



**The Versatile Financing Solution: Mezzanine Debt And Its Role In Kenya's Evolving Business Landscape**  
 Companies are constantly seeking innovative financing solutions to fuel their growth and expansion in Kenya's rapidly business environment which is dynamic in nature. One such instrument that has gained significant traction in recent years is mezzanine debt - a hybrid form of financing that straddles the line between traditional debt and equity

Page 18

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**News >> Clashes at Nyakeyo Primary School Leave Several Injured, Including People Living with Disabilities**

**P. 8.** Trade and Industry Cabinet Secretary Salim Mvurya officially launched the construction of the first phase of the Kabati Export Processing Zone (EPZ) in Mitumbili, Gatanga Constituency, Murang'a County.

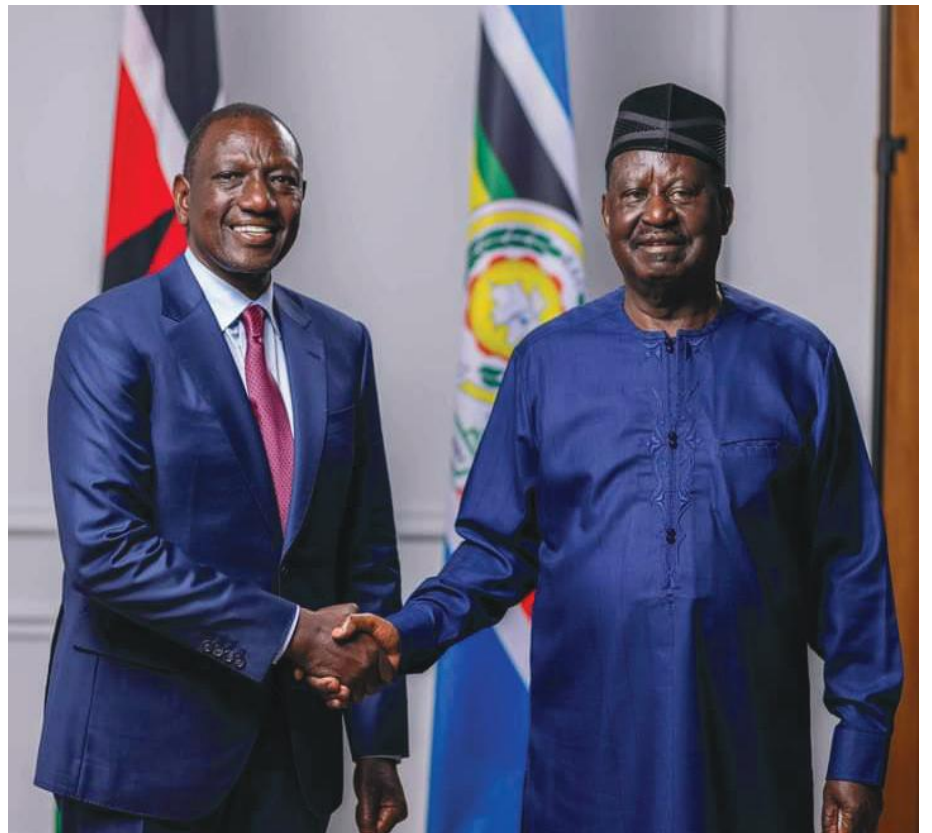


**News >> Agiküyü Cultural Caucuses Differ Over Boys Initiation**

**P. 12.** The Kikuyu Council of Elders Kiama Kia Ma cultural outfit has differed on the circumcision of boys this year with one group suspending the ceremony while another group insisting that the ceremony will go on.

# Raila Odinga's AUC Candidature Unveiled

**Kenya's candidate for the Africa Union Commission (AUC) Chairmanship Raila Odinga has hinted at plans to roll out AU Visas if his bid for the top seat is successful. Odinga said the AU Visas would enhance free movement of people and goods across the continent to promote intra-Africa trade. Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement which was signed in 2018, he said has failed to register success due to bottlenecks which hamper movement from one country to another.**



President William Ruto, ODM leader Raila Odinga at State House yesterday

STORY ON PAGE 9

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# Hasten Coffee, Tea Reforms; DP Urges Agricultural Sector State Agencies

By: DPCS



Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua emphasizing on something during the meeting.

**Worth Noting:**

- “Food security is one of the pillars of Kenya Kwanza and I encourage you that we support the government in achieving. Let us build a strong economy for a stronger country. If the two ministries work together the situation will change with ease. I will support you and availability of the Presidency to help you where you want,” he said.
- “I asked for this meeting so that we can have a seating with the two new Cabinet Secretaries and take them through the reforms exercise. We have responsibility to support the CSs so that they can succeed in their mandates,” he added.

Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua has asked State agencies in the Ministries of Agriculture and Cooperatives to hasten reforms in the agricultural sector especially on tea, coffee and dairy.

Urging the agencies to ensure the reforms are farmer-centric and focused on increasing income, the Deputy President also assured Cabinet Secretaries Wycliffe Oparanya and Dr. Andrew Karanja of his support and commitment in reforming the cooperatives movement and agricultural sector.

Speaking Monday at an inter-ministerial meeting that brought together the two Cabinet Secretaries, who are in charge of the Ministry of Co-operatives and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MS-MES) Development) and Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, respectively, and various agencies concerned with agriculture, Gachagua said he will work closely with them to ensure the government achieves its goals in the agricultural sector.

He hosted the meeting at his Official

Karen Residence, Nairobi to deliberate on the status update for tea and coffee reforms.

He pledged to support the two Ministers as they implement Government’s plan to increase the country’s food production and farmers’ income. He emphasized that the ongoing reforms must be beneficial to farmers, not to their detriment.

At the consultative meeting, the Deputy President also called on the two ministers to involve farmers in the reforms agenda.

He said the government is focused on policy changes, sustainable practices and marketing of the crops.

“Food security is one of the pillars of Kenya Kwanza and I encourage you that we support the government in achieving. Let us build a strong economy for a stronger country. If the two ministries work together the situation will change with ease. I will support you and availability of the Presidency to help you where you want,” he said.

“I asked for this meeting so that we can have a seating with the two new Cabinet

Secretaries and take them through the reforms exercise. We have responsibility to support the CSs so that they can succeed in their mandates,” he added.

On tea, the Deputy President called on the newly elected directors of the Kenya Tea Development Authority (KTDA) to maintain good leadership and lower the cost of production at the factories.

He also appealed on the KTDA leadership to facilitate farmer-centered reforms in the sector while also urging them to be mindful of the farmers welfare through preventing pilferage of resources.

“We are spending too much money on production to the detriment of the farmer. We must agree on production cost, which has been aggravated by directors. The directors must stop being extravagant. As government, we are willing to support you to bring stability in the KTDA. The new board must be reformist to the benefit of the farmers,” he told KTDA Board Chairman Enos Njeru, who was present at the meeting.

He also asked KTDA to work on in-

creasing production of orthodox tea, which he said has higher price.

On coffee sub-sector, the DP urged CS Karanja to ensure farmers have access to the government’s subsidized fertilizer. He said the government plans to increase production of the crop.

He said coffee production has dropped drastically over the years due to frustrations of farmers, discouraging payments and mismanagement of cooperative societies.

“Coffee has had perennial problems for almost two decades arising from various factors. After the private sector took over the sector, exploitation of farmers went underway. When farmers did not get returns commensurate with their efforts they neglected the crop and production went down to 50,000 tonnes. We are working on increased production, improved pricing and motivate farmers back to the farming practice,” he said.

“Some cooperative societies have been protesting because despite good prices, farmers got little since the officials of the Saccos had borrowed money from banks without authority of farmers and were deducted,” he added.

The DP further reiterated the Kenya Kwanza administration’s commitment to leading Kenya into becoming a food secure country.

He also appealed to legislators to enact laws that will aid the Government agenda on agriculture reforms.

Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries Kamau Murango (who is also Kirinyaga Senator) and Borabu MP Patrick Osero (Member National Assembly Committee on Agriculture and Livestock) together with Principal Secretaries Patrick Kilemi (State Department for Co-operatives), Teresiah Mbaika (Devolution) and Idris Dakota (Cabinet Affairs) were also present at the meeting.

Through an Executive Order issued by President William Ruto last year, the DP was tasked to oversee reforms in key agricultural sub-sectors particularly coffee, tea and dairy.

Editor's Desk

**The Mt. Kenya Times**

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

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Mama Judith Ongoro



# MEDICAL APPEAL

Our Mother, Mrs. Judith Ongoro is battling Cancer of the Oesophagus. She has been referred to India, Apollo Hospital, for treatment and management. We have started the first course of urgent treatment at MP Shah Hospital, Nairobi. The Ongoro Family is seeking your humble and generous support to enable the doctors commence urgent and immediate treatment at the cost of:

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## NEWS IN BRIEF



Graduands from technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) have been urged to form and register groups to benefit available government financial support. Speaking during the graduation of 750 graduands of the first cohort of Ujuzi Mashinani initiative at Madaraka Primary School in Buuri Constituency, Micro and Small Enterprises Authority (MSEA) Director for Infrastructure Development, Technology, and Innovation Engineer Edward Karani said the government as well as the private sector usually focus their support to registered groups as opposed to individuals. He acknowledged that the authority had supported several registered groups financially in the area to start income-generating projects. Engineer Karani said before the support comes through, MSEA needs to know where the group members come from, what they can do, and their needs and therefore the need for registering.



Residents of sub-counties in Marsabit county that border Ethiopia have been assured of their continued security and urged to go about their daily chores undisturbed. Marsabit County Commissioner Mr. James Kamau also appealed residents to support government initiatives in maintaining law and order by volunteering useful information on security. Speaking at Dukana primary school after a series of security meetings, Kamau said the government was concerned over sporadic incidents of attacks on innocent residents by suspected armed bandits. The County Commissioner however assured that appropriate measures have been taken to tighten security in the Sub Counties of Dukana, Turbi and Sololo and asked locals not to allow strangers among them.



Nandi East Sub County Assistant County Commissioner (ACC) Charity Ashioya has called on area residents to empower the boy child academically noting that in Nandi County greater emphasis has been placed on educating girls compared boys. Speaking at Nandi Hills in a gathering at Samoei Nursery, Ashioya divulged that the community has concentrated on empowering the girls while ignoring the boys adding that this has greatly impacted the community negatively. She observed that a greater percentage of boys in Nandi County have not realized the importance of education resulting in lack of progression to higher levels of education whereas the girls are working tirelessly to ensure they excel from one level to another. The administrator called on parents to ensure they give the necessary support to school going children to ensure they minimize cases of school drop outs adding that most boys do not progress to higher levels of education due to lack of enlightenment.



