



Embracing Diversity: Promoting Social Cohesion and Cultural Understanding in Kenya

Kenya has a diverse society with minority communities adding vibrancy and depth. Yet, for too long, they have remained overlooked and undervalued, their voices muted and their rights obscured by the dominance of majority narratives.

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News>>Roaming Hyena Causes Panic In Nakuru

P. 8. Residents of Baraka estate in Nakuru are living in fear after a lone hyena was spotted roaming freely at night in several neighbourhoods.



News>>Labour CS Alfred Mutua Inaugurates Key Councils To Address Workers' Wages

P. 12. In a move aimed at stabilizing the Kenyan workers sector, Labour and Social Protection Cabinet Secretary Dr. Alfred Mutua has inaugurated two pivotal bodies that will directly influence workers' welfare.

State's New Initiative In Jua Kali Sector

The Government is developing a framework of linking certified Jua Kali Sector workforce to formal employment and business financing opportunities locally and internationally, Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua has said. The framework, which is underpinned by validation of skills and expertise of Jua Kali artisans as stipulated by the Recognition of Prior Learning Policy (RPLP) launched in March 2023, will provide a roadmap on assisting the workforce in the informal sector transition to the formal space for better pay and improved contribution to building a better economy.



Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua

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Very Rare 1928 Durant Latest Car Entry For Africa Concours d'Elegance

By: MKT Correspondent
 @themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- Concours fans will expect to see a mix of newcomer competitors and regulars together with a variety of cars and motorcycles including a number which have not appeared at the Racecourse in the past.
- They will not be disappointed as the Concours field will feature interesting cars such as the 1966 Ford Mustang entered by legendary rally driver Rob Collinge, the rare 1968 Saab 96 of Thomas Frowein and the 1937 MGTA of Paras Shah.



This rare 1928 Durant box-body vehicle entered by Sachit Shah is the the latest entry in the Concours d'Elegance to be held on September 29th at the Nairobi Racecourse.

A very rare 1928 Durant car made in America is the latest entry to be received for the 2024 Africa Concours d'Elegance entered by Sachit Shah. The event will celebrate the anniversary of the Alfa Romeo Owners Club and is the 52nd in the series. It will be held at the Nairobi Racecourse on Sunday, September 29th

The Durant Motors Cooperation was founded by Billy Durant in 1921 with the intention of creating an automotive empire which would challenge General Motors. Engines made by Continental were used and saloon car bodies were made by the Budd Company until Durant closed in 1932.

The Durant which will be driven along the judging line in front of the main Nairobi Racecourse grandstand will compete in the pre-1930 class and is probably the

only remaining example in Kenya and one of the few in Africa. Like many vehicles in Kenya in the 1930s the Concours Durant has a box body made of wood for use by passengers and to carry cargo.

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They will not be disappointed as the Concours field will feature interesting cars such as the 1966 Ford Mustang entered by legendary rally driver Rob Collinge, the rare 1968 Saab 96 of Thomas Frowein and the 1937 MGTA of Paras Shah.

Newcomer Pablo Kengara will be showing a 1970 Fiat 500F together with a 1985

Mercedes Benz W123 while Hamed Ehsani will also be participating for the first time with a 1976 Morris Minor and a 1967 Volkswagen beetle. Another newcomer is Leo

Otieno who has entered a 1971 Alfa Romeo 1750GTV which he has been restoring for six years.

The classes for sports cars and those made prior to December 1930 which are classified as vintage cars are particularly popular with spectators. The entries in these classes are assessed at the end of the afternoon prior to the prize giving session.



The overall winners tend to come from this classes and the judging keeps the full attention of the Concours.

Another decision which is always awaited with bright attention is the announce-

ment of the most elegant car and motorcycle at the Nairobi Racecourse. The winners placed at the same level as the podium prizes and are displayed together with the top three cars and motorcycles at the prize giving ceremony.

Spectators will divide their attention between the gleaming well prepared Concours cars and motorcycles and the Auto Expo area where the latest vehicle models and accessories are on show. Companies who will exhibit in this space include Inchcape Kenya, Isuzu East Africa, E-Bee Mobility, Loxea Kenya and Pipeman Manufacturers.

Editor's Desk

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Mama Judith Ongoro



MEDICAL APPEAL

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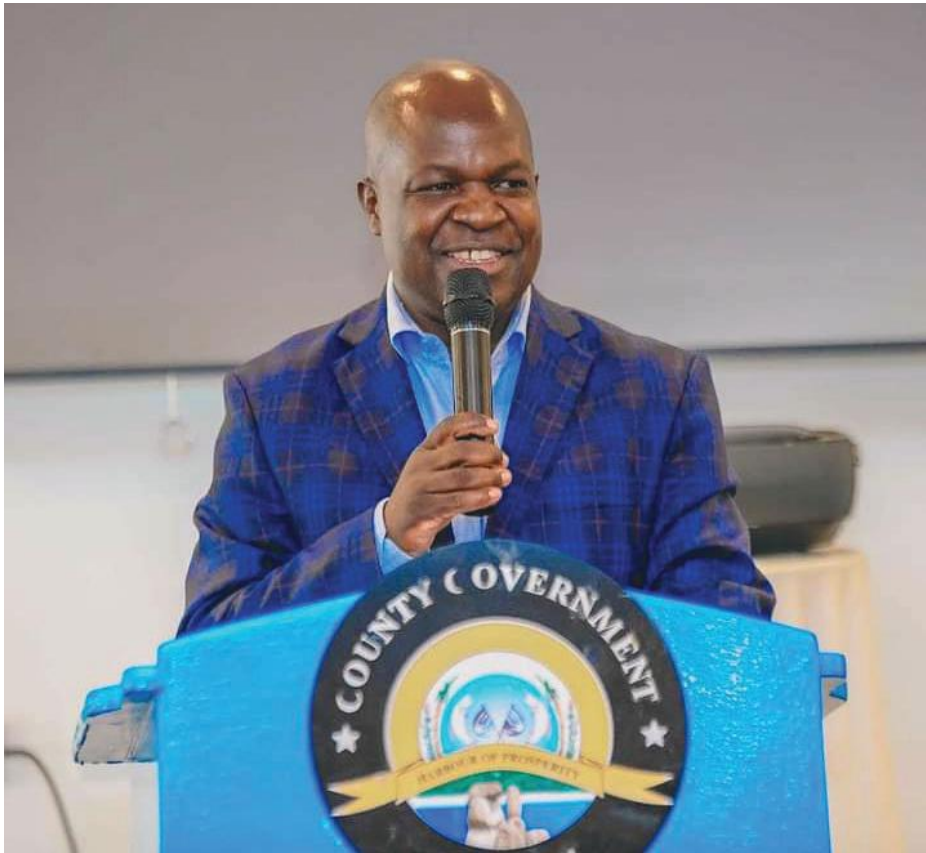
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NEWS IN BRIEF



Kisumu County releases the second county statistical abstract. The Abstract is a comprehensive compilation of demographic, social, economic, governance, and environment statistics for the county. Deputy Governor Mathew Owili emphasised the importance of accurate and comprehensive statistics in making informed development decisions at the county level. He stated that data is not just a tool but the backbone of informed decision-making and effective governance. The publication will be a cornerstone for how the county will plan, execute, and evaluate its progress as a county.



The Communication Authority of Kenya (CA) has launched an initiative to expand communication infrastructure in West Pokot County, aiming to improve interaction, peace, and security in unstable regions. The initiative, part of a government strategy, focuses on improving cellular mobile network coverage in the region, particularly in areas that require significant improvements. "We visited the region to ascertain the level of connectivity in all the sublocations on mobile connectivity, broad-pan, and television connectivity," he said. The Authority operates a Universal Service Advisory Council responsible for managing the universal service fund allocated by the government to support the connectivity of unserved and underserved populations with mobile network services for radio, television, and mobile phones in West Pokot County.

Turkana's County Department of Health and Sanitation has developed an emergency preparedness and response plan to address the potential MPOX outbreak. The plan, which was unveiled during an Mpox sensitisation meeting, was supported by Core Group Partners' Project through the International Rescue Committee. The County Health Executive, Longole Wangoris, said the county plans to establish an emergency operations centre and engage with relevant stakeholders, including the water and tourism sectors, for support in surveillance and public sensitisation. He added that it will include the need for personal protective equipment (PPE) and borrowing from previous COVID-19 plans.



The Kenya Informal Settlements Improvement Project (KISIP) has conducted an induction and training programme for the Settlement Executive Committee (SEC) and the Grievance Redress Committee (GRC) to combat gender-based violence (GBV). The two committees are trained to oversee development projects and advocate for the needs of communities in informal settlements. The training, held in Thika Municipality, focused on two settlements, Umoja and Kiang'ombe, highlighting progress in community involvement in project monitoring and addressing grievances. According to the Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA), an estimated 736 million women globally are exposed to gender-based violence (GBV) at least once in their lifetime.



Nandi Central Deputy County Commissioner Alfet Hudulu has urged residents in Nandi County to utilise government resources to advance their education dreams. Hudulu emphasised the importance of education in the current information age, as it is necessary for operating tech machines and gadgets like smartphones. The Kenyan government is committed to reducing the number of people without basic education by 2030.



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Kiambu County Residents Calls Upon Governor Wamatangi To Assent To Valuation And Rating Amendment Bill

By: Felix Njenga
@themkenyatimes

Kiambu county residents have called upon Governor Kimani Wamatangi to hasten on assenting the County Valuation and Rating amendment bill which was passed last week.

The residents had earlier faulted the valuation and Rating Act 2016 which had made it compulsory for residents owning freehold land to pay taxes failure to which a county executive committee member of finance had the power to sell land through auction or a private treaty.

