



Balancing The Tax Burden: Addressing Inequities Between Kenya's Formal And Informal Sectors

According to recent statistics, approximately 3 million Kenyans employed in the formal sector bear a disproportionate tax burden compared to their counterparts in the informal sector. This stark disparity has led to a significant imbalance in the country's tax system, with formal sector employees contributing a substantial portion of the nation's tax revenue

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News>>Tharaka Nithi Governor Welcomes County Residents And Neighbours For a Free Medical Camp

P. 8. Governor Muthomi Njuki has invited Tharaka Nithi residents and those from neighbouring counties to a free medical camp that is taking place at the Chuka Level 5 Referral Hospital.



News>>KSh7 Billion Nyali Affordable Housing Project All Set For Commencement

P. 12. Consultants and contractors of the KSh7 Billion Nyali V.O.K Affordable Housing Project are rushing against time to complete preparations before the laying of the foundation stone by President William Ruto prior to this year's Mashujaa day celebrations on Sunday

CJ Appoints Judges For DP's Petitions

Chief Justice Martha Koome has appointed a three-judge bench to hear five petitions seeking to prevent the impeachment of Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua. The bench will be led by Justice Erick Ogola, with Justices Antony Mrima and Dr. Frida Mugambi joining him. Deputy President Gachagua, represented by a legal team led by Senior Counsel Paul Muite, is challenging the impeachment on several grounds, including a lack of public participation.



Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua

STORY ON PAGE 9

KETEPA PRIDE
SPICED BLACK TEA

Cinnamon
A spicy delight

Cardamom
Spice of life

Masala Tea
Blend of delicious spices

Ginger Tea
A zingy and tasty treat

CHAI NI KETEPA

KNUT Want Gov't To Provide Choppers In Bandits Prone Areas During Exams

By: Felix Njenga
@themtkenyatimes

The Kenya National Union Of Teachers (KNUT) has called on the government to issue helicopters to ferry teachers to bandit prone areas during the examination period.

Speaking in Thika town during the Annual General Meeting of Thika KNUT branch Mr Malel Langat, the 1st Vice National Chairman said that the government should ensure that teachers are given security as they conduct the examinations .

“We have some places such as Lamu boni forest, we have bandit prone areas in Rift Valley and other areas the government need to assure our children and teachers of their safety during examination time,” he said

Teachers have complained that capitation money has not hit their accounts which has become a major challenge especially during the preparations of the examination time.

“School staff have complained that they have not yet received their salaries for three months. Headteachers have said they have a challenge from suppliers and are being taken to court for non-payments. We are calling upon the ministry of education and treasury to help schools so that there may not be a challenge during this time we are preparing students for examinations,” he said.

He said that invigilators, supervisors, center managers, KNEC should give them enough allowances which will help them as they do their work.

He said that they are expecting the government will hire more teachers as the 46,000 teachers who are said to be employed are the same teachers who were on internship and are being converted to permanent and pensionable terms.

“The 46,000 teachers are still the same teachers who were on internship. We still have a shortage of teachers and we expect the government will hire more teachers as we need 99,000 more teachers in this country because of the junior secondary schools,” he said.

He said that they are grateful to the government for honouring phase two of the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) 2021-2025.

“We have put up measures to sit with our



Some of the KNUT officials during the Thika meeting

employer Teachers Service Commission (TSC) as we have done five meetings in our offices with experts in terms of CBA and very soon we will present our CBA 2025-2029 to the TSC,” he said.

He said that the teachers were contended with the offer from the government hence the reason for calling off the strike and as a union are telling teachers that it was a platform for opening the doors to CBA 2024-2025

Mark Wamuthenya, the Thika Knut Executive Secretary said that they have witnessed the government is committed to ensure that there are JSS classrooms in every school.

He said that the government has also issued capitation money to Thika schools and schools are able to run smoothly without hitches.

He said that in preparations for exams the teachers have been briefed and are ready to conduct the examination exercise.

“KNEC has been here and has prepared teachers, briefing them on what to do and also taking through the security or safety



Malel Langat, KNUT 1st vice National chairman addressing teachers in Thika.

of the children during examination time and are ready for examination exercises,” he said.

The elections of Thika branch Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer where James

Maina was elected unopposed and Samuel Muiru was elected beating two other opponents.

Worth Noting:

- Teachers have complained that capitation money has not hit their accounts which has become a major challenge especially during the preparations of the examination time.
- School staff have complained that they have not yet received their salaries for three months. Headteachers have said they have a challenge from suppliers and are being taken to court for non-payments. We are calling upon the ministry of education and treasury to help schools so that there may not be a challenge during this time we are preparing students for examinations,” he said.

Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times

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Group Executive Chairman
M. Danson

Our Contacts
P. O. Box 101 675 - 00101 Nairobi, Cell: 0700 161 866, 0705 215 262
Editorial Desk: editorial@mountkenyatimes.co.ke, **Adverts:** ads@mountkenyatimes.co.ke,
News Desk: news@mountkenyatimes.co.ke, **Web:** www.mountkenyatimes.co.ke

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NEWS IN BRIEF



Principal Secretary State Department for Public Health and Professional Standards Mary Muthoni yesterday held a meeting with County Public Health Officers and Technicians from all the 47 counties to discuss their evolving roles in the context of Universal Health Coverage (UHC). The meeting focused on understanding environmental health functions and identifying challenges in service delivery. Key objectives included outlining PHOs' roles in UHC, proposing solutions for improved service delivery, and establishing a coordination mechanism for PHOs and Technicians. The meeting is expected to result in the formation of a Caucus of CPHOs for better national coordination and a follow-up list on critical activities like sanitation, tobacco control, and food safety.



During a recent visit to Turkana County, Cabinet Secretary for East Africa Affairs, Arid and Semi-Arid Lands and Regional Development Authority Beatrice Askul, emphasized the importance of enhancing agricultural efforts to combat the county's high poverty levels. "Turkana is among the most vulnerable communities in the Country, let us therefore not compromise our working systems and rather focus on our agricultural initiatives to improve food production in the county," she stated. She noted that key irrigation schemes in Katilu, Lokwiii, Kangelita, Kolioro, and Morulem were crucial for local food production as she further lauded the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) as one of the development partners that have contributed to the success of this scheme. The CS noted that Turkana has the highest poverty index in Kenya, urging local leaders and farmers to strengthen their agricultural initiatives.



The Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) has been allocated land by the county government of Uasin Gishu to construct a KEMRI centre and a vaccine manufacturing factory. KEMRI Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Prof. Elijah Songok said they have already been shown the land in Kapsoiya to put up a KEMRI branch and another for the construction of a vaccine factory they will undertake with its sister Vaccine manufacturing institution, Kenya BioVax. Speaking in Eldoret, Prof. Songok said KEMRI will take over Kapsoiya hospital as its research hospital for the vaccines. "We shall improve facilities at the hospital so that it can be upgraded to a level four hospital for medical research," said Songok.



The creative sector is headed for a major revival as the government champions the passing of legislative policies that will favour players in the arts industry. Director of Culture in the Ministry of Sports, Culture and Heritage Dr Kiprop Lagat said time has come for creatives to make a meaningful life out of their art noting that the State had put in place strategies that will open opportunities for all creatives and save their Intellectual Property from exploitation. He was speaking in Nakuru on Sunday when he held deliberations with the County's Creative Working Group to discuss initiatives aimed at supporting local talent and boosting the city's cultural profile. At the same time, Dr Langat who was flanked by Nakuru City Manager Mr Gitau Thabanja challenged artists to create content that identifies with the African culture as it will speak to African values and will help in promoting local content internationally.



The Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) collected Sh946 million from taxes in the Western region last month following a raft of measures to curb smuggling of goods through the porous borders of Uganda and Tanzania.

Through enhanced surveillance and enforcement in the region which covers ten counties, the taxman generated more revenue from customs at the Malaba, Busia and Isebania One Stop Border Posts (OSBP's) and the Lwakhakha satellite station. KRA Western Regional Coordinator Ms. Patience Wanjau said even though the figure fell short of the Sh1 billion monthly target, the performance was encouraging given the tough economic times. Out of the total collections, Malaba OSBP generated Sh540 million due to enhanced efficiency in clearance of trucks making it a key route for goods destined for Uganda, South Sudan, Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Mount Kenya University

MKU Research and Innovation Week 2024 (MKU_RIW2024)

Theme:
Research and Innovation for Sustainable Production and Livelihoods

Date: 14th to 18th October 2024

Venue: Mwai Kibaki Convention Centre Grounds, MKU, Thika



Introduction

The research and innovation week is expected to provide a platform for stakeholders (Higher Education Institutions, TVETs, Industry, Regulators, Government Institutions, NGOs, Innovation Hubs, and International Partners, Individuals) to showcase their inventive ideas that have the potential to yield pioneering products and services (spin-offs and new ventures). This is in addition to promoting stronger ties with industry through the Service-Learning (SL) initiative.

Activities includes

- . Week-long Schools Symposium
- . AI For Education Hackathon
- . Exhibitions by Industry, Students and Researchers.



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Unlocking Infinite Possibilities

850,000 Children Out Of School In North Eastern Region

By: MKT Reporter
@themkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- Adow said the region has historically been associated with marginalization, most prominently in the education sector.
- The legislator urged the national government to intervene and end decades of economic marginalization, neglect and exclusion that have denied residents their basic rights.
- Adow demanded that the provision of section 95 (2) (E) of the Basic Education Act of 2013 be operationalized and anchored in the basic curriculum framework.

A total of 851,045 school age children are out of school in Garissa, Wajir and Mandera counties.

This is according to Members of Parliament from the North Eastern region under the auspices of the North Eastern Parliamentary Group caucus.

In a meeting at Mombasa Serena Hotel, the MPs decried low education levels in the northern region as the rest of the country made considerable progress in the education system.

Wajir South MP Mohamed Adow said the situation was not only catastrophic but a ticking time bomb that would further alienate the region more so on the human capital development aspect.

Adow said the region has historically been associated with marginalization, most prominently in the education sector.