The Kenya Meteorological Department (KMD) has organised the 9th session of the National Climate Outlook Forum in Nakuru County. The forum, organised by the KMD in collaboration with the Kenya Red Cross Society, the World Food Programme, and the United Nations Development Programme, provides seasonal climate forecasts and outlooks. The Director of KMD, Dr. David Gikungu, underscored the importance of the National Climate Outlook Forum (NCOF) in enhancing the nation's preparedness for climate variability and change by providing timely and actionable climate information. The NCOF aims to improve communication and understanding of climate forecasts among users by providing tools, resources, and guidance on how to interpret and use seasonal outlooks. The forum brings together experts from different fields to discuss and review climate data and projections, ensuring that forecasts are accurate and relevant to different sectors, such as agriculture, water management, and disaster preparedness.

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**THEME: "Promoting Climate Smart Agriculture and Trade Initiatives for sustainable Economic Growth"**



# The Financial Reporting (FiRe) Awards Push for Enhanced Accountability in Sustainability Reporting



By: Cynthia Masibo  
@themkenyentimes

The Financial Reporting (FiRe) Award promoters have unveiled the 2024 edition, emphasizing the crucial role of integrated financial reporting in boosting transparency and accountability across Kenya's public and private sectors. The Award, which highlights "Championing Effective Sustainability Reporting through Technology and Innovation," underscores the importance of detailed business sustainability disclosures as a mandatory reporting practice.

Organized by key institutions including the Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Kenya (ICPAK), the Public Sector Accounting Standards Board (PSASB), the Nairobi Securities Exchange (NSE), the Capital Markets Authority (CMA), and the Retirement Benefits Authority (RBA), the FiRe Award aims to drive comprehensive environmental, social, and governance (ESG) reporting. Entities will be required to detail their ESG practices to showcase their commitment to sustainable development.

In her address at the launch of the 23rd FiRe Award edition, CPA Dr. Grace Kamau, Chairperson of the Award Executive Committee and ICPAK CEO, emphasized the pivotal role of sustainability reporting in advancing sustainable development goals. Dr. Kamau highlighted that adopting International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), particularly IFRS S1 and S2, will aid businesses in effectively monitoring, managing, and disclosing their sustainability impacts. "We will soon release a communique detailing the phases of adoption, assurance of sustainability reports, and disclosure practices, complemented by workshops and roundtables to facilitate a smooth transition," she said.

## Worth Noting:

The NSE's Chief Executive, Mr. Frank Mwit, stressed the Exchange's commitment to supporting Kenyan companies in sustainability reporting. "By focusing on sustainability, we aim to help companies manage risks and attract investment, aligning with growing stakeholder demands for transparency on environmental, economic, and social impacts," Mwit noted. Public sector entities are also encouraged to enhance their ESG reporting practices. Ms. Georgina Muchai, Acting CEO of PSASB, emphasized the increasing regulatory and investor focus on ESG concerns.



CEO- Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Kenya. (ICPAK) CPA Dr. Grace Kamau

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Public sector entities are also encouraged to enhance their ESG reporting practices. Ms. Georgina Muchai, Acting CEO of PSASB, emphasized the increasing regulatory and investor focus on ESG concerns. "Public sector

entities must prepare for new sustainability reporting regulations, which will help them gather crucial data to inform strategies, manage risks, and achieve long-term sustainable performance," Muchai said.

RBA CEO Mr. Charles Machira highlighted the importance of ESG principles in the pension sector. "Stakeholders in the pension industry are demanding clearer sustainability disclosures. Enhanced reporting on ESG impacts, opportunities, and risks will promote governance and boost confidence in the sector," Machira remarked.

CMA CEO Mr. Wyckliffe Shami-

ah noted the growing significance of business sustainability and climate-related disclosures, driven by the ISSB's publication of IFRS S1 and S2 standards. "The finalization of these standards represents a major advancement in establishing a global baseline for sustainability disclosures, enhancing transparency and trust in company reports," Shamiyah stated.

The FiRe Award 2024 promises to be a critical platform for advancing sustainability reporting standards and reinforcing transparency across Kenya's financial and public sectors.

The

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Mugwongo Family

# Trade CS Salim Mvurya Launches Construction Of Kabati Export Processing Zone In Murang'a County



By: Aoma Keziah  
@themkenyatimes



Trade CS Salim Mvurya and Murang'a Governor Irung'u Kangata, during the launch of the construction of the first phase of Kabati (Mitumbili - Gatanga) Export Processing Zone (EPZ) in Murang'a County..



Trade CS Salim Mvurya laying a foundation stone for the first phase of the Kabati (Mitumbili - Gatanga) Export Public Zone (EPZ) in Murang'a County.

Trade and Industry Cabinet Secretary Salim Mvurya officially launched the construction of the first phase of the Kabati Export Processing Zone (EPZ) in Mitumbili, Gatanga Constituency, Murang'a County. The ambitious project, which is set to significantly boost the region's industrial capacity and economic growth, marks a key milestone in Kenya's industrialization agenda.

Accompanied by Murang'a Governor Irung'u Kangata, Investment ProMotion PS Abubakar Hassan, Mvurya highlighted the strategic importance of the Kabati EPZ, which is poised to become a major hub for manufacturing and export activities in Central Kenya.

The first phase of the project will include the development of essential infrastructure such as roads, water supply, electricity, and the construction of factory sheds to attract local

and international investors.

"This project is a critical step in our efforts to transform the economy of Murang'a County and the larger Central Kenya region. The first phase will generate 3000 direct jobs, a priority being the locals, in line with the Bottom Up Transformation Agenda that seeks to raise the Manufacturing Contribution to the GDP." said CS Mvurya.

The Kabati EPZ is expected to attract investments in various sectors, including textiles, agro-processing, and manufacturing. Once completed,

it will provide an enabling environment for businesses to thrive, with incentives such as tax breaks and reduced tariffs aimed at encouraging export-oriented production.

"The 500 acre piece of land will enhance investment opportunities for value chain players in Agro Processing, Pharmaceuticals, among other sectors. Through backward linkage local farmers producing Macadamia, Avacado, amongst other horticultural products sourced from Muranga County and other neighboring counties will be able to sell to investors

for processing and export." Noted Mvurya

Murang'a County Governor Irungu Kang'ata, lauded the national government's commitment to regional development, noting that the EPZ would play a crucial role in uplifting the local economy.

"The establishment of the Kabati EPZ is a clear demonstration of the government's dedication to ensuring equitable development across all regions. This project will significantly contribute to the economic empowerment of our people," said Governor Kang'ata.

The project, which is being implemented by the Export Processing Zones Authority (EPZA) in collaboration with the Ministry of Trade and Industry, is expected to be completed within the next two years. Once operational, the Kabati EPZ will complement other ongoing infrastructural developments in the region.

As the first phase of the Kabati EPZ begins, the government remains optimistic that the project will position Murang'a County as a key player in Kenya's industrial sector, driving growth, creating jobs, and boosting exports.

# Family Bank Records A KSh2.3B Profit Before Tax In The First Half Of 2024

By: John Kariuki  
@themkenyatimes

Family Bank Group has posted a KSh2.32 billion Profit before Tax in the first six months of 2024.

This is a remarkable 15.4% increase compared to KSh2.0 billion registered in the same period in 2023.

The growth in profitability was mainly driven by an increase in the bank's revenues amid a tough operating environment.

Total assets increased by 19.2% to KSh158.3 billion up from KSh132.8 billion in June 2023. The growth was funded through deposits which increased by 18% from KSh100.8 billion to KSh119 billion. With the additional liquidity, the Bank continued to support the customers with additional lending which saw the loans and advances increase to KSh91.4 billion from KSh86.5 billion in June 2023.

With the muted demand of credit from customers due to the prevailing macroeconomics, the Bank invested the available liquidity in government securities which saw this investment class increase by 69% to KSh41.9 billion from KSh24.8 billion.

Interest income grew by 26.1% driven by the growth in the loan book and the additional investments in government securities. Net Interest income increased by a 12.7% to close at KSh4.9 billion.

This growth was muted by the higher cost of funding witnessed during the period which saw a 46% increase in interest expense in line with the high cost of funding witnessed in the first half of 2024.

The Group's income diversification strategy proved successful with non-funded income rising notably by 20% to KSh2.3 billion. This was largely driven by the fees and commissions, trade finance and gains from securities trading.

Operating expenses increased by



Family Bank CEO Nancy Njau (left)

15% to KSh4.9 billion mainly driven by continued investments in technology, people and digital transformation.

"As a Group, our focus in the first half of the year has been on prudent financial management by strengthening our liquidity position while work-

ing on satisfying customer needs. The performance of this first half is a testament of the Bank's agility and resilience in the face of enduring market uncertainties. We continue to prioritise building scalable infrastructure to continue supporting the significant balance sheet growth we have expe-

rienced over the last few years." said Family Bank CEO Nancy Njau.

The Bank's total capital and liquidity ratios remained strong, and well above the regulatory requirement with total capital ratio closing at 16.6% against 14.5% and liquidity ratio closing at 42.2% against 20%.

# Raila Odinga's AUC Candidature Unveiled

By: MKT Correspondents  
 @themkenyetimes

Kenya's candidate for the Africa Union Commission (AUC) Chairmanship Raila Odinga has hinted at plans to roll out AU Visas if his bid for the top seat is successful.

Odinga said the AU Visas would enhance free movement of people and goods across the continent to promote intra-Africa trade.

Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement which was signed in 2018, he said has failed to register success due to bottlenecks which hamper movement from one country to another.

Traders and businessmen, he said are required to have up to 35 visas to travel across Africa whereas their counterparts who hold French passports were freely travelling across the continent since they do not require a visa to do so.

This, he said, has seen growth of Intra-Africa trade as a share of global trade decline to 13.7% in 2022 with African countries trading more outside the continent.

Odinga said his priority if elected AUC Chair will be to unite the continent to speak with one voice to unlock bottlenecks in trade among other issues.

Speaking during the official opening of the World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture (FESTAC) in Kisumu, Odinga said he would leverage the continent's rich culture, music and culinary arts to forge a unified front that will unlock opportunities for the continent.

"We enjoy Congolese music across the continent just the way we enjoy Ethiopian delicacies among others but we have failed to use this diversity to unify the continent," he said.

This, he said, was in line with the Africa Union Agenda 2063 which is hinged on culture and diversity.