According to Eric Mutura, the Speaker of the Bunge Mashinani lobby which had gone round Kiambu county to collect signatures to present a petition to compel the assembly to repeal the valuation Act 2016 while appreciating the county assembly for heeding to the residents demands called on the governor to assent to the bill as further delay was creating tensions which could soon spark heated public debate. "The MCAs passed the Valuation and Rating Amendment bill 2024 but Kiambu citizens are reading mischief in governor's delay to free our lands," he said.

According to the constitution, a Governor is required to assent to a passed Bill presented by the Speaker of the house within a period of 14 days or may refer the Bill back to the house with a memorandum outlining his reservations.

Mutura said that Kiambu citizens may have to visit the Governor's office in large numbers to question his delay on the matter.

The County Assembly rejected submissions by Kiambu county government proposing to reduce the land rates from the 0.25 percent proposed



in the Act to 0.15 percent.

The Assembly also rejected a proposal of zero rating of all freehold properties not used for commercial purposes and those less than five acres being used for domestic purposes, meaning that the owners would not pay anything.

According to Peter Wainana MCA Karuri ward who moved the amendments and presented the report on behalf of the Committee on County Planning and Urbanization said that they considered the concerns of land owners in Kiambu county who had even presented a petition to the assembly to repeal the law since it was punitive and unanimously removed the clauses

which had made their lands be ratable.

"As an assembly we have unanimously repealed the Valuation Act 2016 which saw the freehold land being ratable," Wainana said.

He said that they amended a clause which saw land owners to pay arrears dating 8 years back for lack of rates payments.

"We have passed that no land owner on freehold land should pay penalties dating back 8 years as per the previous law," he said.

He said that they also amended that the penalties to be charged for late payment of the land rate should be 10% p.a down from the previous charges of 36% p.a.

"We agreed that the 3% per month penalty on late payments of land rates on commercial land making it 36% per annum was too high and we passed into law that kiambu people will be paying charges at 10% per annum," he said.

The assembly also repealed Section 45 of the Act which gave Finance executive powers to sell land through auction or a private treaty if one fails to pay land rates.

The lobby group has since called on the county government to put into consideration allocating 1% of the county budget to civic education as it had been demanded in the petition.

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Mugwongo Family

Roaming Hyena Causes Panic In Nakuru

By: MKT Correspondent
 @themtkenyatimes

Residents of Baraka estate in Nakuru are living in fear after a lone hyena was spotted roaming freely at night in several neighbourhoods.

The wild animal is suspected to have strayed from Lake Nakuru National Park. A resident named Ann Kurgat encountered the animal on a feeder road to the Nakuru-Kisumu-Eldoret Highway while driving home at night.

She appealed to the Kenya Wildlife Service to track down the animal and translocate it to the park or elsewhere to prevent deaths.

Locals believe that failure by sand harvesters in Baruti Location to refill

mined quarries and clear bushes has attracted wild animals to residential areas.

Quarries outside protected areas have been identified as havens for hyenas, providing safe breeding and hiding places.

Nakuru Deputy County Police Commander Ezekiel Chepkwony pledged to liaise with the Kenya Wildlife Service to investigate the matter and called on residents to restrain from walking at night, especially near forests, bushes, and quarries.

The Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) has launched Operation Ondoa Fisi-2 to address rising hyena attacks.

The KWS is committed to working with authorities to address and rehabilitate abandoned quarries and ensure the safety of all residents.



Roaming Hyena

Sakaja To Appoint 11 Level 4 Hospital CEOs As City Hall Cascades Level 5 Model

By: Capital Correspondent

Nairobi Governor Johnson Sakaja has approved the appointment of 11 Chief Executive Officers to manage the city's Level 4 hospitals.

Speaking during his 34th cabinet meeting, where he chaired discussions, Sakaja emphasized that this move is aimed at enhancing service delivery in these crucial healthcare facilities.

"This new administrative model, where CEOs head our hospitals, has already proven effective in our Level 5 hospitals. Having seen the positive impact, we are now extending the same approach to our Level 4 hospitals in Nairobi," Sakaja confirmed during the session.

The decision aims to strengthen governance, operational efficiency, and service provision in Nairobi's healthcare system.

The Cabinet resolved to prioritize the hiring of seasoned professionals, following earlier deliberations about the need for improved leadership under the county's latest healthcare reform strategies.

"CEOs will be responsible for navi-

gating the complexities of healthcare, ensuring that each facility can meet modern healthcare demands," said Sakaja.

Sakaja highlighted that the decision aligns with the requirements of the Public Finance Management Act (2012) and the Facilities Improvement Financing Act (2023), which call for greater accountability and enhanced management in public health institutions.

"By appointing CEOs for these hospitals, the county aims to introduce robust governance structures that will streamline operations and improve financial oversight," he reiterated.

These leaders will also address the specific challenges faced by each hospital, with the ultimate goal of improving public health services for Nairobi's residents.

This development marks a significant step in the city's ongoing healthcare reforms, signaling a commitment to better service delivery and increased accountability.



Sakaja emphasized that this move is aimed at enhancing service delivery in these crucial healthcare facilities/City Hall

Government Linking Jua Kali Sector To Jobs And Business Financing

By: DPCS



Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua holding a multi-agency meeting at his Karen Residence, Nairobi.

Worth Noting:

- “Recognition of Prior Learning policy is a great milestone in Kenya because Juakali sector carries a bulk of our population. They are drivers of the economy. The Linkage Programme and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) policy intend to dignify their work,” said Mr Gachagua.

- He spoke during a multi-agency meeting at his Karen Residence, Nairobi, consisting of House Deputy Chief of Staff Josphat Nanok, Principal Secretaries Rosaline Njogu (Diaspora Affairs) and Idris Dakota (Cabinet Affairs) senior officials from TVET, National Industrial Training Authority (NITA), other key agencies and representatives of the Jua Kali Federation.

- The Deputy President has been spearheading formalisation of the Jua Kali Subsector under the Recognition of Prior Learning policy, for better income of the Juakali artisans.

The Government is developing a framework of linking certified Jua Kali Sector workforce to formal employment and business financing opportunities locally and internationally, Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua has said.

The framework, which is underpinned by validation of skills and expertise of Jua Kali artisans as stipulated by the Recognition of Prior Learning Policy (RPLP) launched in March 2023, will provide a roadmap on assisting the workforce in the informal sector transition to the formal space for better pay and improved contribution to building a better economy.

Under the RPLP, skilled and experienced artisans apply to designated Technical and Vocational Education Training Institutions for testing and awarding certificates attesting their competence in the specific area.

The Deputy President described the linking of Kenya’s informal industry with TVET colleges as a master-stroke programme.

Mr Gachagua added on Tuesday that linking artisans to job and business opportunities will spur the growth of the economy and dignify the sector.

He added that the Government will address financial gaps hindering entrepreneurs in Juakali industry from taking up contracts that require huge financing.

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The Deputy President has been spearheading formalisation of the Jua Kali Subsector under the Recognition of Prior Learning policy, for better income of the Juakali artisans.

In the linkages programme, NITA is expected to sensitize TVET principals to be assessors of the Juakali artisans so that individual artisans can be issued with certificates indicating the skills they possess.

The meeting was informed that the Juakali Master craftsmen will also be made assessors and some juakali worksites will become assessment centres of the persons working in informal industry.

Further, some of the Master craftsmen are expected to be converted to trainers. The exercise will be undertaken by the Informal sector transformation unit.

Mr Gachagua elaborated that the plan is also to enhance participation of the Juakali artisans in Affordable Housing Program and the Markets construction.

“Juakali people are practical. This Linkages Programme is a revolution to our economy. We need to find linkages and how to certify the the

people in the informal sector and place them to a project the Affordable Housing Program and Markets construction. This is a better way (of Government) to show its commitment to the Recognition of Prior Learning policy,” he said.

“We need to enhance the Juakali artisans’ input. There must be a linkage on how we can utilize their facilities,” said the DP.

He continued: “This is the way to revolutionize the economy to ensure the informal sector is working. We need to dignify skilled people so that they get the required papers. Let us dignify our skilled workforce by recognizing their skills and certify it. They are organized workforce and are willing to work”.

Chief Executive Officer of the Kenya National Federation of JuaKali Associations Mr Nyamai Wambua lauded the Linkage Programme saying it will create job opportunities for persons working in the informal sector.

“We are the happiest lot for this Programme and being part of the conversation. We are part of the policy. We are happy for the State agencies supporting the agenda. Through Office of the Deputy President we have the Juakali sector transformation unit. We are happy that entire government system is responding to the jua Kali sector,” said Mr Wambua.

Diaspora Affairs Principal Secretary Roseline Njogu said that once the Juakali artisans are certified the State Department will incorporate them in the Kazi Majuu Initiative.

“We will support them with mar-

ket driven needs. We want them to find working space abroad. We have engagements with foreign countries in construction sector. We want our Recognition of Prior Learning certificates to be equal and strong like those from other countries,” she said.

The Recognition of Prior Learning Policy was launched on March 22, 2023.

The meeting chaired by the Deputy President was a follow-up to Mr Gachagua’s earlier guidance that the launch delivers quantifiable impact to the informal/juakali sector workers.

President William Ruto had already directed contractors and developers engaged in Affordable Housing Programme and Market projects to sub-contract youths and jua kali artisans in construction and supply of construction products in the programme.

Representatives of the State Department for Technical and Vocational Education Training, State Department For Labour and Skill Development, State Department for MSME Development, State Department for Housing and Urban Development, Kenya National Quality Authority, National Industrial Training Authority, Technical and Vocational Education Training Authority, TVET Training Curriculum Development, Assessment and Certification Council, Micro and Small Enterprise Authority, among others were present at the meeting chaired by Mr Gachagua.