The legislator urged the national government to intervene and end decades of economic marginalization, neglect and exclusion that have denied residents their basic rights.

Adow demanded that the provision of section 95 (2) (E) of the Basic Education Act of 2013 be operationalized and anchored in the basic curriculum framework.

He said the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) should deploy all the teachers who have been trained and were currently jobless in the North Eastern region to end acute shortage of teachers in primary and secondary schools.

“We also resolve to strengthen adult education programmes and revive low-cost boarding schools which are so far poorly funded and severely dilapidated,” he said adding that it’s time to end neglect of education in the region.

He said the major problems of education in the region were corruption and misplaced government priorities and



North-Eastern Parliamentary Group leaders addressing journalists after their meeting in Mombasa.

policies.

Adow said the education system in the north has been on a steady decline with issues ranging from shortage in qualified teachers, poor funding and decaying infrastructure in schools.

Dadaab MP Farah Maalim decried the lack of access to education infrastructure and insufficient teachers in schools which he said hindered the standard of living for the residents and contributed to unequal opportunities. Maalim urged the national government and other stakeholders to address critical challenges bedeviling the education sector in Garissa, Wajir and Mandera counties and enable residents to break free from the cycle of poverty.

“The national government should resolutely be committed to addressing these challenges for the betterment of our society,” said Maalim.

Eldas MP Aden Keynan noted that poor educational facilities such as classes and laboratories, limited resources, insecurity and inadequate teaching staff have been contributing



Some of the lawmakers from the North-Eastern region during the forum

to the poor performance in the region.

Keynan who is the chairman of the North Eastern Parliamentary caucus said poor funding, shortage of teaching staff and poor educational facilities were to blame for the poor educational standards in the region.

He said the MPs would continue to liaise with relevant stakeholders with

the aim of providing lasting solutions to the falling standard of education in the north eastern region.

Mandera Woman Representative Umulkheir Kassim said Garissa, Wajir and Mandera counties suffered a major shortage after most of the non-local teachers left the region citing insecurity.

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Tharaka Nithi Governor Welcomes County Residents And Neighbours For a Free Medical Camp

By: MKT Reporter
 @themtkenyatimes

Governor Muthomi Njuki has invited Tharaka Nithi residents and those from neighbouring counties to a free medical camp that is taking place at the Chuka Level 5 Referral Hospital.

The free medical camp was officially opened yesterday will run up to Friday.

The 5-day exercise is organised by Doctors from America in partnership with the County Government of Tharaka Nithi through the Department of Public Health and Medical Services, where the Governor has urged members of the public to use the opportunity to access free medical assistance.

“I take this opportunity to invite residents of Tharaka Nithi including our neighbours from other counties to the free medical camp at the Chuka Level 5 hospital where we have visiting specialists from different medical fields in partnership with the County Government of Tharaka Nithi. The

treatments will be free of charge and therefore I urge people to come in large numbers and take advantage of the availability of such personnel,” he said.

According to Governor Njuki, the Chuka Level 5 Referral Hospital was picked as a host due to the availability of state of the art medical equipment in the facility.

Among the services offered during the free medical camp include treatment for diabetes, hypertension, arthritis, kidney diseases and other general medical services.

In addition, the doctors are performing surgeries such as appendectomy, laparotomy, hydrocele and hypothyroidism.

During the camp, the specialists will also be involved in re-constructive and paediatric surgeries that include cleft palate, undescended testis and congenital conditions of the intestines.

“Parents with children who have untreated or pending medical issues are urged to bring their children for specialized care through surgeries and medical procedures”, the Governor emphasized.



Chuka County Referral Hospital in Tharaka Nithi County. America doctors in collaboration with Tharaka-Nithi County government are having a free specialist medical camp at the facility.

General paediatric cases like prematurity, infections of newborns, neonatal jaundice, and other paediatric conditions are also scheduled to be addressed by the specialists along with gynaecological cases that include caesarean sections and surgeries of the women’s reproductive system, such as hysterectomy.

KTDA Installs Anti-Tampering Gadgets On Greenleaf Weighing Scales To Enhance Transparency

At The Same Time, The Farmers’ Organisation Announced That The Bonus Will Be Paid Within This Week With Fertilizer Costing KSh2,500 Per 50-Kg Bag From The Initial Cost Of KSh3,400 Following Government’s Intervention Through Subsidy

By: MKT Reporter
 @themtkenyatimes

In its continued commitment to improving transparency and fairness in tea production, the Kenya Tea Development Agency (KTDA) has successfully completed the installation of anti-tampering gadgets on green leaf weighing scales across its 71 managed factories.

These new measures are designed to eliminate any discrepancies in the weighing of green leaf delivered by over 700,000 smallholder tea farmers at various buying centres.

The introduction of the anti-tampering technology comes in response to concerns raised by farmers over sporadic cases of tampered scales.

These issues could potentially lead

to inaccuracies in the weight of green leaf recorded, which directly affects farmers’ payments.

KTDA recognizes the importance of addressing these concerns and has taken decisive action to ensure transparency and fairness in the process.

Each weighing scale is now equipped with a cutting-edge anti-tampering device embedded with a GSM card.

The device is designed to detect any attempts to tamper with the scale and instantly trigger an alert to factory managers and other officials.

In the event of any tampering, the system will send real-time alerts, enabling swift action to address the issue.

“The integrity of the green leaf collection process is central to our mission of serving our smallholder tea farmers. These anti-tampering gadgets will provide peace of mind

and ensure that every farmer is fairly compensated for their hard work,” said Collins Bett, Managing Director, KTDA Management Services (KTDA-MS).

He added, “We are committed to making the entire tea value chain more transparent and efficient, and this is just one of the many steps we are taking toward this goal.”

In addition to the anti-tampering gadgets, KTDA continues to implement other technologies and innovations aimed at improving operational efficiency, including the digitization of payment systems and the modernization of factory processes.

These efforts are part of KTDA’s broader strategy to enhance value for its over 700,000 smallholder farmers, who are the backbone of Kenya’s tea sector. The Agency has also rolled out an app and USSD that farmers



use to easily access information on their green leaf weights, payments and information on the tea sector.

KTDA remains dedicated to maintaining trust with its farmers and stakeholders and will continue to take steps to ensure the smooth and transparent operation of all aspects of

tea production. KTDA-MS Ltd is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Kenya Tea Development Agency (KTDA) Holdings Ltd. Its role is to manage tea factories owned by 54 factory companies who are the shareholders of KTDA Holdings Company Ltd.

CJ Koome Appoints 3-Judge Bench For Petitions Against DP Gachagua's Ouster

By: Dzuya Walter
 @themtkenyatomes

Chief Justice Martha Koome has appointed a three-judge bench to hear five petitions seeking to prevent the impeachment of Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua.

The bench will be led by Justice Erick Ogola, with Justices Antony Mrema and Dr. Frida Mugambi joining him.

Deputy President Gachagua, represented by a legal team led by Senior Counsel Paul Muite, is challenging the impeachment on several grounds, including a lack of public participation.

Gachagua's team claims that Parliament failed to meet the required standards because the standing orders only allowed for a seven-day window to address the issue before sending it to the Senate.

Muite emphasized that this period was insufficient to allow proper en-

gagement with the public.

Furthermore, the legal team argued that Gachagua was not given enough time to prepare his defense, asserting that he should have been allowed at least 12 days to respond to the allegations that led to his impeachment.

In contrast, lawyer Benson Millimo, representing the National Assembly, defended the impeachment process.

He argued that Parliament had fulfilled its constitutional mandate by passing the resolution and forwarding it to the Senate, dismissing claims that due process had been neglected.

The court will now decide whether Parliament adhered to the legal requirements in the impeachment process.



Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua. PHOTO | JASE MWANGI

Five Politicians Appear Before NCIC Over Tana River Clashes

By: Margaret Kalekye
 @themtkenyatomes

Five politicians are being questioned in connection with the Tana River clashes that have led to the death of 19 people.

The leaders are currently at the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) offices after they were summoned last Friday.

NCIC Chair Samuel Kobia during an engagement with the Kenya Editors Guild on Monday confirmed that the five namely Tana River County Woman Representative Amina Dika Abdullahi, former Woman Representative Rehema Hassan, Bura MP Yakub Adow Kuno, Galole MP Hiribae Said Buya, and Bangale Ward Representative Jibril Mahamud Farah had obeyed the summons.

He disclosed together with two commissioners they had visited the Kitui-Tana River county border for an assessment of the incessant clashes and insecurity.

NCIC, in collaboration with other government agencies, has launched investigations into the inter-community conflict which has forced residents to flee in fear of further attacks.

Numerous homes have also been torched as retaliatory attacks from both communities persist.

In the wake of the killing of four more people on Saturday by armed militants in the Meti area of Tana North Sub County, Kobia assured that NCIC remains dedicated to facilitating peace to ensure long-term stability.

Meanwhile, the Government has been hailed for swift action to contain the clashes.

Cabinet Affairs Principal Secretary Idriss Dokota and Former Tana River Governor Hussein Dado have called on the state to speed up the arrest of all other perpetrators who incited communities into violence leading to innocent deaths.

Already Tana River Governor Godana Dhadho was arrested on Friday together with Galole MP Said Hiirbae for allegedly inciting violence.



NCIC Chair Samuel Kobia during an engagement with the Kenya Editors Guild

On Friday, Interior Cabinet Secretary Kithure Kindiki declared certain areas of the Bangale and Tana North

sub-counties disturbed and dangerous for 30 days.

Simultaneously, Inspector General

of Police Douglas Kanja ordered residents in the area to surrender all firearms to the nearest police station.

Divine Revolution Pt 2



By: Eric Musa
EMEA.ericmusa@gmail.com

We continue with this theme, and I repeat: "If there is a great change a person needs in his/her life, business, ministry, family it is God's divine revolution, such that everything is directed, ordained and centred on God."

The inspirational Scripture Reading is still Isaiah 6, meditate on it as you read, visualise the word.