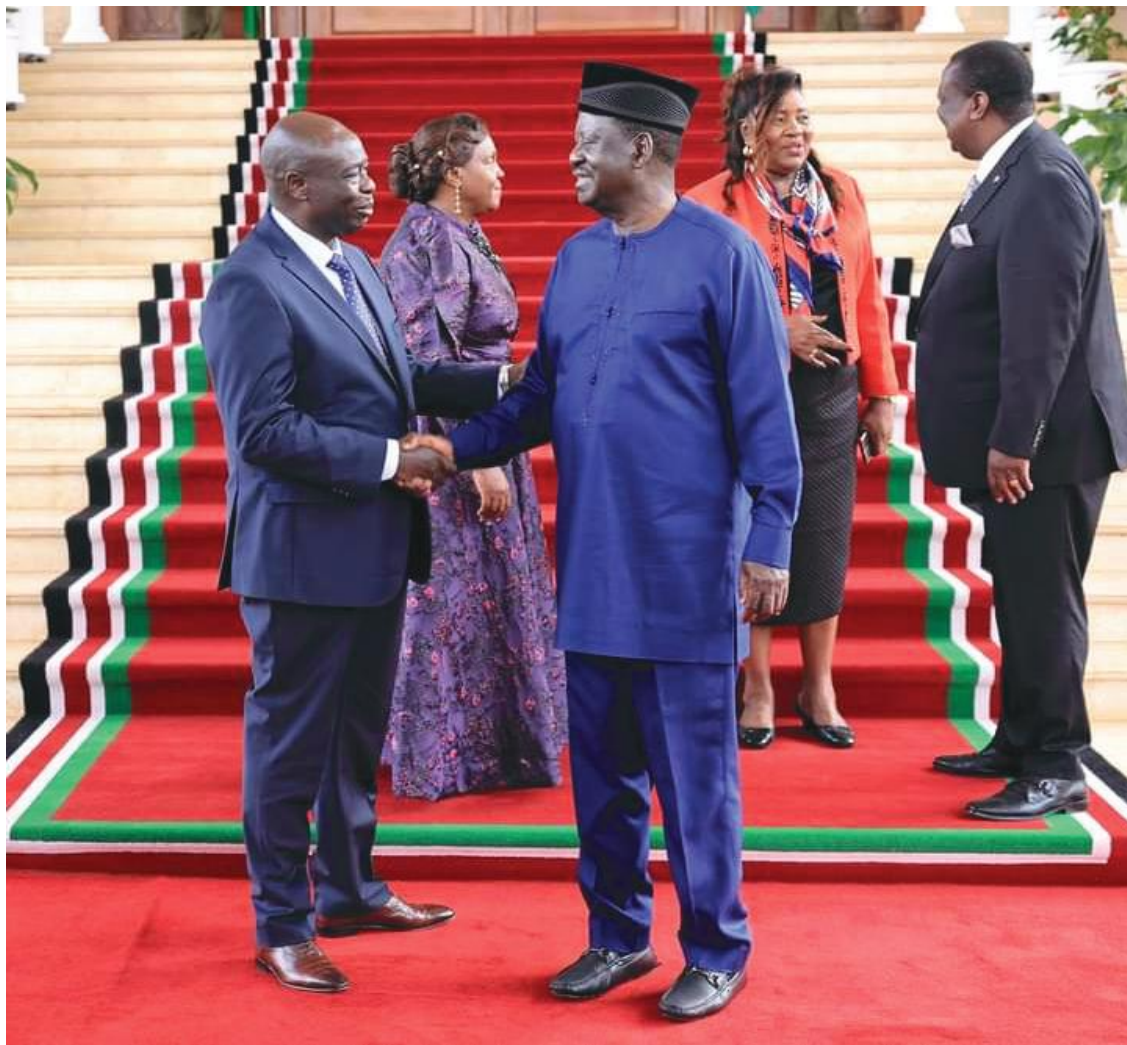
"We want to tap Africa's rich heritage and culture through promotion of creative arts to contribute to the continent's economic growth," he said.

Integration, he said, is an idea whose time has come calling on African states to embrace it for the benefit of the continent.

Top on his agenda, he added, will be to address the challenges among them monetary barriers, poor infrastructure and closed borders to enhance integration and trade.

Speaking during the same occasion, former Nigerian President Dr. Olusegun Obasanjo said it was unfortunate that the continent remained poor despite being endowed with rich natural resources.

"Africa has no reason to be poor. The fact that we are poor is not an act of God. It is because of a poor mentality which we must address," he said.



Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, ODM leader Raila Odinga, Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi, Pastor Dorcas Rigathi and Ida Odinga at State House yesterday

To turnaround the continent's economy, he said the AUC must be overhauled to live up to the challenges facing modern day Africa.

He said it was unfortunate that despite the huge resources on the continent, AUC programmes have stalled since the commission was waiting for funds from donors.

"How can you have a continental body which has programs but waits for the European Union (EU) to

bring money to start the projects?" He questioned.

While backing Raila Odinga's candidacy, Dr. Obasanjo said the task required a person who has the zeal, connections and determination to take Africa forward.

"We need a man who understands the problem of Africa and what role AU has to play and I believe we have that man in Raila Odinga," he said.

Raila will face off with Djibouti's Mohamoud Youssouf, Anil Gayan (Mauritius) and Richard Randriamandrato (Madagascar) for the African Union Commission chairmanship in the race to succeed the outgoing chairman Moussa Faki of Chad.

Somalia's former Foreign Affairs Minister Fawzia Yusuf, dropped her bid for the AUC job.



Some of the local and international leaders who attended the event yesterday

**Worth Noting:**

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- "We enjoy Congolese music across the continent just the way we enjoy Ethiopian delicacies among others but we have failed to use this diversity to unify the continent," he said.

# Discover Your Divine Endowment!



By: Eric Musa  
EMEA.ericmusa@gmail.com

It is written, “And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. “ in Swahili:

“Akampa mmoja talanta tano, na mmoja talanta mbili, na mmoja talanta moja; kila mtu kwa kadiri ya uwezo wake; akasafiri. (Matthew 25:15).”

There is an endowment inside every one, called a gift or a talent, God has given something to everyone to occupy his place on the earth. Some have five, two, or just one, but everyone has something.

A discovery of divine endowment is a very great avenue for locating your purpose. Very many Christians are yet to fulfil their destinies because

they have not discovered their divine endowment. In case you have waited to hear from God and have not, then know that you can make a discovery of your gift from within, by yourself.

Some of the questions to ask that will help you uncover your potentials are: “What do I do effortlessly? What do I do with great excitement? What do I do that gives me fulfilment? What am I productive at?” The answers to these questions are pointers to the gift of God on your inside. It is lamentable that many people are doing what they are neither gifted at, nor graced for.

Please note that the underlying factor in a call from God into ministry is grace. You may not be originally gifted in the area of ministry He has called you to, but He will always back you up with grace to perform.

For instance, it was grace that enabled Moses to fulfil his life assignment. He was a stammerer yet God gave him the job of an orator. How was he going to carry out his assignment? GRACE.

This is the major difference between the first and second avenues of ob-

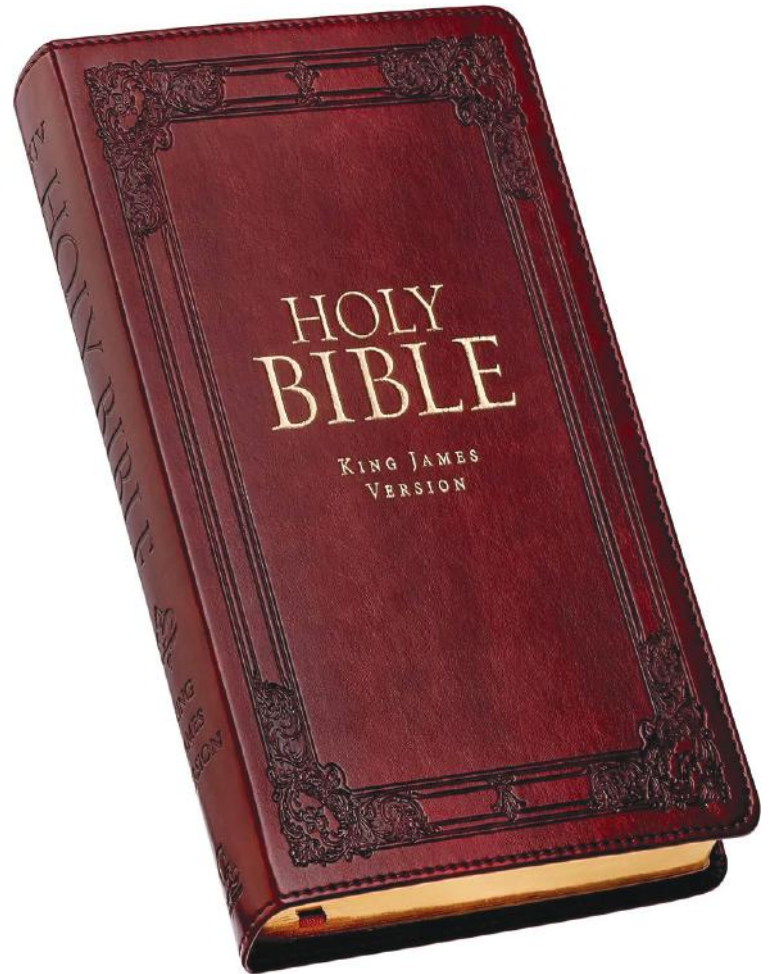
taining a vision — that is, hearing from God and self-discovery. To succeed at the former you need grace; to succeed at the latter you need your gift.

HALELUJAH, PRAISE BE UNTO THE ALMIGHTY GOD.

References:  
The Living Bible.  
Pastor Dr. David Oyedepo.

**Evangelist Eric Musa:**

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



# The Mt. Kenya Times



# Why The Complaints Raised By Families Of Kenyan Police Officers Deployed In Haiti Drew My Attention?



By: Joseph Mutua Ndonga  
mutuandongaa@yahoo.com



Kenyan Police Officers Deployed In Haiti

## Worth Noting:

- The acting Inspector General of Police (IGP) assured these families and the country that there was no cause to worry. We have spoken with the United Nation (UN) and other international bodies who had signed up to pay salaries of the troops in this peace keeping mission.
- They have assured us that the salaries were processed and would be deposited in their respective bank accounts this week.
- The opinion was divided when President William Ruto announced that Kenya was among the countries that had been requested by the United Nations (UN) to send police officers to Haiti for peace keeping mission.
- The critics argued that Kenyan police was ill-equipped to deal with Haiti criminal gangs who had forcibly ousted their legitimate government and taken charge.

A few days ago, I read a story in one of the mainstream media highlighting the complaints raised by families of the Kenyan police officers deployed to Haiti.

Their bone of contention was that the officers were yet to be paid their salaries since they arrived in Caribbean Nation.

This story suggested that the journalists spoke separately to most of the members.

After reading it, three questions came to my mind. Why would the officers use family members to communicate this?

Had they first consulted National Police Service (NPS)? If not, could it turn out they were pushing the agenda of President William Ruto's critics?

Yes, I know the critics would argue the officers did this out of fear of being marked by their seniors and perhaps being recalled.

I highly doubt. The officers had an option of lodging their complaints as a team but not as an individual.

This notwithstanding, the National Police Service (NPS) responded swiftly.

The acting Inspector General of Police (IGP) assured these families and the country that there was no cause to worry. We have spoken with the United Nation (UN) and other international bodies who had signed up to pay salaries of the troops in this peace keeping mission.

They have assured us that the salaries were processed and would be deposited in their respective bank accounts this week.

The opinion was divided when President William Ruto announced that Kenya was among the countries that had been requested by the United Nations (UN) to send police officers to Haiti for peace keeping mission.