What You Tolerate Will Dominate You



By: Eric Musa
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From Christ Jesus teaching, and actually, He had taught Matthew 5 thru 7 and at the end He said, “Now you have heard my words. If you act on them you are smart. And no matter what happens you’ll stand. If you don’t act on them, you’re foolish and your house will fall.” Not, it can fall. It will fall. And it says that, “Great will be the fall of it.” So that means not only will it fall but when it falls it’s going to do some damage.

When He got finished saying that, it says, “And when it came to past when Jesus had ended these sayings the people were astonished at His doctrine.” And then it tells us why. “For He taught them as one having authority not as the Scribes.” The Scribes were basically the ones that

the people really dealt with. The Scribes would all gather and say, “Well, Rabbi So and So said this. You know that could be true but this other Rabbi says this.” They would never come to a conclusion. They were the quintessential politicians. You could never pin them down on anything and they would always change from one thing to another. It wasn’t that they were trying to do that, they just didn’t know.

But Jesus comes along and says, “Look, it’s real simple. You do my words, you’re smart. You’ll stand. You don’t do my words, you’re foolish. You’ll fall.” All of a sudden the people are saying “wow” and they were astonished at His doctrine because He taught as one who had authority. You notice that one thing about Jesus, He never went and said, “Now wait a minute. Let me go check with Jerusalem. Let me run down to the council there at Jerusalem and let’s see what they have to say.”

Now there is wise counsel and you should have counsel around you. People that you trust, that you know where they are going. You know that

they love you and that they care for you. But also that they care for God and the ministry and they know what it is going. Once you get hold of something from God and you know it’s from God and you have proven it out in the Word of God go ahead and do it.

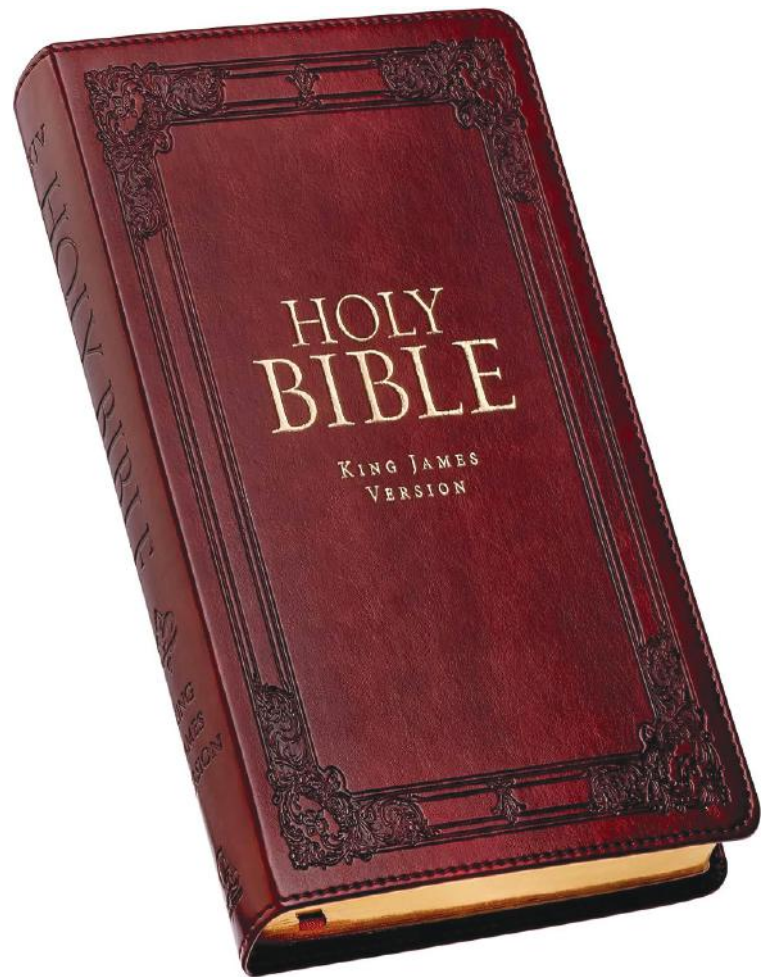
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References:

The Living Bible and lessons from Biblical inspiration books.

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



Was Auditor-At-Large Morara Impromptu Meeting At Kiawara Disrupted Or It Was A Stage-Managed Episode?



By: Joseph Mutua Ndonga
mutuandong@yaho.com



Screengrab of A fire Engine and Lawyer Morara Kebaso addressing a rally. PHOTO/Screengrab

Worth Noting:

- First, the fire engine should have stopped and fight fighters step out and be seen spraying Morara's vehicle with water. But this was not the case.
- Morara's vehicle had instead stopped but the engine was moving along Nyahururu-Nyeri highway. In addition, we never saw photos of the police or any showing confrontation and altercation.
- Besides, I can say without fear of contradiction that the person who took these photos was not smart.
- He seemed to be more of an amateur in the field of photo-shopping.
- There was also no clear photo of the crowd. This again depicted Morara in bad light. Had he been snubbed by the locals?

Two days ago, I came across a post in social media that claimed Auditor-At-Large Morara Kebaso's impromptu meeting at Kiawara in Nyeri County was disrupted. The post showed the photos of what looked like Morara addressing the area residents while atop his top-of-range vehicle and a firefighting engine that was moving with its head-lights on. I'm not saying Morara was not in Kiawara because he is a Kenyan and hence free to travel to any part of republic. However, the story of disruption of his meeting sounded like a stage-managed episode. To justify this, allow me to give two reasons. First, the fire engine should have stopped and fight fighters step out and be seen spraying Morara's vehicle with water. But this was not the case. Morara's vehicle had instead stopped but the engine was moving along Nyahururu-Nyeri highway. In addition, we never saw photos of the police or any showing confrontation and altercation. Besides, I can say without fear of contradiction that the person who took these photos was not smart. He seemed to be more of an amateur in the field of photo-shopping. There was also no clear photo of the

crowd. This again depicted Morara in bad light. Had he been snubbed by the locals? As a writer, I would not come to make a conclusion. This is because I was not there. While noting that this incident reportedly took place in the county of Nyeri, the first step I took was to seek a clarification from the Office of the area Governor Mutahi Kahiga. He responded immediately and told me 'don't believe in everything that you come across in social media. The engine was on its way to refuel and fill in water'. Well, I fully concurred with His Excellency the Governor but with all due respect I did explain to him why I opted to send the photos on his WhatsApp. The people of Kenya were known to at times fall prey to propaganda, half-truth and sometimes outright lies. We know these were some of the tricks used by Generation-Z to mobilize Kenyans to participate in their protests. At 27, Morara fall in this category and he is on record stating the job he is undertaking was meant to further the course of GenZees. One can understand why Governor Kahiga reacted with speed. Since he became the Governor, he has indeed

shown with actions that he is a strong believer in accountability, transparency and rule of law. In light of this, you would not have expected him to obstruct Morara from exposing the dead and stalled projects initiated by the current and previous governments. There is no doubt that Morara's work was drawing the attention of the current administration. In his recent interview on Citizen TV's Jeff Koinange Live (JKL), we saw President William Ruto's Spokesman Hussien Mohamed calling in to give the position of government on the matter. We do not have any problem with the Auditor-At-Large Morara Kebaso. This is because the government of President Ruto strongly believe in accountability, transparency and rule of law. He however stated some of Morara's expos'e were not based on truth. For instance, some of the stalled projects he listed had not been initiated by the current government. We, therefore, ask Morara to be liaising with the line ministries and contractors awarded to implement these development projects. This will help him get factual information. This is in terms of when the proj-

ects were started, the timelines and why they stalled. Hussien further stated: The position of President Ruto is very clear. He has repeatedly stated that his government is committed to implement the stalled projects initiated by his predecessor, Uhuru Kenyatta. President Ruto is walking the talk. In a swift response, I heard Morara saying that he was not doing his job blindly. I knew what I'm doing and I will continue to lay bare the dead and stalled projects. He would not however give a clear picture on how he was gathering and verifying the information. This is my unsolicited advise to Morara. It is good to engage and listen to all the sides. Besides civil society and other non state actors, the line ministries, Auditor General and Ethic and Anti-Corruption Commission can be of much help. Joseph Mutua Ndonga Is A Writer And Political Analyst Based In Nairobi

Labour CS Alfred Mutua Inaugurates Key Councils To Address Workers' Wages



By: Cynthia Masibo
@themkenyatimes



Labour and Social Protection Cabinet Secretary Dr. Alfred Mutua

Worth Noting:

- The General Wages Council, a body that has long been awaited by labour unions and stakeholders, is tasked with the responsibility of determining wage increases. This council, chaired by Bernard Mungata, will address wage-related delays, a problem that has persisted for more than three years. Among its first mandates is the finalization of a 6 per cent minimum wage increase, which was promised during the 2023 Labour Day celebrations but is yet to be implemented.

- Dr. Mutua, while speaking during the inauguration, emphasized the urgency of the matter, giving the council a strict deadline to act.

- “I want to look at your proposals on the minimum wage increase in the next one week to enable me to do the gazettment as soon as possible,” said the CS.

In a move aimed at stabilizing the Kenyan workers sector, Labour and Social Protection Cabinet Secretary Dr. Alfred Mutua has inaugurated two pivotal bodies that will directly influence workers' welfare.

The National Labour Board and the General Wages Council, both of which were officially gazetted last week, are expected to play crucial roles in advising on labour matters and determining workers' wages.

The General Wages Council, a body that has long been awaited by labour unions and stakeholders, is tasked with the responsibility of determining wage increases. This council, chaired by Bernard Mungata, will address wage-related delays, a problem that has persisted for more than three years. Among its first mandates is the finalization of a 6 per cent minimum wage increase, which was promised during the 2023 Labour Day celebrations but is yet to be implemented.