Confessions is the word Isaiah 43: 19, as we pray fervently the following prayer points, believing it is done by the blood of Christ Jesus, and in the mighty name of Christ Jesus:
.....continuation of PRAYER POINTS:

18. By the power that killed Haman in place of Mordecai, let those who

hate my existence be disorganized, in the name of Jesus.

19. Agents of sorrow that are pursuing me, die, in the name of Jesus.

20. Terminators of my father's house, die, in the name of Jesus.

21. I move to the next divine level of my life, in the name of Jesus.

22. My destiny shall explode, in the name of Jesus.

23. Let heavens trouble my trouble today, in the name of Jesus.

24. I render powerful enemies powerless by the power in the blood of Jesus.

25. O God, arise and eliminate any power designed to waste my destiny, in the name of Jesus.

26. O root of hardship in my life, arise by fire and destroy yourself, in the name of Jesus.

27. Every bottled blessing, arise, break the bottle and locate me, in the name of Jesus.

28. Every property of the enemy in my life, catch fire and die, in the name of Jesus.

29. O God, arise and let the root of my problems die, in the name of Jesus.

30. My Father, mobilize the resources of heaven to help me, in the name of Jesus.

31. I locate all my stolen seats by fire, in the name of Jesus.

32. Doors of favour and enlargement, open unto me, in the name of Jesus.

33. O Lord, anoint my eyes, hands and legs to locate my divine purpose, in the name of Jesus.

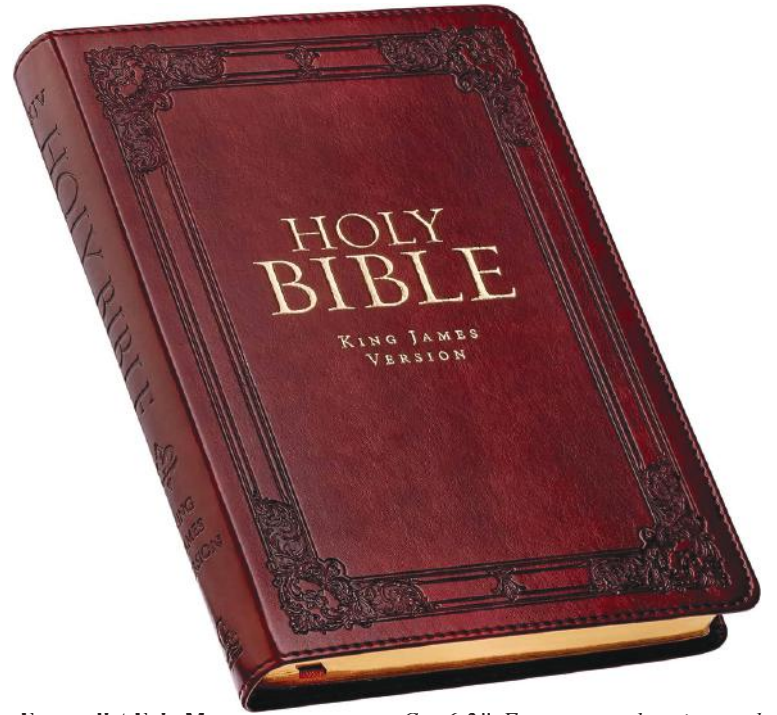
34. O thou that troubleth the Israel of Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries, the God of Elijah shall trouble you today, in the name of Jesus.

35. Every enemy of the Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries, scatter, in the name of Jesus.

36. O God, arise and uproot anything you did not plant inside the Ministry of EMEA(Eric Musa Evangelistic Association) , in the name of Jesus.

37. Let the fire of revival fall upon Ministry of EMEA, in the name of Jesus.

HALELUJAH, GLORY BE TO GOD.



Evangelist Eric Musa:

(My message continuously: If you are not saved: Believe, accept, receive and confess Christ Jesus as your Lord and Saviour and be filled with the Holy Spirit, as it is written; "NOW is the acceptable time, TODAY is the day of SALVATION.- 2

Cor 6:2". For prayers, devotion, and to support the ministry contact Evangelist on +254722157300 (Email: EMEA.ericmusa@gmail.com). Remember, God LOVES ❤️❤️❤️ you unconditionally, perfectly and always: SHALOM

The Mt. Kenya Times



Organization Breaks Ground For Sh300 Million Avocado Oil Processing Plant

By: MKT Correspondent
@themkenyatimes

Months after opening Malava Avocado Promotional Center in Kakamega, Sisi Village Produce has commenced the construction of a Sh300 million Avocado Oil Processing Plant to be located at the Kaimosi Avocado Model Farm and Nursery.

The construction is set to begin next month following a groundbreaking ceremony and dedication of the site last Saturday.

The Plant will serve the Lake Region with farmers from Nyanza, Uasin Gishu, Nandi and other parts of the country expected to benefit from the Avocado market.

The construction of the Plant is expected to take between two to three months followed by the installation of the Processing Machine in February.

Commissioning will begin thereafter then the factory will start crushing the avocado fruits in March.

The contracted construction company, Vishva, together with an Industrial Engineer John Abisai will source for the processing machine from Italy with a capacity to process 5 tons of Avocado fruits per day.

Speaking to journalists after the groundbreaking ceremony, the chairman Board of Directors Sisi Village Produce Dr. Julius Muiya said the factory will be an important project that would provide a market for Avocado farmers in the region.

“We will also create massive employment opportunities for the youth in the factory and also in the office that we are going to set up,” he disclosed.

Dr. Muiya said Western region people are blessed with good rainfall, sunshine, land and they can harvest avocado twice a year urging them to invest in the avocado that would be a lifetime earner.

“Farmers should work hard and plant avocados because if you plant an avocado tree now, in two years’ time, you will start harvesting,” he noted.

Kisia said that farmers would be contracted and organized through Cooperatives and access quality seedlings, training and support from the Avocado Promotional centers and Model Nurseries.

The promotional centres are spread out including the Kaimosi Model Farm and Nursery, Kimilili Avocado Model Farm and Nursery in Bungoma, Likuyani Model Farm and Nursery in Kakamega, Malava Avocado Promotional Centre in Kakamega,

Musikoma Model Farm and Nursery in Bungoma and the Ogalo Model Farm and Nursery.

He said more model farms will be established to enable farmers to access quality avocado seedlings, training and support in planting Avocado trees urging farmers across the region to plant enough fruits to meet the demand of the factory’s 5 tons of avocados per day.



Some of the stakeholders during the ground breaking ceremony last Saturday

“We are encouraging farmers to plant the Hass Avocado. The Hass Avocado is the preferred export product because it is hardy, the shelf life for the Hass is longer than our traditional avocados,” he added.

Kisia noted that apart from the market provided by the factory, Sisi Village Produce will support farmers to export the good export quality fruits through a partnership with Sasini Avocado EPZ limited.

“Farmers will bring their produce to the cooperatives, any export quality goes out for export then whatever remains of that is now what this factory is looking out for to be able to crush. So we are looking out for non-export quality products, we are also looking out at the traditional avocado fruits which are not exportable which therefore will come in for crushing,” he said.

“For now Sasini Avocado EPZ Limited is our export partner to ensure that the export quality goes out. There is no way a farmer will ever lose, every piece of avocado that is produced is going to be consumed, one in the crushing for oil, and the other for export through our partners,” he added.

The General Manager of Sasini Avocado EPZ Limited, Winnie Ngubwa promised that, since Sisi Village Produce is promoting quality, Sasini will partner with them to export produce

from farmers who will produce fruits that meet the export standards.

“I am sure we are going to get good quality fruits here and you can be rest assured that you will get a market for this, together with Sisi Village Produce, we will be able to give you a market for export,” she noted.

She said they have been exporting avocado fruits for the last 10 years as Sasini with Murang’a County leading in the export yet Western Region has conducive climatic conditions to support the fruit.

“The export market has been there for long, Murang’a County has been leading yet it does not have the good climatic condition as western Kenya. You people have rain, sunshine, good soil; you have all what it takes to produce good quality avocados, so why are you not getting this money, is there any reason,” she noted.

“As much as we have been exporting avocados, we are somewhere near a half of the demand, but this demand is on those people who are doing quality work, be rest assured that where you are going is a good space and don’t say that everybody is planting, not everybody is planting quality fruits, so once you do quality the market is huge,” she noted.

The Acting Managing Director of Access Bank Kenya Lilian Odhiambo who was present during the groundbreaking ceremony said the bank is ready to partner with farmers and the company to provide access to credit that would enable them to invest in avocado farming and grow their incomes.

“We have partnered with farmers in tea in the rift valley, we have partnered with farmers in the dairy industry, we have also partnered with farmers in Narok for wheat, so we are

going to partner with you to be able to give you access to finance. Money is supposed to help you to realize your potential and the potential of this region is agriculture,” she explained.

She said Access Bank will offer training on financial literacy, investment and on how to take care of the monies they get from farming.

“We want the farmer to be the biggest winner of this project because once the farmer is happy everybody along the chain is happy so we are here to confirm that we will walk with Sisi Village Produce, we will walk with the cooperatives, we will walk with the farmers,” she added.

The Acting MD also noted that the Bank is partnering with local fin-techs to create a system to support cooperatives on financial management and on how they can effectively report back to farmers with a click of a button to enhance transparency and trust.

“Another thing that we bring to the cooperatives is about their own financial management, I know the cooperatives we have worked with before did not have systems in place to be able to report back to the farmers and the farmers to have information by just logging in through a USSD portal to get information about their produce, how much they owe, how much they expect, when are they expecting, when has the money hit the bank,” she explained.

The Director of Agriculture Vihiga County Government Ben Chumba who was present said to support the enterprise, Vihiga County is formulating an Agro-ecology policy which will be the second one in the country after the one in Murang’a county.

Worth Noting:

- “We will also create massive employment opportunities for the youth in the factory and also in the office that we are going to set up,” he disclosed.

- Dr. Muiya said Western region people are blessed with good rainfall, sunshine, land and they can harvest avocado twice a year urging them to invest in the avocado that would be a lifetime earner.