The critics argued that Kenyan police was ill-equipped to deal with Haiti criminal gangs who had forcibly ousted their legitimate government and taken charge.

But the situation on ground have since proved wrong the critics.

While demonstrating high levels of discipline, courage and experience, our officers have so far made good progress.

They would not achieve this if they were not well trained and understood their assignment.

It is worth noting that Kenya is leading the United Nations (UN) backed-security mission in Haiti.

Under the stewardship of Commander Geoffrey Otunge, Kenya has so far deployed 400 Kenyan police officers.

A few days ago, the officers sent out an appeal for more equipment including helicopters and armoured personnel carriers (APCs).

This come after one of the Armoured vehicles that the US government had earlier supplied to the Kenyan troops was destroyed by a landmine.

This is the only reported incident that saw Kenyan officers engage the criminal gangs in a fierce gun battle that lasted for hour. There were no casualties on the Kenyan side.

The officers managed to clear the road blocks erected and manned by the gangs on the major roads. They had earlier rescued hospitals, an airport and a number of police stations and administrative blocks/offices.

The Kenyan officers' first assignment was to rescue the capital city of Prince Au Port and its environs. The mandate of the officers have since been extended to cover 16 towns and municipalities.

Since arriving in two batches, the officers have been working closely with Haitian National Police Service.

Kenyan police had previously won the battle against criminal gangs such as Mungiki, Mombasa Republican Council (MRC), Saboat rag-tag militias and cells of Al Shaabab militants.

This will happen before these gangs reared an ugly head and posed a serious security threat to social fabric of Kenya.

In Haiti, the officers managed to reclaim the town of Mawozo.

This town is located along the border with Dominican Republic. Some of the arms used by criminals were believed to have been smuggled through this border.

As a result of Kenya's successes, a number of top world leaders have so far visited the Kenyan camp.

Besides the UN and American envoys, the latest is the Canadian ambassador in Haiti.

After holding talks with Otunge led team, he said that Canada will provide all necessary support that they needed.

We are happy with the Government of Kenya for agreeing to lead this mission. You are indeed doing very well. Your

coordination of mission is superb. Please keep it up.

The deployment of Kenyan officers had earlier been delayed because of three main reasons.

One, clearing the hurdles placed in the way of anchoring this process in law.

Two, the camp where the officers would stay had not yet been completed.

Three, the resignation of the Prime Minister of Haiti.

This created a power vacuum. The GoK had to wait for this matter to be sorted out.

The troops are operating under the banner of Multilateral Security Support Mission (MSSM).

The new Prime Minister of Haiti thanked Kenya for responding to their distress call. We are very grateful to the people of Kenya and we request GoK to send more police officers.

The initial reports indicated that the total number of officers to be deployed stood at 1,000.

The deployment of the first batch came hot on the heels of the visit by the delegation of police officers from Haiti.

Then IGP assured them that the government of Kenya has finalized plans to deploy Kenyan police officers to Haiti.

During this visit, the leader of Haiti police delegation thanked President Ruto and his government for responding positively to their distress call. He assured the Kenyan police that they will work closely with them and provide them with necessary support.

Besides Kenya, Chad, Burundi, Nigeria and Algeria are among the countries in Africa which have so far agreed to send officers for the same mission.

They join those from Jamaica, Chile, Paraguay, Barbados, Bahamas, Barbuda Germany, France and Canada.

Contrary to the impression created by one of the mainstream newspaper, the deployment of the Kenyan officers had not been designed to coincide with President William Ruto's recent state visit to the United States of America (USA).

The decision to deploy 1,000 officers had been made long before President Joe Biden sent the invite.

Foreign Affairs Principal Secretary Korir Singoei kept updating the country on why deployment had been delayed.

He always denied rumors being peddled around that the government had developed cold feet.

We have made this decision because of the resignation of the Prime Minister Henri Ariel.

Also, some ministers and top police officers have also been forced by the Haitian gangs to resign and flee.

So, there was no government in place to receive our officers and direct them on how to carry out the operations.

The Government of Kenya believes in the constitution and rule of law. So, in Haiti, it looked forward to work with a constitutional authority, PS Singoei reiterated.

The Haitian transitional council has since appointed a new Prime Minister.

Before the deployment, President William Ruto had hosted the Prime Minister of Haiti Henri Ariel at State House Nairobi. The two leaders signed an agreement paving the way for deployment. The PM resigned a few days

later.

Reports indicate that Kenyan parliament and the Court of Appeal had okayed the deployment. This showed the law was being followed to the letter and spirit.

So the claims by Dr Ruto's critics that he was forcing the decision down the throat of Kenyans did not hold any water.

Having read sections 107,108 and 109 of the National Police Service (NPS), I'm persuaded to believe that the decisions that the President had made so far were within the law.

I heard then Cabinet Secretary for Interior Kithure Kindiki elaborating this matter further.

He stated that the deployment cannot be done without an approval of Parliament.

As we know, the people of Haiti had been in big trouble.

For the starters, I want to share with them some of the atrocities that were being committed there.

The gangs were raping women and chopping the heads of thier fellow citizens. The children were not spared.

The hospitals and schools had been closed and the main roads blocked. More than ten Police stations have run down. A prison have been broken into and thousands of prisoners secured their 'freedom'.

The staff of humanitarian and charitable organizations were being targeted. They were blocked from accessing the camps where hundreds of thousands of Haitians had sought refugee to offer them food and medications.

This is the reason why Haitian leaders, who were on the run and some besieged, had pleaded with UN to intervene.

If you ask historians, this is what they would tell you about Haiti. This was the first country to emancipate itself from the colonial slavery. The people living in this caribbean nation are Africans.

President Ruto remembered this while explaining why Kenya is touched with thier pains and agony.

The people of Haiti are human beings just like us. Taking cognizant that Kenya is a member of the community of nations, it is wrong to sit and watch when they are suffering.

It is worth noting this is not the first time that the government of Kenya is sending security personnel to join the Africa Union or United Nations peace keeping missions.

The history of the previous Kenyan administrations is replete with this.

The previous deployments were approved at a time when Kenya had fallen far short of meeting the UN requirement of the ratio of 1: 450. This means one police officer taking care of 450 citizens.

How come Ruto's critics never raised it during the reigns of the previous governments?

So, thier comments reeked more of hypocrisy and insincerity.

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

# Agiküyù Cultural Caucuses Differ Over Boys Initiation

By: Felix Njenga  
 @themtkenyatimes

**Worth Noting:**

- The disagreement between the elders on circumcision has been occasioned by the change of education system from 8-4-4 to the Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) by the government which keeps boys still in primary school.
- “As elders we do not circumcise boys because of CBC, we circumcise because they have attained the age. We will not disrupt this norm,” he said.
- He added that the boys are already prepared in their minds that they will be circumscied this year and when denied the chance some might end up committing suicide while others will attempt to circumcise themselves as they do not want to be left behind by their predecessors who might laugh at them which may lead to stigmatization.



Captain Kungu Muigai National patron Kiama Kia Ma with other officials addressing journalists

The Kikuyu Council of Elders Kiama Kia Ma cultural outfit has differed on the circumcision of boys this year with one group suspending the ceremony while another group insisting that the ceremony will go on.

According to Captain Kungu Muigai, the national patron Kiama Kia Ma while speaking in Juja where a meeting of elders drawn from 8 counties from Mt. Kenya region was held to discuss various matters, the ceremony will go on as scheduled where boys who clear grade eight while attaining age 13 and 14 years get to undergo the rite of passage.

“Today we met all chairmen drawn from eight counties accompanied by elders who are mandated to conduct circumcision exercises and we agreed that this year we will conduct the circumcision ceremony,” the national patron said.

The disagreement between the elders on circumcision has been occasioned by the change of education system from 8-4-4 to the Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) by the government which keeps boys still in primary school.

“As elders we do not circumcise boys because of CBC, we circumcise because they have attained the age. We will not disrupt this norm,” he said.

He added that the boys are already prepared in their minds that they will be circumscied this year and when denied the chance some might end up committing suicide while others will attempt to circumcise themselves as they do not want to be left behind by

their predecessors who might laugh at them which may lead to stigmatization.

He said that this year’s age set will be called Gen Z which will relate with saying that boys now men will be well prepared on how they will conduct themselves while in primary schools continuing with their studies.

“The elders will educate and instill morals and discipline to the young men who will be circumcised such as not to engage in early sex, respecting younger pupils in school, drug usage

and how to conduct themselves while in primary school,” he said.

He called upon the elders who are mandated to conduct the circumcision ceremony to prepare themselves for the occasion and also called on parents to present their sons to the elders once the occasion arrives.

A splinter group led by Thiongo wa Gitau titled ‘Muthamaki’ in the elders hierarchy while speaking in Subukia, Nakuru county during a Kiama Kia Ma meeting said that as elders they will not conduct the circumcision cer-

emony this year which will be conducted next year.

“We are saying that we will not circumcise our boys this year and will be circumcised next year,” Thiongo said.

Mwaniki Nguri, an elder said that in the Kikuyu culture when there was an indecisive matter there was suspension of the matter until a clear solution was met.

Njoroge Muchiri Chairman kiama kia Ma Subukia said that investigations and consultations are still going on and elders are collecting views from parents over how circumcision should be conducted in the wake of new CBC curriculum which is still domiciled in primary schools.

The elders said that it is the decision of parents to circumcise their boys this year but they will not be involved.

In 2022 in a statement read by national chairman of Kiama Kia Ma elders Ndung’u Gaithuma in Nyeri town adjusted the circumcision age of boys from 14 to 12 years.

A section of parents who have boys who have attained the age of circumcision have said that it will be their decision to make for their boys once the time comes.

The elders have also continued to differ with the church on circumcision, remaining adamant that the ceremony should only be conducted by the elders and the church to stick to its religious doctrine.



Thiongo wa Gitau Kiama Kia Ma elder known as Muthamaki addressing the press in Subukia..

# NCKK Urges Gov't To Address CBC Issues Raised By Stakeholders

By: Felix Njenga  
 @themtkenyatimes

The National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCKK) through their General Assembly has said that it is unfortunate that the education system is marred by confusion, inequality and injustice after review.

In a statement read by Canon Chris Kinyanjui the General Secretary during the Council's 65th General Assembly held in Limuru, Kiambu county the assembly urged the Ministry of Education to speedily address the concerns that have been raised regarding the competency based curriculum (CBC).

"The transition to Grade 9 next year is still unclear as regards the availability of facilities and teachers in public primary schools. How many classrooms have been constructed to accommodate the learners? How

many teachers have been employed to ensure all learners are within the standard teacher/pupil ratio," read part of the statement.

The GA was also appalled at the wastage of public funds being witnessed through multiple scholarship programs.

"We are convinced that the only reason these scholarships have been set up is to enable the officials to steal the money," the GA said.