Dr. Mutua, while speaking during the inauguration, emphasized the urgency of the matter, giving the council a strict deadline to act.

“I want to look at your proposals on the minimum wage increase in the next one week to enable me to do the gazettment as soon as possible,” said the CS.

The council has been directed to bring all stakeholders on board to expedite the gazettment of the wage increase in the coming days.

This move is seen as a positive step toward enhancing workers' rights, especially at a time when many are grappling with the high cost of living. The 6% wage hike was initially agreed upon as part of broader efforts to cushion workers against inflation and rising costs, but its implementation has been delayed due to the lack of an active council. Now, with the formation of the General Wages Council, workers and employers alike are hopeful that these issues will be addressed promptly.

Alongside the General Wages Council, the National Labour Board, chaired by David Siele, will act as an advisory body to the Labour CS on all labour-related matters. This board will play a vital role in ensuring that

the labour sector remains harmonious and that policies enacted by the government are aligned with the needs of both workers and employers. Dr. Mutua's move to inaugurate the board is a clear sign that the government is keen on creating a balanced and fair working environment in Kenya.

In addition to these two bodies, Dr. Mutua also announced the gazettment of three other sector-specific councils: the Seafarers Wages Council, Agricultural Wages Council, and the Protective Securities Council. These councils are intended to address sector-specific wage concerns, ensuring that workers in specialized fields are not left behind in the government's efforts to regulate and improve wages.

Principal Secretary of the State Department of Labour, Shadrack Mwadime, who was also present at the inauguration, emphasized the importance of these councils in ensuring industrial peace. He pointed out that a stable labour environment is directly linked to economic growth, and these new councils would play a pivotal

role in ensuring that worker rights are respected and upheld.

“The formation of these councils will provide much-needed oversight in the labour sector. By addressing wage issues in a fair and transparent manner, we can expect a more stable and productive economy,” noted Mwadime.

As the new councils begin their work, there is optimism that they will help resolve wage disputes that have plagued the sector for years. The establishment of the General Wages Council, in particular, is seen as a milestone in ensuring that the promised wage increase for Kenyan workers becomes a reality. The councils are also expected to play a long-term role in shaping fair wage policies and ensuring that Kenya's workforce is adequately compensated, contributing to a more prosperous economy.

M-Pesa Foundation And Embu University Launch A Comprehensive TVET Programme

By: John Kariuki
 @themkenyatimes

M-PESA Foundation and University of Embu have launched a comprehensive TVET scholarship programme which seeks to benefit 1,300 youth across all 47 counties.

Application forms for cohort one are available at www.embuni.ac.ke or at select Safaricom Shops, with 7th October 2024 being set as the application deadline.

1,300 youth from 47 counties are expected to benefit from a comprehensive Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) scholarship programme by M-Pesa Foundation and the University of Embu.

The scholarships, which will fully cover all program fees and provide a monthly stipend for accommodation and upkeep, encompass vital training in specialized programs.

The programme will offer craft certificates, diplomas, and other qualifications in a wide range of courses such as cosmetology, building and construction, mobile and electron-

ic repairs, repairs of two and three wheeled vehicles, electrical installation and maintenance, advanced welding, culinary arts, and information technology.

“We are pleased to partner with the University of Embu to launch this TVET Scholarship Programme in recognition that we need to provide access to education and comprehensive training that will empower our youth to access opportunities for economic empowerment,” said Nicholas Kamunyu, Safaricom Foundation Trustee.

In the first phase, the programme will recruit an initial 400 youth targeting 10 counties including Embu, Meru, Tharaka Nithi, Nairobi, Murang’a, Nyandarua, Nakuru, Homa Bay, Nyamira, and Turkana.

To qualify, one must be between 15 and 30 years of age. Application forms are available online at www.embuni.ac.ke or at any Safaricom Shops within the 10 target counties.

“The scholarships we are launching today will provide access to a diverse range of programs which have been carefully selected to align with current market demands. Many of these skills are what we often asso-



Safaricom Foundation Trustee Nicholas Kamunyu (Left) and University of Embu Vice Chancellor Prof Daniel Mugendi during the Launch of the M-PESA Foundation University of Embu TVET Scholarship programme in Embu County.

ciate with blue-collar jobs but let us not underestimate their value. These are the foundational skills that drive industries, boost productivity, and create pathways to meaningful employment,” said Professor David Mugendi, Vice-Chancellor, University of

Embu.

As part of the launch, M-Pesa Foundation also broke ground on a series of constructions and renovations that will establish a TVET Centre of Excellence at the University and amplify the institution’s ability to provide

quality TVET education. The works will include creating facilities for phone and computer repairs, cosmetology, an automotive workshop, a cafeteria, and a Black Soldier Fly farming initiative.

British Council To Host Its Flagship New Directions Sub Saharan Africa Conference In Nairobi

By: MKT Reporter
 @themkenyatimes

The British Council yesterday announced it will for the first time host its flagship New Directions Conference to be held in Nairobi, Kenya on 24 – 26 September 2024. This is the first time the conference will be hosted in Africa. The conference is an opportunity to bring the professional language testing and learning community together to engage on challenges and trends affecting the education and assessment systems in Sub Saharan Africa and beyond.

The New Directions conference aims to showcase innovative language testing and policy work in the region and put Sub Saharan Africa scholars and practitioners on the international language learning and assessment map. The conference will explore the theme of Rethink-



ing policy and practice for English in complex linguistic landscapes. The areas of focus will include influencing assessment policy to serve multilingual communities; English and modern African identities; multilingualism and plurilingualism opportunities and challenges; and technology and language assessment and learning in Africa.

The conference will bring together over 200 participants from 18 coun-

tries and will run over two days with a packed agenda featuring high profile experts in the field of language and assessment who will cover a range of topics.

The conference will be officially opened by British Council’s deputy CEO, Kate Ewart-Biggs and the Country Director Kenya, Tom Porter alongside the new Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Director, Lucy Pearson. Plenary speakers and panellists

expected at the conference include Dr David Njengere, Kenya National Examinations Council; Prof. Leketi Makalela, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa; Prof. Barry O’Sullivan, British Council; and Dr. Harry Kuchah Kuchah, University of Birmingham; among others.

Keshav Sreedharan, Regional Director of Exams, British Council, said: “This year’s New Directions, Sub Saharan Africa conference will explore questions around what English could look like and how it will be used. We will discuss what broader competencies are necessary in a rapidly changing and digitally enabled communication landscape, and how these can be developed and assessed in the future. We will also explore the potential changes of language education policy and reform in Kenya and the wider Sub-Saharan Africa region. Additionally, the conference, will provide a platform to share global perspectives about

the future of English with partners, thought leaders, teachers and learners around the world.”

Tom Porter, Country Director, British Council Kenya, said: “The New Directions conference serves as a dynamic platform for fostering collaboration, driving innovation and developing sustainable solutions that empower educational institutions. By bringing together educators, policymakers and experts to exchange transformative ideas, we reinforce our shared commitment to creating a brighter future for education in the region. We have a longstanding partnership with the Ministry of Education and support efforts to enhance core skills assessment.”

Flames Of Despair



What caused the fire, who's to blame?
It's young lives lost in silent flame.

Anger brews within the youth,
A matchstick sparked by hidden truth.
Revenge or protest, careless play,
One strike, and all is burned away.
In every ember lies the cost,
Of futures bright and futures lost.

The fire dims a shining light,
It robs the children of their right.
To learn, to grow, to lead the way,
Yet flames take all in one cruel day.
The ashes tell a tale of woe,
Of dreams that never got to grow.

Oh, Kenya's children, full of grace,
Their future scarred by fire's face.
The lessons left unsaid, unlearned,
As school after school is burned.
A country mourns what could have been,
A loss that echoes deep within.

Let us seek to end this pain,
So no more sparks ignite in vain.
Protect the children, guard their dreams,
For brighter days than fire's gleams.
The future of a nation stands,
Within those small, yet eager hands.

By Evans Asikoyo Amubi (the poet)

In quiet halls where dreams are born,
A spark ignites in early morn.
The smoke curls up, the flames grow high,
As hope and laughter turn to sigh.
In Kenyan schools, the fires rage,
Stealing futures, page by page.

Faulty wires, old and frail,
Left unchecked until they fail.
A flicker, then a roaring blaze,
Engulfs the night, destroys the days.
The dreams of children caught in flight,
Are lost within the smoke and night.

Crowded dorms with no escape,
Unsafe doors that twist and gape.
The heat consumes, the walls collapse,
The promise of tomorrow snaps.

Exceptional Young Woman



Sana Shaharyar
Pakistan

Sana Shaharyar is a distinguished content creator whose influence extends far beyond the realm of digital media. With a robust career spanning over a decade in the IT industry, she has made a significant mark through her roles in multinational companies, her time as an on-air host, and her current work with a US-based firm, all while working remotely.

Driven by a profound understanding of women's experiences in Pakistan, particularly after marriage, Sana ventured into content creation. Her insightful approach quickly garnered widespread acclaim, establishing her as a prominent figure in the DIY community. Through

her Instagram platform (Cozynest_by_sana), she empowers women by teaching them productivity techniques and strategies to improve their mental health. Her inspiring messages and practical advice motivate millions of women daily, encouraging them to find happiness and self-sufficiency. Sana's positive attitude and supportive nature extend beyond individual empowerment. She actively contributes to the growth of small businesses, offering guidance and support to help them flourish. Recently, she delivered a compelling talk on team-building at the Agile Conference Pakistan 2024, further showcasing her expertise and leadership skills.

As a young IT enthusiast, she was a trailblazer among her peers, demonstrating a passion for technology and innovation from an early age. Hailing from the historic city of Bahawalpur, known for its royal heritage, Sana embodies the grace and wisdom associated with her lineage. Her unique content often reflects her ability to transform personal feelings and societal realities into engaging and thought-provoking narratives.