- The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Sisi Village Produce Patrick Kisia said they are targeting Hass avocados which have higher oil content while promising that they would also pick local avocado varieties from farmers.

- “Farmers should work hard and plant avocados because if you plant an avocado tree now, in two years’ time, you will start harvesting,” he noted.

KSh7 Billion Nyali Affordable Housing Project All Set For Commencement

By: MKT Reporter
 @themkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- The consultants have finalized the project master plan and all the trees in the 23-acre prime land will be preserved. The land was on the verge of being turned into a dump site.
- The two-in-one project will have a public and residential sides.
- The first component of the project is the public side which will have a commercial centre and a municipal market. Initially, the market was supposed to be an Economic Stimulus Project before it was converted to a municipal market with 1000 stalls.
- A level four hospital, an Early Childhood Education Centre (ECDE), a primary and a secondary school will also be constructed.



Consultants and contractors of the KSh7 Billion Nyali V.O.K Affordable Housing Project are rushing against time to complete preparations before the laying of the foundation stone by President William Ruto prior to this year's Mashujaa day celebrations on Sunday.

The President will lead the Nation in marking this year's Mashujaa celebration in the neighbouring Kwale County.

The theme of this year is 'Affordable Housing'.

The project in the Port City of Mombasa will completely change the skyline of the Voice of Kenya (V.O.K) area, as the 1976 housing units that will be constructed will straddle the border of the upmarket Nyali suburb and the Mombasa-Malindi highway.

The housing units will be divided into Social Housing, Affordable Housing and Market.

The consultants have finalized the project master plan and all the trees in the 23-acre prime land will be preserved. The land was on the verge of being turned into a dump site.

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A level four hospital, an Early Child-

hood Education Centre (ECDE), a primary and a secondary school will also be constructed.

"It is not a project for the people who live here alone it is a project for the whole community. If you're driving from Malindi Road you can go to the market or the hospital," said Mohammed Munyanya, the Project Architect from AIA Architects during a media briefing at the site.

He added that the project will foster a triple economy impact.

The consultants have requested an interface between the ongoing constructions of the Mombasa-Malindi highway to the project.

"The project has started in earnest. We have been on mobilization period," said Munyanya.

To make full utilization of the land,

he added, the apartment's blocks will be 15 levels adding that geotechnical investigations have been done.

The project has been embraced by all the stakeholders including the owner of the land- the Kenya Broadcasting Cooperation. KBC facilities at the land will be upgraded.

"We thank KBC for giving us this opportunity to develop this project together with them," stated the Architect.

"It is a very holistic approach and Countries like Singapore used housing to regenerate their economy. At some point we were at the same level with Singapore, they took off, and they left us behind because they created employment through a housing program," said Munyanya.

He further hailed the ambitious

housing program as a way of jump-starting the economy.

County Director of Housing Rodgers Wakhungu, says in partnership with investors the government targets to construct 50,000 housing units in the next five years noting 15 construction sites have been identified across the county.

On his part, the area Deputy County Commissioner (DCC) Timothy Cherop assured the constructors of maximum security as they implemented the project.

He urged the area Chiefs to sensitize the community on the project adding the contractor has been directed to hire local youths for unskilled labour for them to earn a living.



World Students Day: The Story Of Peter Kironji

By: Felix Njenga
 @themtkenyatomes

World students Day, celebrated annually on October 15, is a tribute to the transformative power of education.

This day is not only a celebration but also a reflection on the potential education holds to shape individuals, communities and nations.

It is a global reminder of the significant role students play in driving progress and innovation across the world.

One example of how education can reshape a life and, by extension, a community is the journey of Peter Kironji, a beneficiary of the Equity Leaders Program (ELP).

His story exemplifies the impact of global education opportunities and how they can empower individuals to become change-makers in their societies.

Raised in the humble surroundings of Njabini Boys' High School, Peter's life took a transformative turn when he was accepted into the Equity Leaders Program, a flagship initiative of Equity Bank that identifies, nurtures and connects young scholars to opportunities worldwide. With the guidance

and support of ELP, Peter successfully applied to study at the University of Toronto as a Mastercard Foundation Scholar, pursuing a degree in Electrical and Computer Engineering.

His academic journey abroad, however, was just the beginning.

After graduating in 2018, he co-founded an influencer marketing start up in Toronto, which, within 18 months, was successfully acquired. His professional experience expanded as he worked as a Cybersecurity Engineer across various industries for three years. But even in the face of success abroad, he remained rooted in Kenya.

He was driven by a desire to contribute to his home Country's development, a value instilled during his time in the Equity Leaders Program.

In 2019, Peter returned to Kenya and co-founded Twiva, a venture-backed social commerce platform. Twiva leverages influencers to help brands connect with and access markets through social media.

The leadership principles he honed at Equity Bank, such as attention to detail, customer service, and the ability to thrive in high-pressure environments, have profoundly shaped his approach to guiding his teams towards success.

"I am deeply grateful to the Equity Leaders Program for giving me the opportunity to advance my education, reshape my mindset, and enhance my leadership skills. My advice to students around the world is to work hard, embrace challenges, and strive to become innovators who can make a lasting impact," he said.

Kironji's journey from a local high school student in Kenya to an innovative entrepreneur and leader is a powerful testament to the profound impact of education and global exposure. His story embodies the very essence of World Students Day, which celebrates students' potential to drive change, embrace technology, and break barriers.

As the co-founder and CEO of Twiva, Kironji's work continues to influence industries both locally and internationally.

His achievements serve as a beacon of hope for other young Africans, proving that with the right opportunities and support, they too can dream big, overcome obstacles, and lead the continent into a brighter future.

Through initiatives like the Equity Leaders Program, which empowers students to embrace both local and global opportunities, Equity Bank continues to play a pivotal role in



Peter Kironji.

shaping the next generation of leaders. Kironji's story is a testament to how education, coupled with a strong support system, can catalyse extraordinary accomplishments.

Teachers Called to Participate In Sporting Activities For Their Own Good

By: Alfayo Isaac
 @themtkenyatomes

Teachers have been urged to prioritize participating in sports to enhance their health and to prevent them from getting lifestyle diseases at their young age.

Speaking during the launch of 1st Edition of Kericho Sub County teachers' sports held at Kipchimchim grounds the Director Betting Control and Licensing Board BCLB Ann Too said by engaging teachers relieves stress after a long day work.

'Teachers undergo various challenges in class time and giving them an opportunity to play will set an example to the learning by giving them a positive impact on sports and also brings cohesion and integration among the teachers in the region', Too said.

The director said the aim of the event

is to increase access to quality sports programmes with competent teachers who can effectively generate learners to impact more on nurturing their talents and different fields.

She assured teachers that in partnership with betting players in the country to sponsor such events that will be done annually where also called upon Primary and Secondary teachers drawn from the Kericho Sub County to participate in sports.

Too said they started the event by planting more than 200 species of trees with the aim of conserving the environment where every teacher who attended the event planted two to three trees on the school compounds.

'I do like to encourage members of the public to exercise tree planting session which is a great mandate to every human being to have a clean air and conducive environment for learning', the director added.

She added that using sport as an outlet for fun and competition teachers gain the skills that will make



Betting Control and Licensing Board Director Ann Too (Middle with Cap) poses for a photo before the start of the Football Men Competition at Kipchimchim grounds during 1st Edition of Kericho Sub County Sports.

them fit while teaching. 'It's a call to the ministry of education to set up a teachers' sports edition during holidays for this will promote unity across the nation and also the winners in the competition to be awarded with

various prizes', She adds.

Ainamoi ward won in the football men after beating Kapsaos ward in a score of 2.0 as Kapsoit ward won football lady's sports. More than 200 teachers from the sub county turn

up for the competition sponsored by Jambobet a Kenyan based betting company.

My Only Fowl To Worry About...



O-innocent Arendi
Has no favour
For vultures loom all over
In the neighborhood
On rampage for its pea hen- wings.

O- innocent Arendi;
My only fowl to worry
And me, to worry about
To whom shall I entrust thee?
For soon I will be away
And thy wings shall grow more
Beautiful and huge for the
Starving vultures to hold grip
With their lustful ulcer:
A sabotage.

O-innocent Arendi,
To whom shall I entrust thee?
For I will soon be away
To sweat for thy marsh and
Through the plantations, I will gather you enough
pellets
For indoor feeding.

O- innocent Arendi,
As you fly to scratch
In the neighborhood farm of
Nson - a rabbi vulture,
Please invite the Bass to hold
Thy spur and give a bloody nose
To the rich man whose
Decree eats any fowl across his farm
But...but...but...
Keep the Bass to date of thy
Whereabouts for I Mugisha,
Will soon be away to fend.

O-innocent Arendi,
Look, and behold:
The hour is at hand
When Artin will wait in the
Mutooma at the bottom of this
Village hill,
From which they view this top
By panorama
And at the crossroads, Nson
Awaits for any favour
Amidst this fever by rumours
But...but...but...
I Mugisha your master,
Has to worry about my
Only fowl without fowl
And neither a favour
But...but...but...
Thou shalt die in the epilogue.

LABASSSDegra.
(0700133179)
"Brought to earth in a local kitchen."

Memory Or A Mother's Cry



By: Xo'jamiyorova Gulmira

The distant breath of war,
Did not spare a remote village afar.
Even the lonely mother in that distant land,
Was not spared; her only son was called to stand.

The boy was still young, in his prime,
Her sole support, her son, her one lifeline.
But now, no matter what may come,
He must go to war, brave and strong for the
homeland.

She broke a piece of bread for him, stroked his
head,
With trembling hands, she prayed and said,
Murmuring a wish as her heart did implore,
"God, keep my son in Your care, evermore!"

In the house filled with countless memories,
The young man cast one last tearful glance.
And the mother, sad, helpless and frail,
Watched her son, unable to prevail.

The war ravaged the world, leaving many in
despair,
It made many weep and wait in prayer.
Millions of hearts it did deeply shake,
While sleepless mothers stayed awake.