The GA recommended that all the bursaries and scholarships, which totals to close to Sh 100 billion, be collapsed into a tuition fund that will provide capitation to pave way to free education for all.

The GA also said that there is need to urgently review the proposed university education funding model as it is unjust to have a model that makes education a preserve of the rich.

"The government should engage in comprehensive public participation so as to have a structure that benefits all

qualified Kenyans," they said.

Karanja also read that the ministry of education and the teachers' service commission should engage in meaningful dialogue with teachers so as to safeguard the education of the children.

The GA however demanded the immediate withdrawal of a circular sent to regional and county directors of education directing that all school going children must be registered on the Social Health Insurance fund (SHIF). "We find this to be a backdoor method of pushing Kenyans into the scheme which is yet to be understood and regarding which Kenyans have raised concerns," the GA said.

The GA recommended that a comprehensive public participation must be done so that parents can present their views saying that strategies however good, they must not be forced on Kenyans.



Chris Kinyanjui.

# Reflections on the 14th Anniversary of Kenya's 2010 Constitution

By: Cynthia Masibo  
 @themtkenyatimes

Yesterday Kenya celebrated its significant milestone: the 14th anniversary of the promulgation of the 2010 Constitution. It enabled Kenyans to reflect on the progress made, the challenges faced, and the path forward in fully realizing the promises of this transformative document.

Faith Odhiambo delivered a compelling keynote address that captured the essence of our journey under the 2010 Constitution. Her speech provided a comprehensive overview of the gains achieved and the pressing issues that remain. Odhiambo began by acknowledging the Constitution's foundational role in reshaping Kenya's governance landscape. It was designed with a vision to address historical injustices and to promote democratic governance, equity, and human rights.

Odhiambo's address particularly focused on the need for a deeper commitment to the Constitution's core values. She noted that while the 2010 Constitution has ushered in significant reforms—such as enhanced public participation, a more

robust framework for human rights, and a stronger Rule of Law—there are still critical areas that need attention. One of the major points she raised was the activation of dormant provisions. For instance, the two-thirds gender rule, aimed at ensuring equitable representation of both genders in political spheres, has yet to be fully realized. This gap highlights the ongoing struggle to achieve true gender parity in governance.

Moreover, Odhiambo addressed the issue of judicial independence and electoral reforms. Despite strides toward strengthening the judiciary, challenges remain in ensuring that it operates with complete autonomy and integrity. Electoral justice and reforms continue to be pivotal, as fair and transparent elections are essential to sustaining democratic governance. The need for continued reform in these areas is crucial to uphold the spirit of the Constitution and to ensure that all citizens have confidence in the democratic process.

In her address, Odhiambo also celebrated the vital role of Kenya's youth in driving change. The active involvement of young people in advocating for human rights, democracy, and greater public engagement



Law society of Kenya President Mrs Faith Odhiambo issuing her address to the media on Katiba Day.

is a testament to the enduring relevance of the Constitution's values. Their enthusiasm and commitment reflect the principles outlined in Article 10, which emphasize national values and principles of governance, including participation, accountability, and transparency.

The event was further graced by the presence of notable figures such as Senior Counsel Charles Kanjama and President of the Kenya School

of Law, Joshua Okayo. Their attendance underscored a shared recognition of the need for ongoing efforts to fully implement the Constitution. Kanjama and Okayo's participation was a reminder of the collective responsibility of all stakeholders in ensuring that the Constitution's aspirations are realized.

As Kenyans mark this anniversary, it is crucial that to take Odhiambo's message to heart. Reflecting on our

progress and acknowledging our shortcomings is vital, but it is equally important to renew our commitment to the Constitution's principles. We must work together to address the outstanding issues, including gender equality, judicial independence, and electoral reforms. By doing so, one can build a Kenya that truly embodies the values enshrined in the 2010 Constitution.

## Duppidozlik



By: Davronbekova Sevinch Khushnubek «Beads», «Duppidozlik», «Jewelry». In our region, we often use the most common and Andijan Iraqi skullcaps. Now I have been buying a variety of skullcaps, shokila, zebugardon and tillagosh. Let me give a brief overview of the doppi. The human mind is beautifully created with the minds of the mind. This is different from other creatures. All his actions are done wisely. From time immemorial, people have sewn clothes from various fabrics and other materials to prevent cold, heat or rain. Bora Bora began to take shape in a culture of dress that became a profession. It is no exaggeration to say that in every ornament of our skullcies, the thoughts of our ancestors embody the dreams of the thoughts of the moon. Doppi is a light hat and has long been widespread among the Iranian and Turkic peoples. Since the 1920s, the shape of the doppia has changed: the top has

been round or jam-shaped, and the jaw in the cloak has thinned. Chust, Andijan, Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara, Boysun and Shahrisabz doppi are popular in Uzbekistan. The Chust skull is made of dark green silk or satin 4 karjli. The dope is mainly made of embroidery with velvet, silk, silk, silk and dice thread. Among the peoples of Turkestan, it has become a type of national costume, especially in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Uzbek doppies differ from other people in their unique shape and decoration. The doppia is made up of three parts - the top (in the form of a circle and a rectangle), a cloak (in the form of a flange) and a jum. Decorated differently in different parts of Uzbekistan; It looks different when parts are combined. The profession of doppi seamstress is called doppidoz, and the profession of doppi sewing is called doppidozlik. Values of the skullcape. It was even believed that it could be harmed by its owner by striking, crushing, and tearing a dope. In addition to the fact that the doppia is a protector and protector of the head, it is believed that the strength, will and qualities of a person wearing a doppia will pass to him.

## Echoes Of Our Youth



By Nuriddinjon Abdurasulov Sharofjon

In two thousand eight, I stepped into the light,  
With Khadichakhon and Sayyorakhan, my  
guiding sight.  
First grade adventures, oh, what tales they  
spun,  
In the heart of our school, where we laughed  
and we'd run.

A window I shattered, a bid to evade,  
The confines of class, oh, the wildness I'd  
trade.  
With Abror, a scuffle, his head met my cheek,  
A stone to his window, my vengeance unique.

Red swollen eyes, as Durдона cried,  
Fear wrapped around us, nowhere to hide.  
In older grades, Davron and I took a fall,  
With a grip on his waist, I answered the call.

Salahuddin scribbled, but Hassan found cheer,

Tore up the paper, "The teacher won't hear!"  
Then summer shook softly, the earth  
trembled low,  
A stone from the mountain put on quite a  
show.

From the ninth-grade window, it thundered  
and crashed,  
Hitting the director's door, our laughter was  
dashed.  
Aydinghan and Sitorakhan, with soil from the  
cliff,  
Eating hard earth, in childhood's sweet rift.

With Jawahir, a quarrel, I struck out in haste,  
His father, dear Shuhrat, came to end the  
waste.  
In snow-covered fields, we played without  
care,  
Yet as graduation loomed, silence filled the air.

In tears without glasses, our hearts heavy  
sighed,  
In twenty-seventeen, we spread out our  
pride.  
Davron, Mukhlisa, and Durдона, my friends,  
In Jizzakh Law College, our journey transcends.

Through quarrels and laughter, we took our  
great stride,  
In the halls of our youth, where our dreams  
would abide.

## However, We Have A Large People



We have a large people,  
There is no equal in the world.  
How many nations are friendly,  
Lives in Uzbekistan.

Wishes for health to a friend,  
Faces - the sun.  
He starts with hello  
Every compatriot has his say.

As long as the guest comes  
Scattered to share.  
Let's say hello  
Open heart.

Respected elders,  
The younger ones are also honored.  
Brave boys for the country,  
On duty around the clock.

Cut your long hair  
Girls who wear hats.  
Even the moon remains  
Blushing with embarrassment.

It gives glory to our country  
Old, tall cities.  
Flowers are everywhere,  
Good deeds are appreciated.

We have a large people,  
The world is full of passion.  
Do not let the eyes touch your neck,  
Modern Uzbekistan!

Author: Rózakhan Safarboýeva.

## For The Future



By: Orzigul Sherova,  
Uzbekistan

Life is short, but full of tests,  
All of us are just simple guests,  
Everyone has her own nests,  
Just believe yourself, my dear soul.  
One day we will achieve our goal.

I know, it is really hard to gain,  
May be we face to some sharp pain,  
But everything will past, like rain,  
Just believe yourself, my dear soul.  
One day we will achieve our goal.

Trying to be the best for your future,  
Love all things, such as nature,  
Aims are best opinion for the capture,  
Just believe yourself, my dear soul.  
One day we will achieve our goal.

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## DEVELOPMENT

## State To Relocate Three Schools To Pave Way For Mwache Dam Project

By: MKT Correspondent  
 @themtkenyentimes



Cabinet Secretary Eng Eric Murithi Mugaa addressing journalists in Kwale County on Monday

## Worth Noting:

- “The government has given Kasemeni ward residents an opportunity to participate in the determination of a construction sketch of the Fulugani primary school that the State is building after relocation of the people to pave way for the construction of Mwache multipurpose dam. This is one way of ensuring the public feels included and part of this new development,” he said.
- He added that the committees formed should later hold public forums to inform the rest on the goings of the construction project of the schools.
- The CS noted that the compensation exercise for Project Affected Persons (PAP) for the Mwache dam project has kicked off following the release of Sh500 million by the National Treasury.

Water, Sanitation, and Irrigation Cabinet Secretary Eng. Eric Mugaa has asked residents of Kasemeni ward in Kinango sub county, Kwale county to be proactive in decision-making of the construction of three primary schools that were affected by Mwache dam project.

The affected schools namely, Fulugani primary, Nunguni primary and Mwache bridge ECDE are expected to be reconstructed with modern facilities installed.

Mugaa said that the construction exercise has started at the slated sites and members of the public will be involved in the process by participating in key decision making in terms of the type of structures they want and the facilities to be included.

The CS was addressing the community during a public forum in Kasemeni when he asked them to form committees that will represent them in the decision making of the slated projects during the official discussion.

This came after residents expressed their concerns to the leaders on why the reconstruction of the schools was not going as per their requirements.

“The government has given Kasemeni ward residents an opportunity to participate in the determination of a construction sketch of the Fulugani primary school that the State is building after relocation of the people to pave way for the construction of

Mwache multipurpose dam. This is one way of ensuring the public feels included and part of this new development,” he said.

He added that the committees formed should later hold public forums to inform the rest on the goings of the construction project of the schools.

The CS noted that the compensation exercise for Project Affected Persons (PAP) for the Mwache dam project has kicked off following the release of Sh500 million by the National Treasury.

He urged the residents to cooperate with the contractors and give him a conducive working environment as he constructs the dam to enable them get the value for money.

“Once there are delays with the project, money gets lost, and it is the taxpayers’ money that is lost. Let us not interfere with the construction work and present any complaint to my office, as I promise to listen to all of you,” he affirmed.

The construction stalled in July following compensation and livelihood restoration demands by the local community in Kinango Constituency, Kwale County.