Currently based in Karachi, she balances her roles as a content creator, full-time IT professional, and mother of two with remarkable efficiency. Her time management skills are a source of inspiration for many women, who benefit from her tips shared on Instagram. Her ability to juggle various responsibilities has been highlighted in numerous media appearances and news features, further cementing her reputation as a trailblazer in both technology and content creation.

Ma Pensée



By: Tajalla Qureshi

Listen!
I thought the way I live for YOU
More possessively
More obsessively
With a longing for divinity
and belonging of sincerity
I thought the way I dream
with the muse of your beam
How I crave your breath

How I yearn for your hearth
I thought the way I grasped my words
in YOU

Glitters with my glints
Fades with my flints
Listen! I thought of YOU
As a magnificent LIGHT
mesmerizingly bright
As an orchid of lavender
ravishingly wonder
I airily worship your eyes and ears
softly with the zealously hears
I thought I endlessly near
Near your heart with a divine starch
that yearly meet and march
I speak to the airy blinks around
the ink of nights

That often eagerly invites
my divinity for you in lights
As when you click the flipping flights
I thought of you
As you ever for me and mine
Like a mate of sensuous sign
Highlights the unheated lines.

April Wind



By: Saidqulova Nozima
Uzbekistan

April wind blows suddenly,
Waves in the tongues, feelings.
Beautiful feelings without a door,
When you come, it's spring in the heart.

When the winds blow, letters again,
He spreads his leaflets everywhere.
Just a heart wound,
It is afraid of being updated.

I have many memories in the April wind,
Beautiful songs that I remember.
My tunes are played by that narrow
flute,
Covered in dust, lying aside.

The elegant expression of the April wind,
It's still that cute.
Of I can take a breath from your
happiness,
The pain in my throat is a pain without it.

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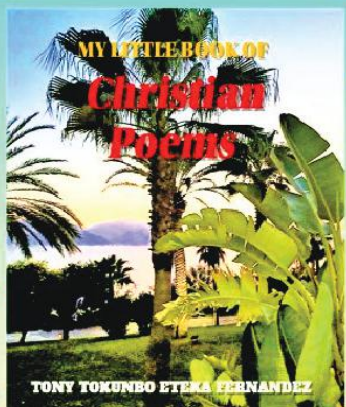
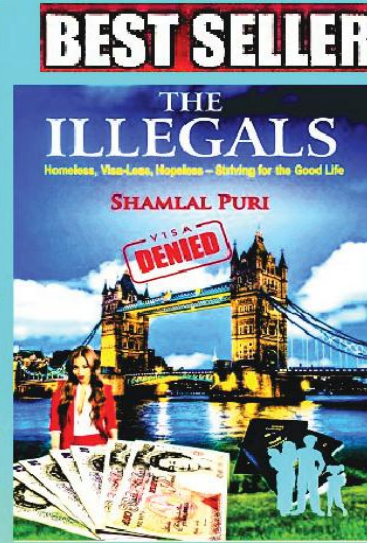
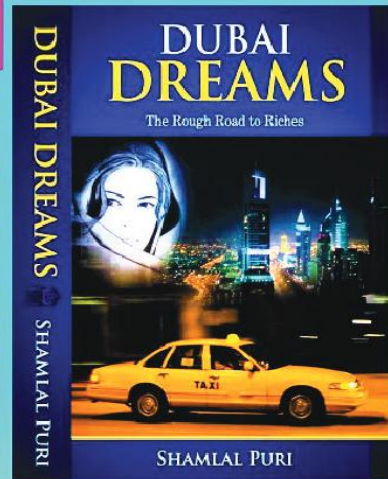
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BUSINESS

Strengthening UNEP Part Of Kenya's Foreign Policy: Environment Envoy

By: Capital Correspondent

Kenya's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Amb Gertrude Angote has said strengthening the UN agency headquartered in Kenya was at the core of the environmental diplomacy component of the country's foreign policy.

"A strengthened UNEP in Kenya and its headquarters in Nairobi is in line with Kenya's foreign policy; advancing the environmental diplomacy focal area.

"Kenya will continue to work closely with UNEP to elevate the scientific and technical discussions in Nairobi, including in the lead up to and during key environmental and sustainable development negotiations and processes," Amb Angote said.

The envoy spoke Monday at the UN Complex in Gigiri, Nairobi during her inaugural meeting with UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen.

She assured the UNEP boss that Kenya will continue pursuing ongoing diplomatic efforts to "elevate the role of UNEP as the global environmental authority within the United Nations system".

"During my tenure, and as directed by H. E. Dr. William Ruto, the President of Kenya, we shall be guided by the core values of collaboration, communication and integrity, while ensuring that Kenya remains at the forefront of global environmental governance," she said rooting for collective action and strong multilateralism.

"Kenya is ready to contribute its voice, expertise, and resources to the global environmental agenda. My priority will be to continue strengthening and elevating the Kenya-UNEP relations," Amb. Angote said noting that Kenya's commitment was in line with paragraph 88 of Rio+20 outcome.

UNEP-Kenya relations

As part of strengthening UNEP and elevating the agency's relationship with Kenya as host nation, Amb Angote said the country will strive to meet its obligations including "predictable and long-term funding".

She also underscored the establishment of a UNEP Kenya Country Office at UNON in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry as another priority area for her office.

"My office will be keen on fast-tracking the full establishment



Amb Angote spoke during her inaugural meeting with UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen/Ministry of Environment.

Worth Noting:

- As part of strengthening UNEP and elevating the agency's relationship with Kenya as host nation, Amb Angote said the country will strive to meet its obligations including "predictable and long-term funding".

- She also underscored the establishment of a UNEP Kenya Country Office at UNON in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry as another priority area for her office.

- "My office will be keen on fast-tracking the full establishment of the UNEP Kenya Country Office with proper resources including programmes, projects and staff to support Kenya's priorities on environmental and sustainable development actions," Amb Angote assured.

of the UNEP Kenya Country Office with proper resources including programmes, projects and staff to support Kenya's priorities on environmental and sustainable development actions," Amb Angote assured.

At the same time, Amb Angote said Kenya was keen on the finalization of a global plastics treaty and the establishment of the instrument's secretariat

at UNEP in Nairobi.

"The President (William Ruto) has made Kenya's position clear that the Secretariat of the Plastics Instrument should be hosted at UNEP in Nairobi. Kenya will continue to work with UNEP member states on this matter.

"A great first step is the upcoming joint side event by Kenya and UNEP on the margins of the 79th Session of

the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York in September 2024.

"H.E. Dr. William Ruto will use that opportunity to call for support for the establishment of the Secretariat of the convention including its funding and operationalization," Amb Angote concluded.



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Love Gardens	KAJIADO	FROM AS LOW AS Kes.950,000	Achievers Paradise Phase 2	NGONG	FROM AS LOW AS Kes.1.995M
Ushindi Gardens	NAKURU	FROM AS LOW AS Kes.1.095M	Achievers Business Park	NGONG	FROM AS LOW AS Kes.3.95M
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Embracing Diversity: Promoting Social Cohesion And Cultural Understanding In Kenya



By: Odhiambo Jerameel Kevins Owuor
@themtkenyaintimes



Worth Noting:

- Innovative approaches to alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms can also play a pivotal role in enhancing access to justice for minority communities. By embracing customary and traditional justice systems, mediation practices, and restorative justice models, Kenya can provide avenues for resolving disputes in a manner that is culturally sensitive and respects the values and traditions of diverse communities.

- These ADR mechanisms not only alleviate the burden on formal court systems but also foster social cohesion and promote healing within minority groups.

- Moreover, Kenya must undertake a comprehensive review of its existing laws and policies

Kenya has a diverse society with minority communities adding vibrancy and depth. Yet, for too long, they have remained overlooked and undervalued, their voices muted and their rights obscured by the dominance of majority narratives. As Kenya strides towards a more inclusive and equitable future, the pursuit of justice and the protection of minority rights have emerged as paramount imperatives, demanding a radical shift in our collective consciousness and a resolute commitment to upholding the principles of equality and non-discrimination.

Minority groups in Kenya, whether defined by ethnicity, religion, language, or cultural identity, have long faced systemic marginalization and inequalities that permeate every facet of their existence. From limited access to education and healthcare to disproportionate representation in decision-making processes, the barriers to their full participation and empowerment are multifaceted and deeply entrenched. This marginalization not only violates their fundamental human rights but also erodes the very fabric of a just and inclusive society.

To confront this injustice, Kenya must embark on a transformative journey, one that reimagines the concept of access to justice through the lens of minority rights. This journey demands a comprehensive overhaul of the legal and institutional frameworks, ensuring that they not only acknowledge the unique challenges faced by minority communities but also actively work to dismantle the structural barriers that impede their access to justice.

One groundbreaking approach lies

in the creation of specialized legal aid clinics and community-based paralegal programs tailored to the specific needs of minority groups. By fostering partnerships between legal professionals, civil society organizations, and grassroots movements, these initiatives can provide culturally sensitive legal assistance, facilitate the documentation of human rights violations, and empower minority communities to navigate the complexities of the justice system.

Furthermore, Kenya must prioritize the representation and participation of minorities within the legal profession and the broader justice sector. By actively recruiting and supporting individuals from underrepresented communities to pursue careers in law, judiciary, and law enforcement, the nation can cultivate a more diverse and inclusive legal landscape that reflects the richness of its people. This diversity not only enhances the credibility and legitimacy of the justice system but also ensures that the unique perspectives and lived experiences of minorities are duly considered in the administration of justice.