Children longed for their fathers each day,
Rushing to the door at every knock, eager and gay.
Women kept busy with chores as a disguise,
Peering down the road, hope in their eyes...

Days, months, and years passed by,
But still no news of her son, though she did try.
Winds of longing pierced the mother's soul,
Her eyes fixed on the path, taking their toll...

Years later, the breath of war ceased,
The long-awaited time finally brought peace.
It felt as though the world was split in two,

The village rushed to the streets, filled with hope
anew.

The mother couldn't contain her joy,
She rushed to meet the returning convoy.
Suddenly, she remembered something, went back
home,
And brought out the coat meant for her son alone.

Some crawled in from afar, barely alive,
Some leaned on canes, trying to survive.
Others hugged their mothers with one arm,
While others had their heads wrapped from harm.

The mother, too, searched for her beloved son,
Desperate among the crowd, her eyes scanned
each one.

Like an angel, with tears streaming down,
She asked everyone, with a painful frown:

"Where is my dear son, why does he not come?
Is he delayed, perhaps something made him numb?
Does he not know how much I miss him?
Or did he tire, lost in deserts grim?"

Tell him to come, even if he's broken,
If his legs are gone, I'll carry him with devotion.
If his hands are lost, that's alright,
I'll feed him myself, day and night.

Oh fleeting life, have mercy on me,
Return my son, oh heavens, set him free.
Where shall I seek salvation now?
I even sewed a coat for him, somehow.

If life demands it, I'll give mine away,
If he's lost much blood, take mine, I'll repay.
My heart's healing balm, my soul's remedy,
Let me see my son, my joy, my destiny."

The mother said these words and fell to her
knees,
Her tearful eyes still searching the breeze.
Tears fell drop by drop onto the earth,
Oh, how mournful, her eyes full of dearth.

There are many questions, yet no answers at
hand,
Everyone knows their own burden and strand.
Separation and longing are thorns of pain,
The mother's words pierce every heart, in vain.

Now, the sun sets, casting a red glow,
The mother hasn't moved, waiting in sorrow.
She stands still, gazing at one single spot,
Longing for her son, swallowing the pain in her
thought...

Months turn into years, passing quickly by,
No news, no sound, just a silent cry.
She rests her head on her knees, her heart
undone,
The mother's soul—forever gone.

Drowned in grief, though no one can tell,
Longing, suffering, pain, sorrow—she felt it all.
Her final tear fell, frozen in stillness,
The mourning mother's body now lifeless.

The Face Of Betrayal



As lies reveal a different view.

The ground beneath begins to shake,
Foundations crack, facades break.
Where faith once stood, now doubt
creeps in,
And trust fades like a phantom's grin.

A dagger's thrust, though out of sight,
Leaves scars in places dark as night.
A wound that time can never seal,
The silent ache, too deep to heal.

Betrayal's face is hard to trace,
It hides behind a friendly grace.
Yet once revealed, it leaves its mark,
A heart grown weary, cold, and dark.

For in its wake, what's left behind,
Is more than pain—it twists the mind.
The love that once held light and cheer,
Now dances with a lingering fear.

And though forgiveness may arise,
A flicker still haunts loving eyes.
For trust, once shattered, takes its toll,
A broken bond, a fractured soul.
(Evans Asikoya, the poet)

A friend's embrace, so warm, so near,
Turns cold with whispers none can hear.
A bond that once stood pure, intact,
Now frays beneath a veiled act.

Eyes that sparkled, true and bright,
Now dim beneath a shadowed light.
A glance once filled with trust, sincere,
Now hides deceit, masked in fear.

Hands that promised steady care,
Reach out with threads of thin despair.
A pact, now brittle, falls apart,
As treachery strikes at the heart.

The words once soft, a soothing balm,
Now cut like glass, a shattered calm.
What once was whole, now torn in two,

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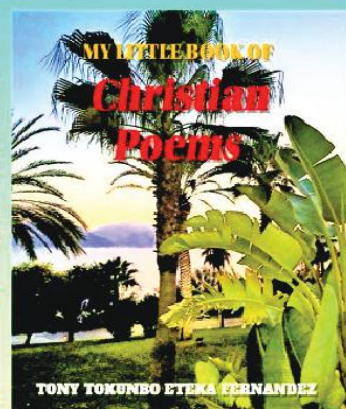
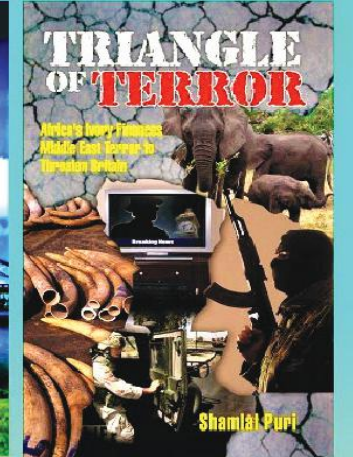
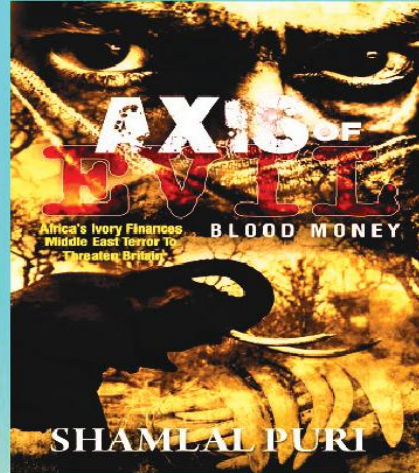
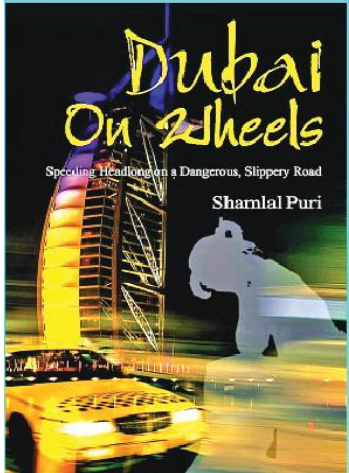
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HOPE

Hope For Widows

By: Alfayo Isaac
@themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- Chiggai said widows are the largest part of the female population worldwide mostly in developing countries thus needs social umbrella and strength to sustain them in their daily lives for their children to have a better living.
- She called upon the widows to secure funds from government entities through self-help groups which is of low interest reducing rates to give hope for their businesses.
- Matters on early child pregnancies Chiggai urged the mothers across the nation to ensure the girl child have been natured and provided with basic needs to help them grow without any difficulties. She asked the local community leadership through the administration unit to ensure every culprit who committed the event has to be brought to book.

Widows across the nation have been challenged to form self-help group so as to benefit from various programs from governmental and Non-government institutions.

The two day training of widows from Kipkelion East Constituency held at Barotion grounds in Kericho county where its key is to empower them in various capacities in life such forming up various self-help groups that will make them excel on their lives.

Speaking in Kipkelion Harriette Chiggai said she from the executive office of the president said the widows for a long time had been looked down in the community and to end the matter widows have to be empowered in skills to make them great entrepreneurs.

We have what entails to touch the hearts of the community by creating awareness through various programs such as skills and also providing funds through various funding institutions.

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She also asked the Widows to develop the farming culture of crops that do well in their regions saying the government has put more effort in the agriculture sector in providing seedlings to the farmers.

The Director Betting Licensing and Control Board Ann Too said women goes through a lot of challenges such as Gender Based Violence especially the widows and to curb this challenges they need to be empowered through skills that will nature them.

Miss Too said the widows plays a great role in the community and by touching them through various programs they deliver the best to the society where she called upon every partners to support sensitization exercises which aims in promoting their



President's Advisor on Women Rights Harriette Chiggai shares a conversation with Director Betting Control and Licensing Board Ann Too during the Widows training program held at Barotion in Kipkelion East Sub County Kericho county. Photo by Alfayo Isaac.

lives .S he also called upon for the women who are undergoing to speak up and report the matter at the gender desk at any police station.

According to the Tourism Fund CEO Patricia Odeng said the two-day training aims to promote awareness of human rights issues in a bid to strengthen widows 'property rights to occupy property and have access to land.

Odeng said several widows have been denied by the family members to access properties of the deceased husband which has turn up to gender based violence and to end the matter

the widows has to be provided with the capacity building.

She said the Tourism Fund mobilizes resources from various partners and give back to the community by setting up awareness programs for the widows across the nation.