Bendaro Ndegwa a resident of Kasemeni ward said that they are yet to receive livelihood restoration funds promised by the government after they were relocated.

The CS assured the locals that soon

bit of uniqueness as there will be a component of livelihood whereby the government will restore the livelihood of the project affected persons to where they were before they were relocated.

He noted that the government has asked the contractor to also give 70 percent of jobs to the locals to ensure they fully benefit from the dam project.

The CS also urged the people to deliver their end of the bargain once given job opportunities and not only focus on entitlement that they deserve the work.

“I have vouched for you to be considered when seeking for employment at the construction site, please do not let us down,” he added.

Women and young people were also challenged to go for the opportunities offered insisting that the government offers equal chance to all its citizens.

Kinango Member of Parliament Gonzi Rai said that residents of Kinango had stopped work demanding compensation but added that once he took the issue to the National Assembly, the Commission, Ministry, and the Treasury agreed to sort out the challenge in due effect.

A total of KSh4.4 billion is required for land acquisition affecting at least 4,000 Project Affected Persons (PAP).

Mwache dam is located across the Mwache river at Fulugani village in Kwale County, about 22 kilometers west of Mombasa.

Construction of the dam commenced in March 2023, with the completion projected to be December 2027.

Mugaa said that the project has a



Mwache dam project



# PROJECT CATALOG

Malindi Phase 7	MALINDI	FROM AS LOW AS Kes.129,000	Kithimani Springs	MACHAKOS	FROM AS LOW AS Kes.1.50M
Great Oasis Gardens	NANYUKI	FROM AS LOW AS Kes.399,000	Ocean View Ridge Vipingo	VIPINGO	FROM AS LOW AS Kes.1.750M
Wema Gardens	NARO MORU	FROM AS LOW AS Kes.439,000	Vuyanzi Gardens	KITALE	FROM AS LOW AS Kes.1.995M
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 Versatile Financing Solution: Mezzanine Debt And Its Role In Kenya's Evolving Business Landscape



By: Odhiambo Jerameel Kevins Owuor  
@themtkenyatimes



educating Kenyan entrepreneurs and business leaders about the benefits and nuances of mezzanine debt. Industry associations, financial institutions, and advisory firms have all played a crucial role in raising awareness and providing guidance on the effective utilization of this financing tool. As a result, the understanding and adoption of mezzanine debt in the Kenyan market have steadily increased, with more companies recognizing its potential to unlock new avenues for growth and expansion.

Looking ahead, the future of mezzanine debt in Kenya appears promising, as the country's economic landscape continues to evolve and the demand for flexible and innovative financing solutions intensifies. With the increasing sophistication of the Kenyan financial sector and the growing presence of international investors, the availability and accessibility of mezzanine debt are expected to continue expanding, providing Kenyan businesses with a valuable alternative to traditional financing options.

Moreover, the regulatory environment in Kenya has also become more conducive to the use of mezzanine debt, with the recent amendments to the Companies Act removing many of the previous restrictions on financial assistance. This legislative change has paved the way for more seamless integration of mezzanine financing into Kenyan M&A and leveraged buyout transactions, further enhancing the appeal of this hybrid instrument for local businesses.

As Kenyan companies navigate the complexities of the modern business world, the role of mezzanine debt is poised to become increasingly significant. By offering a unique blend of debt and equity features, mezzanine financing has the potential to unlock new avenues for growth, facilitate strategic transactions, and empower Kenyan entrepreneurs to pursue their ambitious visions with greater financial flexibility and control. The continued evolution and adoption of mezzanine debt in Kenya will undoubtedly be a crucial factor in shaping the country's economic landscape in the years to come.

*The writer is a legal researcher and scrivener.*

## Worth Noting:

- The rise of mezzanine debt in Kenya has also been driven by the growing presence of private equity and venture capital firms in the market. These investment vehicles have increasingly turned to mezzanine financing as a way to enhance the returns on their investments, leveraging the unique risk-reward profile of this hybrid instrument to generate higher yields for their investors.
- As a result, the Kenyan market has witnessed a surge in mezzanine-focused funds and investment vehicles, further expanding the availability and accessibility of this financing option for local businesses.
- However, the integration of mezzanine debt into the Kenyan business landscape has not been without its challenges.

Companies are constantly seeking innovative financing solutions to fuel their growth and expansion in Kenya's rapidly business environment which is dynamic in nature. One such instrument that has gained significant traction in recent years is mezzanine debt - a hybrid form of financing that straddles the line between traditional debt and equity. As Kenyan businesses, both large and small, grapple with the challenges of accessing affordable and flexible capital, mezzanine debt has emerged as a compelling alternative, offering a unique blend of features that cater to the diverse financing needs of the market.

At its core, mezzanine debt is a subordinated form of financing that sits between a company's senior debt and its equity capital in the capital structure. Unlike senior debt, which is typically secured by the company's assets, mezzanine debt is often unsecured and carries a higher level of risk for the lender. However, this increased risk is compensated by the potential for higher returns, often in the form of embedded equity kickers, such as warrants or conversion rights, which allow the mezzanine lender to participate in the upside of the company's performance.

The versatility of mezzanine debt is particularly evident in the Kenyan context, where it has found applications across a wide range of industries

and transaction types. From funding mergers and acquisitions to facilitating leveraged buyouts and supporting expansion plans, mezzanine debt has proven to be a valuable tool in the arsenal of Kenyan businesses seeking to access growth capital without significantly diluting their ownership or control.

One of the key advantages of mezzanine debt in the Kenyan market is its ability to bridge the gap between traditional bank financing and equity-based investments. Many Kenyan companies, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), often struggle to meet the stringent collateral requirements and lengthy approval processes associated with traditional bank loans. Mezzanine debt, on the other hand, offers a more flexible and tailored financing solution, allowing these companies to access the capital they need to fuel their expansion and development without the need for extensive tangible assets as security.

Moreover, mezzanine debt has also proven to be an attractive option for Kenyan entrepreneurs and family-owned businesses that are wary of diluting their ownership through equity-based financing. By providing a means to raise growth capital without relinquishing a significant stake in the company, mezzanine debt enables these businesses to maintain greater

control over their operations and decision-making processes, while still benefiting from the infusion of additional resources.

The rise of mezzanine debt in Kenya has also been driven by the growing presence of private equity and venture capital firms in the market. These investment vehicles have increasingly turned to mezzanine financing as a way to enhance the returns on their investments, leveraging the unique risk-reward profile of this hybrid instrument to generate higher yields for their investors. As a result, the Kenyan market has witnessed a surge in mezzanine-focused funds and investment vehicles, further expanding the availability and accessibility of this financing option for local businesses.

However, the integration of mezzanine debt into the Kenyan business landscape has not been without its challenges. The complex and often bespoke nature of mezzanine financing structures can pose a significant hurdle for some companies, particularly those with limited experience in navigating the intricacies of hybrid financing. Additionally, the higher cost of mezzanine debt, relative to traditional bank loans, can be a deterrent for some Kenyan businesses, especially those operating in highly competitive or low-margin industries.

To address these challenges, there has been a growing emphasis on ed-



# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Affordable Housing In Kenya: Balancing Expectations And Realities

By: James Kilonzo Bwire  
 @themtkenyatimes



Affordable Housing In Kenya

### Worth Noting:

- Critics often question why the government is directly involved in building houses instead of creating a conducive environment for private sector development. The government is indeed working to create such an environment by addressing both demand and supply sides of the housing market.
- The Affordable Housing Act of 2024 introduces tax incentives and financing options that make it easier for developers to construct affordable homes. Moreover, the national Tenant Purchase Scheme, with loans as low as 3% per annum, is a testament to the government's commitment to making homeownership accessible to all.
- Affordability remains a key concern for many Kenyans. The government has set affordable housing prices starting at Kshs 840,000, with mortgage options that extend up to 30 years.

The pursuit of affordable housing in Kenya has become a focal point for both the government and citizens alike. As the country grapples with a significant housing deficit, understanding the intricacies of the government's initiatives and addressing the common questions raised by Kenyans is crucial for fostering trust and ensuring successful implementation. One of the most pressing questions is why the national government is involved in housing when it is considered a devolved function. The answer lies in the complexity of the housing value chain, which necessitates coordination between the National Government, County Governments, and financial organizations. This collaborative approach is essential to ensure that affordable housing is accessible to all Kenyans, providing long-term financing and support to both homeowners and developers.

Another common concern is the government's practice of building houses on public land and selling them to private individuals. Utilizing public land helps reduce costs, thereby keeping homes affordable. However, this initiative is not merely about individual ownership; it aims to foster community development and cohesion, which is vital for sustainable urban growth. Citizens have raised valid concerns about the protection of public resources and ensuring that these projects truly benefit low-income individuals. To address these concerns, the government should establish clear guidelines and criteria for the allocation of public land for affordable housing projects, prioritizing the needs of low-income individuals and ensuring that the land is used for its intended purpose.

Critics often question why the government is directly involved in building houses instead of creating a conducive environment for private sector development. The government is indeed working to create such an environment by addressing both demand and supply sides of the housing market. The Affordable Housing Act of 2024 introduces tax incentives and financing options that make it

easier for developers to construct affordable homes. Moreover, the national Tenant Purchase Scheme, with loans as low as 3% per annum, is a testament to the government's commitment to making homeownership accessible to all.

Affordability remains a key concern for many Kenyans. The government has set affordable housing prices starting at Kshs 840,000, with mortgage options that extend up to 30 years. This approach aims to ensure that homeownership is within reach for many, allowing individuals to pay a monthly rate comparable to their current rent. However, questions persist about whether these prices are genuinely affordable for the average Kenyan, particularly those in the low-income bracket. To address these concerns, the government should explore additional financing options and incentives that make homeownership more accessible to low-income individuals, such as expanding the Tenant Purchase Scheme and providing subsidies or tax credits for first-time homebuyers.

The introduction of a housing levy has also raised questions. The housing fund operates as a revolving fund, where contributions from Kenyans help finance homebuyers. This collective effort enables the government to support more individuals in their journey toward homeownership, fostering a sense of community investment in housing solutions. However, citizens are concerned about the necessity of this levy and how it is utilized. The government must communicate clearly how these funds are managed and ensure that they are used effectively for the intended purpose.

Security and transparency of the housing levy fund are paramount. Managed by the Affordable Housing Board, the fund is designed to be transparent, with financial records published publicly to ensure accountability. This transparency is crucial for building public trust, especially in light of past concerns regarding the allocation of government housing projects. The government should

also establish a clear and verifiable bidding process through the Boma Yangu portal, including specific eligibility requirements and evaluation parameters to ensure fair and equitable allocation of housing units.

The government's strategy also includes investing the housing levy funds wisely to ensure growth through interest, which in turn supports the construction of affordable housing schemes nationwide. This approach not only addresses the immediate housing needs but also contributes to long-term economic stability. However, citizens want assurance that these investments are being made responsibly and that they directly benefit the intended low-income populations.