Innovative approaches to alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms can also play a pivotal role in enhancing access to justice for minority communities. By embracing customary and traditional justice systems, mediation practices, and restorative justice models, Kenya can provide avenues for resolving disputes in a manner that is culturally sensitive and respects the values and traditions of diverse communities. These ADR mechanisms not only alleviate the burden on formal court systems but also foster social cohesion and pro-

mote healing within minority groups.

Moreover, Kenya must undertake a comprehensive review of its existing laws and policies, identifying and addressing provisions that perpetuate discrimination or fail to adequately protect the rights of minority communities. This process demands extensive consultation and active engagement with minority representatives, ensuring that their voices are heard and their concerns are addressed in the formulation of inclusive and equitable legal frameworks.

The role of the judiciary in upholding minority rights and ensuring access to justice cannot be overstated. As the guardians of the rule of law, judges and legal practitioners must embrace a progressive and rights-based approach to jurisprudence, interpreting laws in a manner that upholds the principles of equality and non-discrimination. This involves actively challenging discriminatory practices, issuing landmark rulings that affirm the rights of minority communities, and serving as a bulwark against oppression and injustice.

Additionally, the judiciary must actively engage in judicial activism, challenging unjust laws and policies that perpetuate the marginalization of minority groups or curtail their fundamental freedoms. By issuing rulings that prioritize substantive equality over formal equality, the judiciary can address the systemic inequalities and structural barriers faced by minority communities, ensuring that the law serves as an instrument of empowerment rather than oppression.

Crucially, the pursuit of access to justice for minority communities must be accompanied by a concerted

effort to promote cultural understanding and social cohesion. This involves fostering intercultural dialogues, promoting education on diversity and inclusion, and challenging the insidious narratives of prejudice and discrimination that pervade societal attitudes. By embracing the richness of Kenya's diversity and celebrating the contributions of minority communities, the nation can cultivate an environment of mutual respect and understanding, laying the foundation for a truly just and equitable society.

Furthermore, the empowerment of minority communities must extend beyond the realm of legal and institutional reforms. It necessitates a holistic approach that addresses the intersecting challenges of poverty, limited access to education and healthcare, and economic marginalization. By investing in the socio-economic development of minority communities, Kenya can create an enabling environment that fosters their participation and leadership in all spheres of society, ensuring that their voices are amplified and their rights are protected.

The journey towards realizing the full potential of access to justice and upholding the rights of minorities in Kenya is not without its challenges. It demands a unwavering commitment from all stakeholders – the government, civil society, legal professionals, and the general public – to confront deep-rooted biases, challenge entrenched power structures, and embrace the transformative potential of diversity and inclusion.

Yet, in the face of these challenges, Kenya stands at a pivotal moment, a moment where the pursuit of justice and the protection of minority rights are not mere aspirations but moral and legal imperatives. By unraveling the tapestry of injustice and weaving a new narrative of equality, Kenya can emerge as a beacon of hope, a shining example of a nation that embraces the richness of its diversity and upholds the inalienable rights of all its people, regardless of their minority status. In doing so, Kenya will not only fulfill its constitutional obligations but also unlock the boundless potential of its people, fostering an environment where innovation thrives, where diversity is celebrated, and where the pursuit of justice is a shared responsibility, woven into the very fabric of society.

The writer is a lawyer and legal researcher



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Engaging ASAL Leaders Is Key To Unlocking The Potential Of Kenya's Drylands

By: **James Kilonzo Bwire**

The disappointment expressed by Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua regarding the low turnout of elected leaders from Arid and Semi-Arid Land (ASAL) counties at a critical meeting underscores a pressing issue in Kenya's governance and development strategy. The ASAL regions, which constitute over 80% of the country's land mass and house approximately 16 million people, have historically faced marginalization and underdevelopment. This meeting was intended to address pressing issues such as water scarcity, food insecurity, and infrastructure development, yet only a handful of leaders attended. This lack of engagement from local leaders is not merely a missed opportunity; it reflects deeper systemic issues that have long plagued the ASAL areas.

For decades, ASAL regions have been characterized by a narrative of low potential, often sidelined in favor of more resource-rich areas. This perception has been reinforced by national policies that prioritize investment in high-potential regions, leaving ASAL communities to grapple with poverty, inadequate infrastructure, and limited

access to basic services. The 1965 Sessional Paper on African Socialism, which advocated for investment based on potential returns, exemplifies the historical neglect of these crucial areas. However, it is increasingly recognized that Kenya cannot achieve its development goals without integrating the ASAL regions into the national development framework.

The establishment of the State Department for Development of the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (SDDAAS) and the National Drought Management Authority marks a significant shift in acknowledging the importance of ASAL development. These institutions aim to create a structured approach to addressing the unique challenges faced by these regions. Yet, the success of these initiatives hinges on the active participation of local leaders who can advocate for their constituents and ensure that development policies are effectively implemented.

One notable example of successful collaboration between national and county governments is the Frontier Counties Development Council (FCDC), which has worked to promote joint investment and development initiatives across several ASAL counties.

This model demonstrates the potential for collective action to address shared challenges, such as climate resilience and economic development. However, for such initiatives to thrive, local leaders must be fully engaged and committed to the development agenda.

To truly unlock the potential of ASAL regions, it is essential that national and county governments work in tandem to implement comprehensive and coordinated development strategies. This includes strengthening policy frameworks that support ASAL development, promoting private sector investment through incentives, and investing in climate-smart agriculture and livestock value chains. Additionally, developing climate-resilient infrastructure is crucial for improving connectivity and access to markets, which can significantly enhance economic opportunities for ASAL communities.

Moreover, fostering social and cultural integration among communities in ASAL regions is vital for building cohesive societies that can effectively advocate for their needs. The historical marginalization of these areas has often led to political disorganization and a lack of representation. By empowering local leaders and communities to

take an active role in decision-making processes, the government can help dismantle the barriers that have hindered ASAL development.

The disappointment expressed by DP Gachagua serves as a wake-up call for all stakeholders involved in the development of ASAL regions. It is imperative that local leaders recognize the importance of their participation in national dialogues and development initiatives. Engaging with the national government is not only a responsibility but also an opportunity to advocate for the specific needs of their constituents.

In addition to political engagement, there is a pressing need for investment in education and capacity building within ASAL communities. Many local leaders lack the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively advocate for their regions. Training programs that focus on governance, resource management, and sustainable development can empower these leaders to make informed decisions and push for necessary changes.

Furthermore, the role of civil society organizations cannot be overstated. These organizations can facilitate dialogue between communities and government, ensuring that the voices of the

marginalized are heard. By collaborating with local leaders, civil society can help bridge the gap between the government and ASAL communities, fostering a more inclusive development process.

In conclusion, the path to unlocking the potential of Kenya's ASAL regions lies in fostering stronger collaboration between national and county governments, as well as empowering local leaders to take an active role in the development process. By prioritizing the needs of ASAL communities and investing in sustainable development initiatives, Kenya can create a more inclusive and prosperous future for all its citizens. The time for action is now, and it is essential that all stakeholders commit to a shared vision of development that encompasses the vast potential of the ASAL regions. Only through concerted efforts can we hope to transform these historically marginalized areas into vibrant contributors to Kenya's national development.

James Kilonzo Bwire is a Media and Communication practitioner.

Kenyan Politics Mourns The Loss Of Simon Ogari: A Legacy Of Service And Dedication

By: **James Kilonzo Bwire**

The passing of former Bomachoge Chache MP Simon Ogari at the age of 68 has left a significant void in Kenyan politics. Ogari, who served from 2008 to 2017 as a member of the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), was known for his unwavering commitment to his constituents and his close ties with opposition leader Raila Odinga.

Ogari died at his home in Karen, Nairobi, early on September 10, 2024, reportedly after a long illness. His contributions to the political landscape were profound, as he was recognized for his dedication to addressing the needs of his constituents and advocating for regional development.

He began his political career after winning a by-election in 2009, defeating the late Joel Onyancha. Subsequently, he was appointed as the Transport Assistant Minister in the Grand Coalition government and

later served as Assistant Minister for Trade and Information and Communications. His tenure was marked by significant legislative initiatives aimed at improving infrastructure and public services in his constituency.

Senator Richard Onyonka, a personal friend and colleague, expressed deep sorrow, stating, "He was a polite, kind, and selfless man who was simple to a fault. His legacy of dedicated service to the people of Bomachoge will remain a guiding example for all of us in leadership."

Nominated Senator Esther Okenyuri also mourned his loss, highlighting his remarkable leadership and the profound humility with which he served. "He touched many hearts throughout his life," she noted.

Ogari's death has prompted an outpouring of tributes from across the political spectrum, reflecting the respect he garnered during his tenure. Leaders from the Gusii region have particularly expressed their con-



lences, emphasizing the impact he had on local governance and community development.

As the Kenyan political community mourns this loss, discussions about memorial arrangements are under-

way. Ogari's legacy of compassion, dedication, and public service is expected to inspire future leaders in the region. Further updates on memorial plans will be provided as they become available.

James Kilonzo Bwire is a Media and Communication Practitioner.

The Illusion Of Power: A Deep Dive Into The Powerlessness Of Deputy Governors In Kenya



By: Midmark Onsongo
@themtkenyatimes



Former health CS Susan Nakhumicha with deputy governors Mathews Owili (Kisumu) and Ayub Savula (Kakamega) at Zipline distribution center in Chemelil, Kisumu county. Photo | Courtesy.

Worth Noting:

- One of the most glaring examples of the powerlessness of deputy governors is the case of Polycarp Igathe, the deputy governor of Nairobi County under Governor Mike Sonko. After assuming office in 2017, Igathe resigned less than a year later, citing frustrations in his working relationship with Governor Sonko.
- He openly admitted that he could not earn the trust of the governor, who was notorious for micro-managing county affairs and sidelining his deputy. Igathe's resignation highlighted a critical issue: deputy governors are often at the mercy of their bosses, with little room to operate independently. Despite being second in command, Igathe was rendered powerless, unable to influence key decisions or steer the county in any meaningful direction.