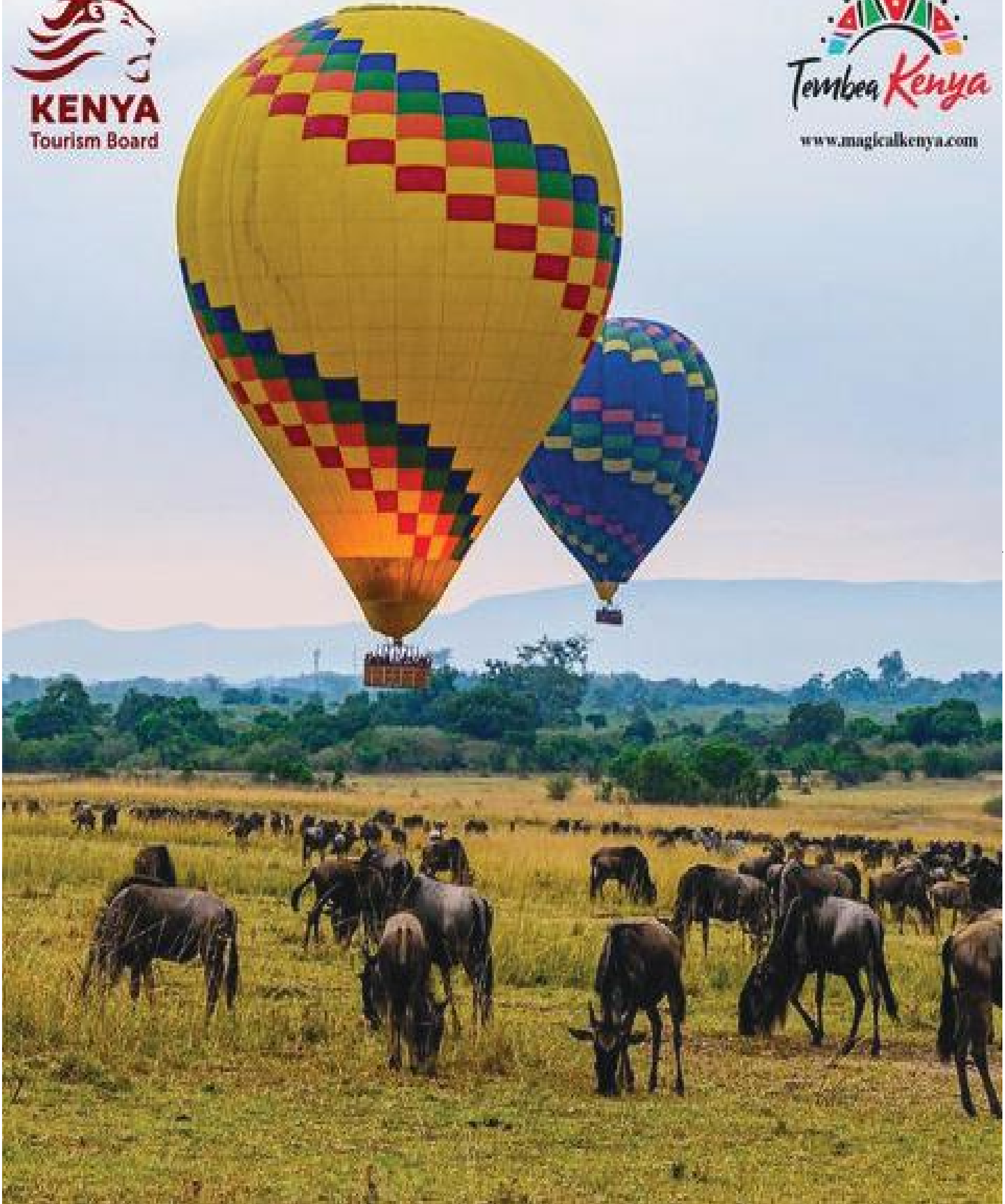
'At the closure of the training the participants appreciated for the education in understanding human rights terms ,right to own properties and also benefit through the unclaimed assets which was left by the late husband. Our plan is to have the workshop in every county and do urged the widows especially those who come

from humble backgrounds to register themselves in groups so as to benefit through government grants start on engaging in business ideas such as poultry farming and other crops that do well on their regions', Odeng added.

Josphine Bett one of the widows applauded the executive office of the President for having such trainings where she says was able to understand how the law protects them and to engage in applying for funds to the business.



Kericho Widows gifts Harriette Chiggai a Kalenjii Traditional Calabash at Barotion in Kipkelion East Sub County Kericho County.



Balancing The Tax Burden: Addressing Inequities Between Kenya's Formal And Informal Sectors



By: Odhiambo Jerameel Kevins Owuor
@themkenyatimes

According to recent statistics, approximately 3 million Kenyans employed in the formal sector bear a disproportionate tax burden compared to their counterparts in the informal sector. This stark disparity has led to a significant imbalance in the country's tax system, with formal sector employees contributing a substantial portion of the nation's tax revenue while the informal sector, which comprises a larger segment of the workforce, contributes considerably less. This situation has created a wide gap in tax contributions and placed undue pressure on those in formal employment.

The root of this issue lies in the structural differences between the formal and informal sectors in Kenya. The formal sector, characterized by registered businesses, regular employment contracts, and standardized wage systems, is easily trackable by tax authorities. In contrast, the informal sector, consisting of small-scale enterprises, self-employment, and unregistered businesses, often operates outside the purview of tax regulations. This dichotomy has resulted in a tax system that inadvertently penalizes formal sector employees while allowing a significant portion of economic activity to remain untaxed.

To address this imbalance, a multifaceted approach is necessary, combining legislative reforms, administrative improvements, and public education initiatives. The first step in rectifying this situation is to conduct a comprehensive review of the current tax code. This review should aim to identify loopholes that allow informal sector participants to evade taxes and propose amendments to close these gaps. For instance, the Income Tax Act (Cap. 470) and the Value Added Tax Act of 2013 could be amended to include provisions that specifically target informal sector activities and bring them into the tax net.

One potential solution is the implementation of a presumptive tax system for small businesses and self-employed individuals in the informal sector. This system, which has been successfully employed in countries like Ghana and Tanzania, would allow tax authorities to estimate the income of informal sector participants based on certain indicators such as business type, location, and size. By simplifying the tax calculation process, this approach could encourage compliance and bring more informal sector workers into the tax system.

Another critical aspect of addressing this issue is improving the capacity



and efficiency of the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA). This would involve investing in advanced technology for data collection and analysis, enhancing the skills of tax officers, and implementing more effective enforcement mechanisms. For example, the KRA could leverage big data analytics to identify potential tax evaders in the informal sector and conduct targeted audits. Such measures would not only increase tax collection from the informal sector but also create a more equitable tax environment.

Public education and awareness campaigns play a crucial role in fostering a culture of tax compliance. Many informal sector participants may be unaware of their tax obligations or the benefits of formalizing their businesses. By launching comprehensive outreach programs, the government can educate citizens about the importance of paying taxes and the advantages of operating within the formal sector. These programs should emphasize how tax revenues contribute to public services and infrastructure development, thereby creating a sense of civic duty among all Kenyans.

Incentivizing formalization is another key strategy in balancing the tax burden. The government could offer benefits such as access to credit facilities, social security programs, and business development services to informal sector participants who register their businesses and comply with tax regulations. This approach has been successful in countries like

Brazil, where the "Simples Nacional" program provided tax incentives and simplified procedures for small businesses, leading to increased formalization and tax compliance.

It is essential to recognize that the informal sector often comprises low-income earners who may struggle to meet tax obligations. To address this, the government should consider implementing a progressive tax system that takes into account the ability to pay. This could involve introducing tax brackets with lower rates for low-income earners and gradually increasing rates for higher income levels. Such a system would ensure that the tax burden is distributed more equitably across all sectors of the economy.

Collaboration between various government agencies is crucial in tackling this issue. The KRA should work closely with other bodies such as the Registrar of Companies, local authorities, and financial institutions to share information and create a more comprehensive database of economic activities. This inter-agency cooperation would enhance the government's ability to identify and tax informal sector participants effectively.

The role of technology in formalizing the informal sector cannot be overstated. The government should explore innovative solutions such as mobile-based tax payment systems, digital identification for businesses, and blockchain technology for transparent record-keeping. These technological advancements can simplify

tax compliance processes, reduce corruption, and make it easier for informal sector participants to meet their tax obligations.

While implementing these measures, it is crucial to maintain a balance between increasing tax compliance and avoiding overly burdensome regulations that might stifle economic growth. The government should conduct regular impact assessments to ensure that tax policies do not disincentivize entrepreneurship or drive businesses further into informality. This balanced approach would help create a more equitable tax system without hampering economic development.

In conclusion, addressing the disparity in tax contributions between Kenya's formal and informal sectors requires a comprehensive, long-term strategy. By combining legislative reforms, administrative improvements, public education, incentives for formalization, and technological solutions, Kenya can work towards a more equitable tax system. This balanced approach would not only alleviate the burden on formal sector employees but also foster economic growth, increase government revenues, and promote a culture of tax compliance across all sectors of the economy. Ultimately, these efforts would contribute to a more prosperous and equitable Kenya for all its citizens.

The writer is a lawyer and legal researcher

Worth Noting:

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- Another critical aspect of addressing this issue is improving the capacity and efficiency of the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA). This would involve investing in advanced technology for data collection and analysis, enhancing the skills of tax officers, and implementing more effective enforcement mechanisms.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A Call For Robust Measures Against Exams Misconduct As We Approach National Exams Season

As Kenya approaches its national exams—KCSE (Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education) and KCPE (Kenya Certificate of Primary Education)—the significance of maintaining integrity in the examination process cannot be overstated. These exams are critical milestones in a student’s academic journey, shaping their futures and opportunities. However, the recurring incidents of exam misconduct pose a significant threat to the credibility of our education system. It is imperative that we implement robust measures to ensure adherence to examination regulations and eliminate any form of malpractice.

To effectively combat exam misconduct, we must first understand its underlying causes. Several factors contribute to this issue, including societal pressures, inadequate preparation, and a lack of faith in the education system. Many students, overwhelmed by the high stakes associated with these exams, may resort to unethical practices to secure good grades. Additionally, some schools may inadvertently foster a culture of dishonesty, prioritizing results over ethical conduct.

A comprehensive approach begins with strengthening the regulatory frameworks surrounding national exams. The Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) must enhance its guidelines and ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the regulations. This includes conducting thorough training for teachers, invigilators, and

school administrators on the importance of integrity and the consequences of misconduct.

Moreover, KNEC should collaborate with the Ministry of Education to develop a clear communication strategy that informs students, parents, and educators about the rules governing examinations. This could include regular workshops, seminars, and distribution of informational materials that outline acceptable conduct and the penalties for violations.

One of the most effective ways to deter exam misconduct is through increased surveillance during the examination process. This can be achieved by deploying more invigilators in examination rooms and utilizing technology, such as CCTV cameras, to monitor students. Such measures would create an environment of accountability, discouraging students from engaging in dishonest practices.

Additionally, KNEC could explore the use of biometric identification systems to verify the identities of candidates before they enter the examination halls. This would help to prevent impersonation, a common form of exam malpractice.

Building a culture of honesty and integrity within schools is crucial. Educators play a vital role in shaping students’ attitudes towards examinations. Schools should incorporate ethics and integrity into their curricula, emphasizing the long-term benefits of honesty over the short-term gains of cheating.

By instilling these values early on, we can cultivate a generation of learners who prioritize integrity in their academic endeavors.