Accessing these housing projects has been made easier for ordinary Kenyans. By registering on the Boma Yangu platform, individuals can select their preferred housing units and start saving through mobile payment systems. This streamlined process is designed to empower citizens and simplify the journey to homeownership. Nevertheless, the government must ensure that the platform is user-friendly and accessible to all, particularly those in rural areas with limited access to technology.

Finally, the visibility of these housing projects is essential. The government has made it clear that affordable housing projects can be tracked through the Boma Yangu website, allowing potential homeowners to see progress and apply for allocations. This level of transparency is critical in ensuring that citizens feel involved and informed about the housing initiatives that directly affect them. Regular updates and public forums should be held to keep the community engaged and informed about ongoing projects.

In conclusion, the government's commitment to affordable housing is a multifaceted approach aimed at addressing the pressing needs of Kenyans. By tackling common concerns and fostering collaboration among stakeholders, the administration can create a sustainable housing environment that benefits all citizens. As the government continues to implement its housing agenda, it is crucial to maintain transparency, accountability, and inclusivity to build trust and ensure the success of these initiatives. With concerted efforts, affordable housing can become a reality for many Kenyans, contributing to the overall development and prosperity of the nation.

However, it is important to acknowledge that the government's ambitious targets may not be achieved overnight. The housing deficit in Kenya is substantial, and addressing it requires a long-term, strategic approach. The

government should set realistic goals and timelines, while continuously evaluating and adjusting its strategies based on feedback from citizens and stakeholders.

Moreover, the success of affordable housing initiatives depends on the active participation and support of various stakeholders, including county governments, private developers, financial institutions, and civil society organizations. The government should foster strong partnerships and ensure that all stakeholders are aligned with the common goal of providing affordable and accessible housing for all Kenyans.

It is also crucial for the government to prioritize the needs of low-income and vulnerable populations in its affordable housing policies. While the current initiatives aim to cater to a wide range of income groups, the government should ensure that the most disadvantaged communities are not left behind. This may require targeted interventions, such as subsidies, social housing programs, and slum upgrading projects.

In addition to providing affordable housing, the government should also focus on improving the overall quality of housing and living conditions across the country. This includes investing in basic infrastructure, such as water, sanitation, and electricity, as well as ensuring that housing units meet minimum safety and habitability standards.

Finally, the government should continuously monitor and evaluate the impact of its affordable housing initiatives, using data and evidence to inform policy decisions. Regular feedback from citizens and stakeholders should be incorporated into the decision-making process, ensuring that the government remains responsive to the evolving needs and expectations of Kenyans.

In summary, the government's commitment to affordable housing is a laudable and necessary initiative that has the potential to transform the lives of many Kenyans. However, balancing expectations and realities is crucial for ensuring the long-term success and sustainability of these initiatives. By maintaining transparency, accountability, and inclusivity, and by fostering strong partnerships with stakeholders, the government can create a housing environment that truly benefits all citizens, contributing to the overall development and prosperity of the nation.

*James Kilonzo Bwire is a Media and Communication practitioner.*

# Harnessing The Winds Of Change: Climate Resilience In East Africa's Uncertain Future



By: Midmark Onsongo  
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component of East Africa's natural capital, are also under increasing stress due to climate change. The region's rivers, lakes, and groundwater systems are vital for drinking water, irrigation, and hydroelectric power generation. However, rising temperatures and changing precipitation patterns are leading to altered hydrological cycles, with some areas experiencing severe water shortages while others face increased flood risks. Lake Victoria, the largest freshwater lake in Africa and a lifeline for millions, has seen fluctuating water levels that threaten fisheries, transportation, and water supply systems. In the Horn of Africa, groundwater resources are being depleted at an alarming rate, exacerbating the challenges of water access in already arid and semi-arid regions.

recognizing the need to adapt to the changing climate and are taking steps to build resilience. For example, Ethiopia's Green Legacy Initiative, which aims to plant 20 billion trees by 2024, is one of the world's largest reforestation efforts and seeks to combat deforestation, land degradation, and climate change. Similarly, Kenya's Vision 2030 development blueprint includes ambitious targets for increasing renewable energy capacity, with a focus on geothermal, wind, and solar power. These efforts are critical for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, enhancing energy security, and providing sustainable livelihoods for communities.

However, the road to climate resilience is fraught with challenges. Financial constraints, weak institutional capacity, and political instability continue to hinder effective climate action in many parts of East Africa. Moreover, the region's vulnerability to external shocks, such as global economic downturns and conflicts, exacerbates the difficulties in implementing long-term climate strategies. International support, in the form of climate finance, technology transfer, and capacity building, is essential to help East African countries navigate these challenges and build a sustainable future.

As the proverb suggests, East Africa faces a choice: to build walls or windmills in response to the winds of change. The region's future will depend on how effectively it can harness its strengths, address its vulnerabilities, and seize the opportunities presented by a changing climate. With its rich natural resources, resilient communities, and growing commitment to sustainable development, East Africa has the potential to turn the challenges of climate change into a catalyst for positive transformation. But this will require visionary leadership, bold action, and a collective effort to build a climate-resilient region that can thrive in the face of an uncertain future.

*This article was scripted by:  
MIDMARK ONSONGO  
(Sustainable economist,  
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## Worth Noting:

- The impacts of climate change on agriculture in East Africa cannot be overstated. Agriculture is the backbone of the region's economy, employing about 70% of the population and contributing significantly to GDP. However, the sector is highly vulnerable to climate variability.
- Changes in rainfall patterns, coupled with rising temperatures, are already reducing crop yields and threatening food security. For example, maize production, a staple crop in the region, is expected to decline by up to 20% by 2050 due to climate-induced stresses. Similarly, coffee, one of East Africa's key export commodities, is under threat, with suitable growing areas projected to shrink significantly by mid-century.
- These changes not only jeopardize the livelihoods of millions of smallholder farmers but also have broader implications for national economies and global food supply chains.

It was once said, "When the winds of change blow, some build walls while others build windmills." This ancient wisdom, attributed to a Chinese proverb, resonates profoundly with the unfolding reality of climate change in East Africa. As the region grapples with the accelerating impacts of a warming planet, the metaphorical winds of change are no longer distant or abstract; they are a present and pressing force, shaping the very fabric of life in this part of the world. The question is, will East Africa build walls to shield itself from these changes, or will it harness the winds to create new opportunities for resilience and adaptation?

East Africa is increasingly becoming a global hotspot for climate change, with its delicate ecological systems and socio-economic structures facing severe disruptions. Recent data underscores the gravity of the situation: the region has warmed by approximately 1.2°C since the late 19th century, and projections suggest that temperatures could rise by another 1.5°C to 3°C by the end of the century if global emissions continue unabated. This warming trend has significant implications for a region that relies heavily on rain-fed agriculture and pastoralism, both of which are highly sensitive to changes in temperature and precipitation patterns.

One of the most visible signs of climate change in East Africa is the increasing frequency and severity of extreme weather events. The region has witnessed a rise in

prolonged droughts, erratic rainfall, and devastating floods. The 2019-2021 drought, for instance, affected over 20 million people across Ethiopia, Somalia, and Kenya, leading to widespread food insecurity, displacement, and loss of livelihoods. The drought was followed by unprecedented floods in 2020, which displaced hundreds of thousands and caused significant damage to infrastructure and homes. These events are not isolated incidents but are becoming the new norm, with climate models predicting that such extremes will become more frequent and intense in the coming decades.

The impacts of climate change on agriculture in East Africa cannot be overstated. Agriculture is the backbone of the region's economy, employing about 70% of the population and contributing significantly to GDP. However, the sector is highly vulnerable to climate variability. Changes in rainfall patterns, coupled with rising temperatures, are already reducing crop yields and threatening food security. For example, maize production, a staple crop in the region, is expected to decline by up to 20% by 2050 due to climate-induced stresses. Similarly, coffee, one of East Africa's key export commodities, is under threat, with suitable growing areas projected to shrink significantly by mid-century. These changes not only jeopardize the livelihoods of millions of smallholder farmers but also have broader implications for national economies and global food supply chains.

Water resources, another critical

Biodiversity, too, is feeling the strain of a changing climate. East Africa is home to some of the world's most iconic wildlife, including elephants, lions, and rhinoceroses, as well as unique ecosystems such as the savannas of the Serengeti and the montane forests of the Ethiopian Highlands. These ecosystems and species are increasingly under threat as rising temperatures and shifting rainfall patterns disrupt habitats and food sources. For instance, the Great Migration of wildebeest and zebras, one of the most spectacular natural events on Earth, is being affected by changing rainfall patterns, which alter the timing and availability of grazing lands. Additionally, coral reefs along the East African coast are suffering from bleaching events due to rising sea temperatures, threatening marine biodiversity and the livelihoods of coastal communities.

Human health is another critical area where climate change is making its mark. The region is experiencing an increase in climate-sensitive diseases, such as malaria, dengue fever, and cholera. Warmer temperatures and changes in rainfall patterns are expanding the range of disease vectors, such as mosquitoes, into previously unaffected areas, leading to higher incidence rates. Furthermore, the increased frequency of extreme weather events, such as floods and droughts, is exacerbating the spread of waterborne diseases and malnutrition, particularly among vulnerable populations like children and the elderly.

In the face of these challenges, East Africa is not standing idly by. Countries in the region are increasingly

# Clashes at Nyakeyo Primary School Leave Several Injured, Including People Living with Disabilities

By: Elizabeth Angira  
@themtkenyatimes

Several people, including People Living with Disabilities (PLWDs), were injured at Nyakeyo Primary School in South Mugirango Constituency, Etago Sub-County, Kisii County, after rival youths clashed during an event.

Sub-County Police Commander Laban Omol reported that the youths, armed with crude weapons, stormed the school where County Woman Representative Dorice Donya Aburi was scheduled to distribute wheelchairs to PLWDs. One person was arrested with arrows and is currently in custody to assist the police with the investigation, while another individual was injured and taken to the hospital.

The suspect will be charged with causing a disturbance.

"The attackers used stones and sticks and pulled down the tents. I cannot

confirm the number of those injured.

We are pursuing more suspects," said Omol

Donya recounted how the goons, armed with stones, sticks, and whistles, invaded the venue and began attacking residents.

She appealed to the police to ensure that the perpetrators are brought to justice.

The lawmaker, who provided 90 wheelchairs to PLWDs, said she is accustomed to violence but will not be intimidated or deterred from serving the residents of the county.

She added that during the attack, several PLWDs and their caregivers were frightened and fled for safety, with some sustaining injuries.

The MP condemned the attack on PLWDs and urged security officers to ensure that the suspects reveal who hired them to disrupt the event.

"I have more boreholes to launch and wheelchairs to distribute to PLWDs to improve their lives.

Violence will not stop me," Donya asserted, emphasizing her commitment to serving the residents.