The role of deputy governors in Kenya has often been seen as one of significant authority, given their position as the second-in-command in county governments. However, over the years, it has become increasingly evident that deputy governors wield little actual power, often being reduced to ceremonial roles with minimal influence on county governance. This lack of power stems from various factors, including constitutional ambiguities, political maneuvering, and a lack of clear roles. Numerous examples from different counties illustrate this powerlessness, shedding light on the ineffectiveness of the position and questioning whether deputy governors truly serve the counties or are simply political ornaments.

When the 2010 Constitution of Kenya was enacted, it introduced devolved governments in the form of counties, creating a two-tier system of government aimed at decentralizing power and resources. Each county was to be headed by a governor, with a deputy governor as the automatic running mate. This constitutional arrangement suggested that the deputy governor would have substantial influence, sharing responsibilities with the governor and ensuring continuity in governance. However, the constitution failed to clearly define the roles of deputy governors, leaving their duties largely at the discretion of the governors. In practice, this has led to deputy governors being sidelined, with many finding themselves excluded from key decision-making processes and lacking the authority to initiate or implement policies.

One of the most glaring examples of the powerlessness of deputy governors is the case of Polycarp Igathe, the deputy governor of Nai-

robi County under Governor Mike Sonko. After assuming office in 2017, Igathe resigned less than a year later, citing frustrations in his working relationship with Governor Sonko. He openly admitted that he could not earn the trust of the governor, who was notorious for micro-managing county affairs and sidelining his deputy. Igathe's resignation highlighted a critical issue: deputy governors are often at the mercy of their bosses, with little room to operate independently. Despite being second in command, Igathe was rendered powerless, unable to influence key decisions or steer the county in any meaningful direction.

Another prominent example is the case of Dr. Mandu Mandu, the former deputy governor of Lamu County, who resigned in 2019. Dr. Mandu's resignation was triggered by his complete exclusion from the county's decision-making processes. He claimed that he had been reduced to a mere figurehead, with Governor Fahim Twaha handling all affairs without consulting him. Dr. Mandu lamented that despite being elected alongside the governor, he was sidelined and left without any clear responsibilities. This scenario is not unique to Lamu County, as deputy governors across the country have raised similar concerns about being left out of crucial county matters and being treated as spectators rather than active participants in governance.

A recurring theme in the powerlessness of deputy governors is their lack of legal authority. Unlike governors, who have specific roles outlined in the constitution, deputy governors are left without a defined mandate. Their primary role is to assume the governor's position in the event of a vacancy or incapac-

itation, but this rarely happens. For the most part, they are left waiting in the wings, only to be called upon when the governor is unavailable. This lack of clear duties not only limits their influence but also creates a situation where they are entirely dependent on the governor's goodwill. If a governor chooses to ignore or sideline the deputy, there is little recourse for the latter. Consequently, many deputy governors are left powerless, unable to fulfill their political or administrative ambitions.

The situation in Murang'a County further illustrates the fragility of the deputy governor's position. In 2019, Deputy Governor James Kamau publicly expressed his frustrations over being sidelined by Governor Mwangi Wa Iria. Kamau claimed that he was completely excluded from county affairs and decision-making processes, with the governor running the county unilaterally. Despite his constitutional role, Kamau had no influence on policy or administrative decisions. His plight echoed the experiences of many other deputy governors who have found themselves reduced to powerless positions, even as they hold ostensibly high-ranking offices.

Additionally, political dynamics often exacerbate the powerlessness of deputy governors. Many are selected as running mates not for their expertise or leadership abilities but as a means of fulfilling political alliances or balancing ethnic representation. Once the election is won, governors frequently see no need to engage their deputies in governance, viewing them as expendable political assets rather than partners. This dynamic can lead to strained relationships, where deputy governors are left with no meaningful role beyond attending ceremonial functions

or representing the governor in minor capacities.

The powerlessness of deputy governors has become so pervasive that many have opted to resign rather than continue in their marginalized roles. This trend raises critical questions about the relevance of the position. If deputy governors are consistently excluded from governance and lack the authority to influence county affairs, what purpose do they serve? The position, as it stands, appears to be more of a political formality than a functional office. This has led to calls for constitutional amendments to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of deputy governors, ensuring that they have real authority and a meaningful role in county governance.

Beyond constitutional reforms, there is also a need for a cultural shift in how governors perceive and treat their deputies. Governors must recognize that deputy governors are not political rivals but essential partners in delivering services to the people. By sidelining their deputies, governors not only undermine the spirit of devolution but also weaken the overall effectiveness of county governments. Collaborative leadership, where governors and their deputies work together as a team, would ensure that county governments are more inclusive and effective in addressing the needs of their constituents.

The powerlessness of deputy governors in Kenya is a stark reality that has persisted since the inception of devolved governments. Examples such as Polycarp Igathe in Nairobi, Dr. Mandu Mandu in Lamu, and James Kamau in Murang'a highlight the difficulties faced by deputies in asserting their authority and contributing meaningfully to governance. The lack of clear constitutional roles, coupled with political dynamics and the governors' reluctance to share power, has rendered the position largely ceremonial. To address this issue, there is a pressing need for legal reforms and a shift in the political culture to empower deputy governors and ensure that they play an active role in county governance. Until such changes are made, the office of the deputy governor will remain an illusion of power, offering little more than a title without the corresponding authority.

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Sports >> *Former international Elijah Onsika has challenged Harambee Stars coach Engin Firat to take the blame for the team's 0-0 draw against Zimbabwe in their group opener of the 2025 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) qualifiers.

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Kenya Will Not Qualify For AFCON In Morocco With Engin Firat In Charge, Says Elijah Onsika

By: **Louis Hobbs**

Former international Elijah Onsika has challenged Harambee Stars coach Engin Firat to take the blame for the team's 0-0 draw against Zimbabwe in their group opener of the 2025 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) qualifiers.

Harambee Stars went into the Group J fixture as favourites having not lost to Zimbabwe in the last three meetings in all competitions. The latest clash between the two nations was during the 24th edition of the COSAFA Cup on July 2nd, 2024, where Kenya, who were taking part as a guest team, won 2-0 in South Africa.

Ahead of the game, Firat was missing the services of key players owing to injuries among them lead striker and captain Michael Olunga, who had scored a hat-trick when Kenya beat Zimbabwe 3-1 in a Four Nation tournament held in Malawi in March, defenders Daniel Anyembe, Zak Vyner, midfielder Collins Sichenje, winger Ayub Timbe and striker Masoud Juma.

Firat's problems were compounded further after defender Johnstone Omurwa, pulled out of the game. The former Moldova coach dropped regular goalkeeper Patrick Matasi to the bench with Bandari's Bryne Omondi starting, while the defence revolved around Alphonse Omija, Erick Ouma, Joseph Okumu, and Sylvester Owino.

Dundee United player Richard Odada led the midfield role assisted by Anthony Akumu, Rooney Onyango, Austin Odhiambo while Duke Abuya and Eric Johana took up the striking role. However, Kenya looked a depleted side against the Warriors lacking the finishing power.

Blame Coach Engin Firat for Zimbabwe's Poor Display

An agitated Onsika questioned Firat's choice for the striking role saying had the Turkish fielded an outright striker, Kenya should have easily bagged maximum points against the Warriors.

Despite having three strikers at his disposal for the matchday One - St. Mirren forward Jonah Ayunga, FKF Premier League Golden Boot winner Benson Omalla, and John Avire - Firat went for midfielders Abuya and

Johana to lead the line, with only Avire coming into the game the 68th minute to replace Johana.

"Kenya was not aggressive, Eric (Ouma) was doing the runs, but no one was there at the centre to finish his crosses, they lacked that spirit of winning and no co-ordination from mid upfront, we need a serious coach, you can't call the likes of Jonah (Ayunga) all the way from Europe and bench him," Onsika told Sports-Boom.com.

"Firat is just a cruel coach, who doesn't understand what he wants. How can he play 90 minutes of football without a striker? We all know Olunga was out (owing to injury), so why bench Benson (Omalla), John (Avire), Jonah (Ayunga)? This was their opportunity to prove what they have in the absence of Olunga, why would he (Firat) call up three strikers and use midfielders instead?"

Onsika continued: "Firat is afraid of losing, he better get a draw than losing but how will this help Kenya? He does not want to take chances, he doesn't want to play a striker, why use a false number nine when you have three fit strikers on the bench? I am afraid if this is the game plan for the next qualifying matches, then Kenya should forget playing AFCON in Morocco."

Onsika further faulted Kenya's technical bench for lacking a Plan B saying they never tried to change their formation of play throughout the game despite realising it was difficult to get past Zimbabwe.

"The mindset was never set, this was a home match away from home, the coach and the technical team do not have an idea of how offensive has evolved, I didn't see any plan B or C in change of formation to win the match, the team was very predictable in the attack, they lacked the venom to press for goals, they lacked creativity, very wasteful style of play," added Onsika, who played for Harambee Stars in the late 80s and 90s.

"Our striking force was very blunt and most of the game was played on our side meaning we were afraid of Zimbabwe, we did not want to take them (Zimbabwe) head on, we gave them room to dominate us and never

tried to shoot from far."

Onsika explained why the draw against Zimbabwe will complicate matters for Kenya in the qualification campaign.

"Zimbabwe was a must win game but now we will start to use calculators when the group matches reach the penultimate stage because of our own undoing, we didn't deserve a draw, good fielding (with players in the squad) could have given us a good result," offered Onsika.