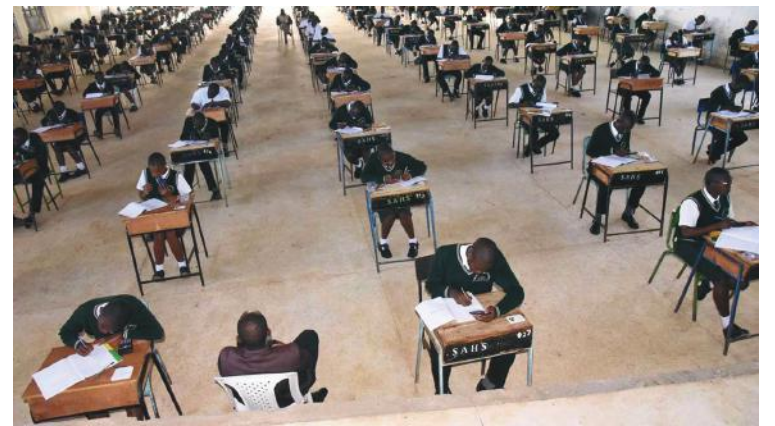
Furthermore, schools should celebrate academic honesty by recognizing and rewarding students who demonstrate ethical behavior, thereby reinforcing the notion that hard work and dedication are more commendable than shortcuts to success.

Parents and the community also have a significant role to play in combating exam misconduct. Parents should engage in open discussions with their children about the importance of integrity and the implications of cheating. This dialogue should emphasize the value of hard work and the detrimental effects of dishonest practices on personal and societal levels.

Community organizations can support these efforts by hosting workshops and seminars that address academic integrity. By fostering a community-wide commitment to honesty, we can create an environment that discourages misconduct.

It is essential to acknowledge the psychological pressures that students face during exam periods. Many students experience anxiety and stress, which can lead them to consider dishonest methods as a way out. Schools should provide psychological support and counseling services to help students manage their stress and build resilience.

Counselors can work with students to



develop effective study strategies and time management skills, ultimately reducing the temptation to cheat. By promoting mental well-being, we can foster a healthier approach to examinations and learning.

The use of technology can significantly enhance the examination process and minimize opportunities for misconduct. KNEC should invest in secure online platforms for exam registration and result management, ensuring that data is protected and accessible only to authorized personnel.

Moreover, incorporating digital examination methods, such as computer-based testing, can streamline the process and reduce the chances of traditional forms of cheating. By modernizing the examination system, we can create a more secure and efficient environment for students.

As we prepare for the upcoming KCSE and KCPE examinations, it is

crucial that we adopt a multifaceted approach to uphold the integrity of our education system. By strengthening regulations, enhancing surveillance, promoting a culture of honesty, and involving parents and communities, we can effectively combat exam misconduct.

Moreover, providing psychological support and leveraging technology will create a more conducive environment for students to thrive academically without resorting to unethical practices. Ultimately, the goal is not merely to administer exams but to cultivate a generation of learners who value integrity and are equipped to face the challenges of the future.

*Atieno Dorothy,
Rongo University Student*

Let’s Be Our Own Game Changers After Campus

As graduation nears, one question haunts every graduate: what next? In a country where job opportunities are scarce, we must take control of our futures. Life truly begins when you start paying your own bills and reduce your dependence on your parents. By utilizing the skills acquired during your time on campus, you can venture into small businesses or freelance work that helps sustain you and covers your daily expenses.

Job opportunities in Kenya are a significant challenge, especially for the youth, particularly recent graduates with degrees from various university faculties. Many end up facing depression due to the lack of employment opportunities. However, we can change our stories by taking owner-

ship of our skills and using them to create opportunities instead of waiting for them to appear.

The world is rapidly changing, and technology is advancing at an incredible pace. This is why it is important to invest in the skills we have acquired, as finding job opportunities is becoming increasingly difficult. For instance, many members of Generation Z are investing their free time in online job opportunities such as freelancing on platforms like Google .Some freelance skills that are growing in demand and playing a significant role in global advancement include data analysis, graphic design, video editing, cybersecurity, sales, and digital marketing, among others in which most of youths have

venture into this practices to sharpen their skills and to be aligned with advancement in technology.

As the saying goes, “If you believe, you become.” By being creative and pursuing what we believe in, we can change the perception that there are no jobs after completing a four-year degree. In the face of limited job opportunities, some may be tempted to fall into destructive habits, but there are better paths. Let’s utilize our skills and change our own narratives by building our futures with the resources we have.

By Ann Amollo Public relations student, Rongo University.



Economic Crisis And Biodiversity Loss That Threaten Kenya's Fragile Ecosystems

Critical economic implications of biodiversity loss in Kenya, emphasizing the urgent need for sustainable practices



By: Midmark Onsongo
@themtkenyatimes



Worth Noting:

- The paradox stands starkly before us: while we celebrate our rich natural heritage, the very resources we rely upon are slipping through our fingers like sand. The hyperbole of biodiversity loss is staggering; the World Wildlife Fund's 2020 Living Planet Report indicates a staggering decline of 68% in global wildlife populations since 1970, a trend mirrored in Kenya's own ecosystems. The irony of progress, then, is that in our race for development, we may be sprinting toward our own demise.

- The economic implications of biodiversity loss cannot be overstated. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) emphasizes that a healthy ecosystem underpins a thriving economy, providing essential services such as pollination, water purification, and climate regulation.

Are you aware that the majestic Kilimanjaro casts its watchful eye over the sprawling savannah and the Great Rift Valley cradles a myriad of life, a silent crisis looms larger than the African elephant that roams its plains. This is not the usual drumroll of an economic downturn or the predictable chaos of a political uproar; rather, it is the gradual and insidious erosion of biodiversity, a threat so profound yet overlooked that it threatens to tip the scales of our very existence.

Ironically, as we navigate the tumultuous waters of development, the waves of biodiversity loss crash relentlessly against our shores, leaving us to ponder the question: what is the true cost of our neglect? The fabric of our economy, once vibrant and resilient, now risks unraveling like a well-worn tapestry frayed at the edges.

Biodiversity—the intricate web of life that includes the vast array of plants, animals, and microorganisms—serves as the backbone of Kenya's economy. From the pastoral lands of the Maasai to the lush highlands where tea and coffee flourish, the contributions of biodiversity to livelihoods, food security, and climate resilience are immeasurable.

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The economic implications of biodiversity loss cannot be overstated. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) emphasizes that a healthy ecosystem underpins a thriving economy, providing essential services such as pollination, water purification, and climate regulation.

In Kenya, tourism—a cornerstone of the economy—is intricately tied to the nation's rich biodiversity. National parks and reserves, such as the iconic Maasai Mara and Amboseli, draw millions of visitors each year, generating revenue that fuels local economies.

Yet, as habitats are destroyed and species disappear, the very founda-

tion of this industry crumbles. The chiasmus of loss is evident: as we lose biodiversity, we lose the economic benefits it brings, a cycle that perpetuates poverty and ecological degradation.

Moreover, the juxtaposition of rural communities against the backdrop of urban expansion reveals a stark reality: those who depend most on biodiversity for their livelihoods are often the first to suffer its loss. Smallholder farmers, who constitute approximately 70% of Kenya's agricultural sector, rely on diverse crop varieties for food security and resilience against climate change.

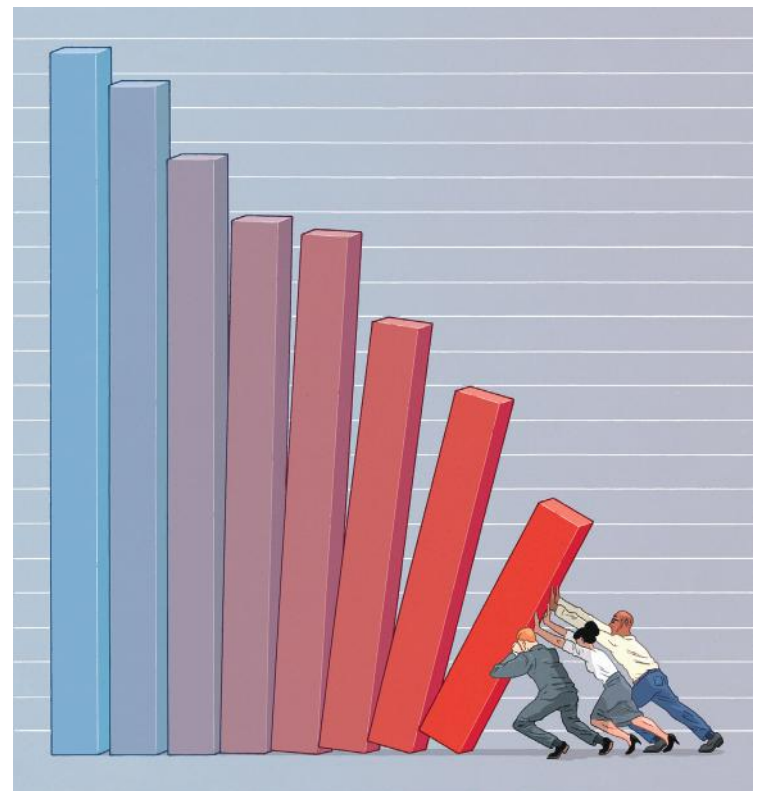
The irony of their plight is palpable; while they cultivate the land that feeds the nation, they are often marginalized in policy discussions that shape the very systems they depend upon. The metaphor of the canary in the coal mine rings true; as these communities grapple with diminishing yields and increasing vulnerability, their struggles signal an impending crisis that affects us all.

In addressing this crisis, we must confront the aporia of our current approaches to development. The Kenyan government has made strides toward recognizing the importance of biodiversity through policies and initiatives, yet the implementation often falls short.

The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), revised in 2015, outlines ambitious goals for conservation and sustainable use of biological resources. However, the funding and political will necessary to realize these objectives remain elusive, leaving us with a half-hearted commitment that does little to stem the tide of loss.