Kisii Woman Rep Dorice Donya issuing Wheelchairs and Tricycles to People Living with Disability at Nyakeya Primary South Mugirango. Photo /Elizabeth Angira

Reuben Migiro, Tabaka Ward Chairman for People Living with Disabilities, also condemned the incident, urging youths to respect PLWDs.

He highlighted the importance of recognizing and respecting PLWDs, stating, "When you attack people living with disabilities, you attract curs-

es. It is not our wish to be disabled."

This is the third time that the County MP's meetings have been disrupted by alleged goons.

## A Vision Of Borderless Asia



By: Muhammad Adnan

I wish Indians to peep into Lahore,  
I wish Pakistanis to sleep in Amritsar,  
I wish Lankans to visit Karachi through Bombay,  
I wish Bengalis to ring bells in Chennai;  
I wish East Punjab and West Punjab to be just Punjab,  
I wish the mingling of Ganga and Chenab,  
I wish Delhi and Lahore as twins,  
Stitching their hearts with a common pin;  
I wish for the land to be like Europe,  
Where you wander like an unidentified

chrip,  
I wish for the commoners before the partition,  
Not facing any divisional commission;  
I wish for the bright face of the Asian economy,  
Where laymen enjoy prosperity,  
I wish for love as the remedy,  
And mercy and peace as policy;  
I wish for the richness of Pakistaniness  
I wish to be valued as Indian-ness,  
I wish for Lankans to beat around the continent,  
And for Bengali rice and fish to be permanent;  
I wish to cherish the echoes in vegetable markets,  
I wish to relish the laughter of old folks in the streets,  
I wish for commoners to sing songs of joy,  
I wish for teenagers to play with mutual toys;  
I wish for the integrity of Asians around the globe,  
Standing tall and firm among a multicultural mob,  
I wish for humanity to be its religion  
And I wish for its solemnity of all regions.

# SPORTS NEWS

- PHOTOS
- SCORES
- OPINIONS
- STATISTICS
- SCHEDULES
- BREAKING NEWS



**Sports >>** \*Sandro Tonali's return for Newcastle following his 10-month ban for breaching betting rules will be an "incredible release" for the midfielder, says manager Eddie Howe.

## Tonali 'In Squad' For Cup Game As Ban Ends – Howe



Sandro Tonali. Photo/TEAMTALK MEDIA

Sandro Tonali's return for Newcastle following his 10-month ban for breaching betting rules will be an "incredible release" for the midfielder, says manager Eddie Howe.

Tonali, who joined Newcastle from AC Milan last summer for £55m, was banned by the Italian Football Federation in October for breaching rules while playing in Serie A.

The 23-year-old's ban expires on Tuesday, meaning he is eligible to play for the Magpies against Nottingham Forest in the Carabao Cup on Wednesday.

"He will definitely be in the squad," said Howe. "He is fit, he just hasn't had the match [practice] – the most important thing with the game time.

"He has done everything else – he has worked incredibly hard to

be on top of his fitness."

Tonali, who is the Magpies' second most expensive signing, made 12 appearances for Howe's side before the ban was imposed.

Asked how he will be feeling on his return, Howe said: "I imagine a range of emotions, a lot of excitement.

"When you have a long time out, you have a long time to analyse and reflect. Now it is just back to

doing what he loves. It will be an incredible release for him.

"The microscope is on everybody and it will be on him for a period of time. He understands that and we understand that. It is just about small steps.

"He has to play to his strengths and not do anything too out of the ordinary."

**BBC**

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

**Sports >>** \*Fresh guidelines for new mothers in football have been introduced by FifPro including details of how they can return to full training and elite performance.

# New Guidelines For Mums Returning To Football



TOPSHOT - France's forward #09 Eugenie Le Sommer and teammates react at the end of the Australia and New Zealand 2023 Women's World Cup quarter-final football match between Australia and France at Brisbane Stadium in Brisbane on August 12, 2023. (Photo by FRANCK FIFE / AFP).

Fresh guidelines for new mothers in football have been introduced by FifPro including details of how they can return to full training and elite performance.

Created in consultation with medical and legal professionals, they cover three main topics offering advice for players, their support teams and regulatory processes.

They offer clubs an improved insight into how to manage returning mothers and the step-by-step processes they should take in training, recovery and their return to play.

Areas addressed include breastfeeding, sleep hygiene, nutrition, mental health, methods of delivery, pelvic health and exercise programmes.

Female footballers and mothers were consulted to create the guidelines. Among them were ex-Jamaica international Cheyenne Matthews, USA World Cup winner Crystal Dunn, Germany goalkeeper Almuth Schult and Iceland midfielder Sara Bjork Gunnarsdottir, who won a claim against former side Lyon, external for failing to pay her full salary during pregnancy.

A survey by FifPro found 75% of players felt pregnancy-specific expert help was not provided by their clubs previously.

Alexandra Gomez-Bruinewoud, FifPro's senior legal counsel, believes the priority is to continue advocating for automatic contract extensions for pregnant women at

all clubs, as introduced by AC Milan earlier this month.

The average length of contract for a female professional footballer globally is currently just one year.

On the introduction of the new guidelines, mother-of-three Matthews said: "For there to be guidelines that show it's possible [to be a mum and a footballer] is important to see. It will help people understand they don't have to be separate.

"I kept my son away from training at first because I didn't want to be looked at as 'the mum'. I still wanted to be looked at as a professional."

The new guidance, she said, "eases the stress and uncertainty",

adding there will "still be things to work through" but to have this baseline is "paramount for players across the world".

She added: "The biggest question was regarding training during pregnancy. How long did it take to start training again? You want to have an idea. Having those things is so important. That was the number one question."

BBC

# SPORTS NEWS



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# SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



# Kenyan Juniors Hungry For Medals As World Under 20 Championships Begin In Peru

By: Capital Sport

## Worth Noting:

- “We have prepared well...trained well. All I now pray for is God to strengthen me so that I can get into a podium position. The coaches have trained us well and now it is time for us to deliver. That would be my greatest delight,” Jebet said.
- Echoing her teammate’s sentiments, Chepkemoi said she is eager to put into action what they have learnt in a month of training.
- “The training has gone on well and now me and my teammate are ready to go and apply what we have been taught in training. We have really worked on teamwork and are hopeful of good returns if we do everything to the letter,” the World Schools Cross Country champion said.



Team Kenya arrive in Lima for the World Under 20 Championships.

Kenya will begin their medal hunt at the World Under 20 Athletics Championships in Peru when four athletes take to the track in the men and women’s 5000 metres final, early yesterday morning.

Sheila Jebet and Mercy Chepkemoi will start things off in the women’s 5000m before the 2023 World Cross Country junior champion Ishmael Kipkurui and Andrew Kiptoo run in the men’s race.

Ahead of the competition, Jebet’s prayer is to wake up on the right side of the bed and to reach the podium.

“We have prepared well...trained well. All I now pray for is God to strengthen me so that I can get into a podium position. The coaches have trained us well and now it is time for us to deliver. That would be my greatest delight,” Jebet said.

Echoing her teammate’s sentiments, Chepkemoi said she is eager to put into action what they have learnt in a month of training.

“The training has gone on well and now me and my teammate are ready to go and apply what we have been taught in training. We have really worked on teamwork and are

hopeful of good returns if we do everything to the letter,” the World Schools Cross Country champion said.

### Poised for podium

On his part, Kipkurui is equally optimistic of a podium place at the championships in light of the ade-

quate preparations.

“We thank God for the journey mercies. We arrived safely and now our focus is on the finals. We are expectant of great returns considering the hard work we have expended in training,” the 2023 World Cross Country junior champion said.

It won’t be as easy as taking can-

dy for a child for Kipkurui and his fellow Kenyan, Andrew Kiptoo, considering the ever-lurking threat of Ethiopia and Uganda — the country’s longstanding long-distance running arch-nemeses.

It is a fact not lost on the youngster who admits they will have to be at their best.

“It will be really tough because we have the Ugandans and the Ethiopians in there. However, my teammate and I are confident in ourselves and looking forward to giving a good account in the race,” he said.

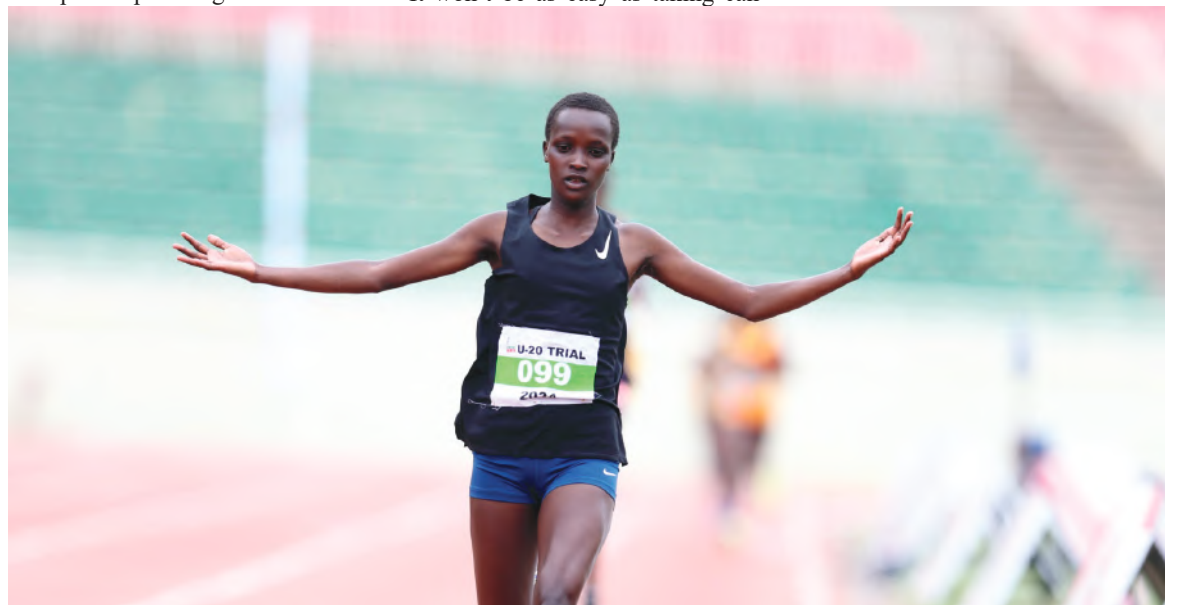
Kenya missed out on the podium in both races at the last edition of the championships in 2022 in Cali, Colombia.

The women’s race will begin at 1:30 a.m (Kenyan time) before their male counterparts take to the track 25 minutes later.

Other Kenyans in action on Day One include African champion Sara Moraa and Janet Jepkemoi who will be running in the heats of the women’s 800m.

Their male counterparts, Phaniel Kipkosgei and Kelvin Koech will be in action in the men’s 800m.

Diana Chepkemoi and Sharon Chepkemoi will be competing in the heats of the women’s 3000m steeplechase.



Mercy Chepkemoi wins the women’s 3000m at the national trials for the World Under 20 Championships. PHOTO/RAYMOND MAKHAYA