Kenya Should Stop Over Relying on Michael Olunga

Onsika believes Harambee Stars have put too much faith in Olunga, who plays for Al Duhail SC in the Qatar Stars League, forgetting they have other strikers, who can come in and do the job of scoring goals.

"We over rely too much on Olunga to score goals and forget we have other players who can equally step in. We need to look for a clinical finisher, who can step up when someone like Olunga is missing, the players we have in the squad also need to step up and take responsibility if Olunga is not playing," said Onsika.

"Kenya needed to make correct forward passes, against Zimbabwe the game started well but as it progressed, one would really guess that it was to end with a barren draw because Harambee Stars wasn't good in attacking like Zimbabwe."

Firat Should Stop Trying Players in Competitive Matches

Onsika sent a passionate appeal to Firat to stop using Harambee Stars as a training base for non-starters and especially fielding them during competitive matches.

"Firat has been here for long (for as long as I can't remember), he has received all the support needed from FKF, the government and even the fans, he should stop these a bit of trying players during competitive matches and have his first eleven team," said Onsika. "The time of using Harambee Stars to train players is way gone. This is a national team that deserves quality, I don't say new players should not be accommodated to the squad, no, what I am saying, let us make sure we select the best

and stick with them.

"Nowadays, it is even difficult for Kenyans to name their starting XI ahead of any given game because you don't know what Firat has in store for you. You may think Patrick (Matasi) will start the game, but when the line-up is out, you see another name on the list. If Firat wants to succeed with this team, he should work out to have his first team."

With Cameroon edging out Namibia 1-0 in the other Group J match, Onsika was asked about Kenya's prospects of getting a win against the Brave Warriors.

"Our game against Zimbabwe was a big joke and if we play like this against Namibia, then they will end up beating us, we will lose and may not even score," said Onsika.

"How do you field a squad full of midfielders without a striker and expect a positive result? It is not possible and can never work. For us to beat Namibia, we must start an outright striker, we better start Ayunga and maybe introduce Avire in the second half or start Omalla and Ayunga.

"Firat has quality players at his disposal all he needs to do is to use them properly. Remember Cameroon is somewhere waiting for us, we cannot win any match if we play like we did against Zimbabwe, we need to lower our expectations, but if the coach changes tact and fields players in their positions, and goes for the best line-up, then we may have hope of qualifying for the AFCON."

Onsika concluded: "Kenya's final third needs improvement, they lacked creativity against Zimbabwe, the technical bench should also improve, they lacked ideas to change the format despite Zimbabwe dominating us." Kenya have already arrived in South Africa in readiness for their matchday two fixture against the Brave Warriors at Orlando Stadium on Tuesday, September 10.

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Sports >> *Second half goals from John Avire and Duke Abuya were all Kenya's Harambee Stars needed as they beat Namibia 2-1 at the Orlando Stadium in Johannesburg

Harambee Stars Clobber Namibia In Jo'burg To Stabilize AFCON '25 Hunt



John Avire celebrates his goal with Jonah Ayunga. PHOTO/Harambee Stars/X

Second half goals from John Avire and Duke Abuya were all Kenya's Harambee Stars needed as they beat Namibia 2-1 at the Orlando Stadium in Johannesburg to put their 2025 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) hopes steady after two matches.

Deon Hotto scored a last gasp freekick, but it was too little too late as Kenya had already sealed the win.

With the win, Stars move top of Group J ahead of Cameroon, who played to a 0-0 draw with Zimbabwe in the other group match played in Kampala.

A better second half performance saw Stars tear down the Brave

Warriors, as they moved to four points, and potentially top of Group J.

Avire broke the deadlock with a sumptuous freekick before a textbook counter attack saw Abuya slot in the second with 14 minutes left to seal the victory away from home.

Stars were not at their best in the opening 45 minutes as they struggled to create an effort on target. The closest they came to goal was when Avire hang in the air to connect to an Abuya cross from the left, but his effort rose way over the bar.

On the contrary, Namibia were more offensive and inside the

opening 10 minutes, Prince Tjueza and Hotto had worked Bryne Omondi in the Kenyan goal with shots that the latter handled well.

They also came close off a freekick, Omondi doing well to put a fingertip to Tjueza's well curled effort for a fruitless corner.

In the second half, Stars started better and were rewarded when Avire curled home a brilliant freekick from the edge of the box after Abuya had been fouled at the edge of the box.

The Namibians put in a concerted effort to try and rally back, but Kenya's defense line was hawkeyed to ensure they kept the potent attackline of Hotto, Tjueza

and Peter Shalulile at bay.

And, off a brilliant piece of counter attacking play, Stars made it 2-0 in the 76th minute. A corner was well defended into the path of Eric 'Marcelo' Ouma on the left. The Poland-based defender turbo-charged past his marker before slashing a low cross that Abuya duly turned home.

Namibia finally got one back in the 95th minute when Hotto curled a freekick from distance, but it proved to be the last kick of the game.

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Nasir: The Gentleman Bus Conductor And His Unseen Grandeur



By: MUHAMMAD ADNAN
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Nasir

Worth Noting:

o Another quality that distinguished him in this profession was that he never responded harshly to his seniors. He never abused or rebuked them; instead, he always showed regard, love, and respect to both his friends and foes. His utterances were mild and sweet. He was a kind man who created space and peace for the solace of passengers. His self-esteem and unorthodox approach showcased his radicalism among his fellow beings.

o He was a man who I often thought deserved a profession higher than being a bus conductor.

• During our journeys, he often displayed his humanistic vision. He knew the professions of all the passengers who traveled daily on his bus and managed accordingly, reserving seats that best suited different professionals.

Nasir was known for his polite, lovely, and lively behavior among his fellow bus conductors. He had vast experience in this field and had traveled extensively through Punjab, Baluchistan, Sindh, and Azad Kashmir—a region of occupied Kashmir often regarded as the bone of contention between Pakistan and India. This exploration made him unique and thought-provoking among his peers. I met him during my university teaching days when I was teaching at the University of Chenab, Gujrat.

I noticed and learned new things from his generosity, purity, clarity, and rare qualities. His generosity was exemplary. Most of the time, I couldn't have breakfast early in the morning, but he would often guess this and bring me a cup of coffee or tea. His smile was meticulous and heartwarming as he offered me a cup of tea with grace. The charm on his face seemed to sparkle whenever he shared something or served me during the bus ride. I couldn't help but think, "What a delightful and soulful being God has placed in such a smart body." He was like a beautiful poem, one I often recall and recite during my quiet moments. I

would often ask him, "Nasir, how do you always know?" He would reply, "Sir G, I have wandered the world. Now, I have the ability to articulate what is what and who is who." I was surprised at his response.

Another quality that distinguished him in this profession was that he never responded harshly to his seniors. He never abused or rebuked them; instead, he always showed regard, love, and respect to both his friends and foes. His utterances were mild and sweet. He was a kind man who created space and peace for the solace of passengers. His self-esteem and unorthodox approach showcased his radicalism among his fellow beings.

He was a man who I often thought deserved a profession higher than being a bus conductor.

During our journeys, he often displayed his humanistic vision. He knew the professions of all the passengers who traveled daily on his bus and managed accordingly, reserving seats that best suited different professionals. As an observer, I noticed many times that he had a compassionate spirit. After a few days of traveling, I interacted

with him, and he began to reveal his diverse experiences. He shared that he had lived in Saudi Arabia, where he performed Umrah and Hajj many times, though he never boasted about this in his community. He had extensive knowledge about the sacred pilgrimages in Saudi Arabia, knowing each corner where pilgrims go and are blessed by the holy relics. I was amused by how much he knew and how simply he portrayed it.

Moreover, he was a devoted and fanatic fan of Imran Khan. He would often mention Imran Khan as if the man had become a cult figure for him. He had great respect for Khan, frequently exclaiming "Khan, Khan, Khan." Although he had only completed secondary school, he loved following news about Khan and adored his photos. He often shared his admiration in ways that clearly reflected the enigmatic and mystical character of Khan among the lower and middle classes of Pakistan. He knew all about Khan's Peshawari chappal, watch, tasbih, sunglasses, white robe, and agile gestures. His love for Khan was well-known among his peers, shopkeepers, and hotel owners, who were aware of his

passion for catching even a glimpse of Khan on television. During Khan's jail days, Nasir was deeply grieved and hoped for a miracle for his leader. I often thought of him as Mangu from Sadat Hasan Manto's story "The New Constitution"—hoping against hope for Khan's release so he could once again mesmerize his followers.

As an explorer, Nasir also had insights into the political turmoil in Baluchistan. Whenever we discussed the unrest there, he eagerly participated, sharing firsthand observations of the conflict. He explained that it wasn't the common Baloch who caused the disturbances, but various groups backed by different agencies to create unrest in the region. I was amazed by his knowledge, far beyond what I would expect from a bus conductor, and his optimistic perspective.

In addition, Nasir had a good understanding of business. He often spoke about his friends and colleagues, who celebrated his character and vision. He was a trusted figure, often relied upon by the families of his friends in their absence. He would frequently share stories and gifts given to him by his friends, and I often wondered why he was working on these buses that traveled from Behra Miani, Malikwal, and Mandi Bahauddin to Gujranwala.

I frequently asked him about his son, and he was always clear about his plans. He shared that after his son's matriculation, he would either send him to Europe or guide him in goat farming. He envisioned his son as a future businessman—a boss in his own right. What a vision he had! I often reflected on his wisdom. As a wanderer in Pakistan, I had seen many tough versions of bus conductors, but Nasir stood tall among them. I prayed for him, "May he live long with dignity and love."

MUHAMMAD ADNAN GUJJAR

The writer is a full-time lecturer in the Department of English Language and Literature at the University of Chenab, Gujrat, and is currently working on the third edition of the literary magazine *The Wordsmith E-Magazine*