The understatement of our collective responsibility is glaring; while we speak of biodiversity as a priority, actions speak louder than words, and our inaction reverberates through the ecosystems we cherish. The role of indigenous knowledge in conservation cannot be overlooked; it is the antidote to the poison of negligence. Indigenous communities, who have coexisted with nature for generations, hold invaluable insights into sustainable practices that promote biodiversity.

The Maasai, for example, practice traditional pastoralism that maintains ecological balance by migrating with their herds to prevent overgrazing. Yet, despite their profound understanding of the land, these communities often find their rights



and voices marginalized in favor of commercial interests.

The ethos of inclusion must guide our conservation efforts; empowering local communities not only fosters resilience but also reinforces the interconnectedness of biodiversity and economic stability. To illustrate, consider the case of the Meru people, who have implemented sustainable farming practices that integrate traditional knowledge with modern techniques.

Through agroforestry, they enhance soil fertility while conserving indigenous tree species, showcasing a harmonious relationship between culture and ecology. This model serves as a beacon of hope, demonstrating that sustainable practices can yield economic benefits while nurturing biodiversity.

Yet, the irony remains that such practices are often dismissed in favor of industrial agriculture, which prioritizes short-term profits over long-term sustainability. As we grapple with the stark realities of biodiversity loss, the call for urgent action reverberates across the land.

The metaphorical elephant in the room—our collective complacency—must be addressed with boldness and clarity. The rising tide of climate change exacerbates the crisis; as temperatures soar and weather patterns shift, the already fragile ecosystems face unprecedented stress. The hyperbole of impending doom is not merely a scare tactic; the Intergovernmental Panel on

Climate Change (IPCC) warns that without immediate and transformative action, we risk reaching tipping points that could trigger irreversible damage to biodiversity and the ecosystems we depend upon.

The economic crisis posed by biodiversity loss is not just an environmental concern; it is a pressing issue that demands our immediate attention and action. The intertwining of economic stability and ecological health cannot be ignored.

As we chart a path forward, we must embrace the wisdom of our ancestors, empowering local communities and integrating indigenous knowledge into our strategies. The time for bold, decisive action is now; we must challenge the status quo and reimagine our relationship with nature.

By prioritizing biodiversity conservation, we can cultivate a sustainable future—one where economic growth harmonizes with ecological integrity, ensuring that the rich tapestry of life in Kenya continues to thrive for generations to come.

In the quest for a resilient and prosperous nation, let us heed the lessons of the past, embrace the complexities of the present, and forge a future where biodiversity loss is no longer an overlooked crisis but a rallying call for collective action.

This article was scripted by; MIDMARK ONSONGO, SGS (Socio-Geographic Scholar)

Kenya And Ghana Strengthen Trade Ties At Ghana Trade House Anniversary Durbar In Nairobi



By: Cynthia Masibo
 @themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- “Ghana is keen to deepen its economic ties with Kenya, with a focus on sectors like technology, agriculture, and manufacturing,” he said. He also highlighted Ghana’s commitment to the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), urging Kenyan businesses to tap into the numerous opportunities it presents.
- The Ghana High Commissioner to Kenya also took the stage to express his gratitude for the continued support from the Kenyan government. He reiterated that the Ghana Trade House has become a crucial platform for businesses from both countries to engage, share knowledge, and explore new avenues for trade and investment. “Kenya and Ghana have a rich history of collaboration, and through institutions like the Trade House, we are creating pathways for our businesses to grow and thrive together,” the High Commissioner said.



The Ghana Trade House in Kenya is a year old, having been established at the Sameer Business Park in May 2023.

The Ghana Trade House celebrated its anniversary with a colorful durbar held at a business park in Nairobi.

The event, which drew a wide array of dignitaries, was graced by high-ranking government officials, including the Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry from Ghana, and the Ghana High Commissioner to Kenya. Senior Government of Kenya (GOK) officials were also in attendance, showcasing the significance of the partnership between Kenya and Ghana.

The durbar, a traditional Ghanaian event signifying unity and celebration, marks a significant milestone for the Ghana Trade House, a key institution in fostering bilateral trade between the two nations. Since its establishment, the Trade House has been instrumental in facilitating the exchange of goods, services, and business opportunities between Kenya and Ghana, and today’s event highlighted these ongoing efforts.

In his opening remarks, the CEO of Kenya export promotion and branding agency, commended the strides made in trade relations, particularly emphasizing the need for more cooperation between Kenyan and Ghana-

ian enterprises.

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Senior GOK officials echoed these sentiments, with a focus on enhancing Kenya’s role as a regional trade hub. A representative from the Ministry of Trade and Industry of Kenya emphasized the importance of aligning Kenya’s trade strategies with other Afri-

can countries to promote intra-Africa trade. “Kenya sees immense value in strengthening our economic ties with Ghana. Through initiatives like the Ghana Trade House, we are making progress in boosting trade volumes and ensuring that our business communities benefit from these partnerships,” the official remarked.

The anniversary celebration also featured a series of discussions between Kenyan and Ghanaian business leaders, exploring ways to enhance trade relations. Sectors such as digital economy, sustainable agriculture, and entrepreneurship were highlighted as key areas for growth and collaboration. Various products from both countries were showcased at the event, further underlining the diverse trade potential between the two nations.

The Ghana Trade House has been a pivotal institution for bilateral trade, providing businesses with the necessary resources and support to expand into new markets. Through networking events like today’s durbar, it continues to solidify its role as a cornerstone of the Kenya-Ghana trade relationship.

As the event drew to a close, attend-

ees, including members of the press, were given the opportunity to interact with the officials and business leaders present. This allowed for in-depth discussions about future prospects and challenges in the business landscape of both countries. Many expressed optimism that the future of Kenya-Ghana trade relations is bright, with expectations that today’s engagements will lead to more fruitful partnerships.

The 2024 Ghana Trade House Anniversary Durbar marks a significant chapter in the history of trade cooperation between Kenya and Ghana, setting the stage for further collaboration in years to come.

SPORTS NEWS

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BREAKING NEWS



Sports >> *Harambee Stars' quest for qualification to the 2025 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) suffered another hit yesterday evening after suffering a 1-0 defeat

Cameroon Complete Double Over Harambee Stars With Kampala Win



Harambee Stars players during a training session. PHOTO/Timothy Olobulu

Harambee Stars' quest for qualification to the 2025 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) suffered another hit yesterday evening after suffering a 1-0 defeat at the hands of Cameroon in Kampala, the Indomitable Lions completing a double over Stars.

Substitute Boris Enow struck a brilliant 65th minute freekick to give Cameroon the victory, and inch them closer to qualification with two matches to go.

Enow struck a freekick beyond the wall from almost 35 yards out catching keeper Bryne Omondi offguard, a goal that the Central Africans guarded till the final whistle.

Coach Engin Firat had resorted back to his strongest 11, Bryne coming back in goal for Patrick Matasi whose gaffes were the source of criticism from the first leg. The coach also started Joseph Okumu who came on as a sub in the first leg, and he part-



nered Johnstone Omurwa at the heart of defense.

Daniel Anyembe moved to the right side, with Amos Nondi benched.

Stars gave a better performance, but couldn't get a goal when it mattered most. They almost

scored at the death when substitute Alphonse Omija's header from Erick 'Marcelo Ouma's curling cross from the right missed the target by a whisker.

Stars remain third in the table with four points after four matches, and now face a must

win situation in the final two games against Zimbabwe and Namibia next month.

Cameroon are on 10 points and just need a draw in the last two to confirm their ticket.

Capital Sport

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *Kenya's Rising Stars have edged closer to the semi-finals of the CECAFA Under-20 Championships after thrashing Djibouti 4-0 at the KMC Stadium in Dar es Salaam

Rising Stars Thrash Djibouti To Edge Closer To CECAFA U20 Semis



Kenya's Rising Stars line up before a past match at the CECAFA U20 Championships. PHOTO/CECAFA/X

Kenya's Rising Stars have edged closer to the semi-finals of the CECAFA Under-20 Championships after thrashing Djibouti 4-0 at the KMC Stadium in Dar es Salaam on Sunday, and now just need a point in their last match against Sudan to make the last four.

Albania-based Kevin Wangaya scored a brace in between Hassan Beja and Lawrence Okoth's goals, as Salim Babu's men rose to second in the standings with seven points, off two wins and a draw. Beja opened the scoring for Ken-

ya in the sixth minute, slamming the ball home from close range after some poor control from one of the Djibouti defenders gifted him the ball inside the box.

Wangaya then made it 2-0 minutes later, when he slid in to shoot the ball home after another piece of poor defending from Djibouti, who failed to clear the ball in their box.

Wangaya completed his brace just before halftime from the penalty spot, sending the keeper the wrong way after Beja had been

brought down inside the box.

In the second half, Stars finished the job early, Wangaya once again involved in the goal when he won the ball in transition, drove to the edge of the Djibouti box before feeding Okoth who struck the ball between the keeper's legs.

A place in the semis means Kenya are now just one step away from qualifying for the Under-20 Africa Cup of Nations for the first time ever. The two finalists from the competition will qualify for next year's U20 Cup of Nations.

Capital Sport

SPORTS NEWS



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SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



Godfred And Perry At The Microsoft Build Event

By: Joy Atieno Otieno
@themkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- Godfred Awudi is a dynamic student pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in Telecommunication Engineering and Computer Science, specializing in Software Engineering at ALX as part of the 19th cohort. Hailing from Amasaman, Ghana, Godfred is passionate about data science and artificial intelligence. He envisions using these cutting-edge technologies to develop innovative solutions for real-world challenges.
- Perry Kwabena Amoako, another standout student, is in his final year of a Bachelor of Science program in Information Technology Management, with a specialization in mobile application development and AI research. Perry's journey is deeply personal, shaped by witnessing his brother's battle with a serious illness, which has inspired his lifelong mission.

The extraordinary efforts of Godfred and Perry to turn adversity into opportunity earned them an all-expenses-paid trip to Seattle for the Microsoft Build event, a showcase of AI's future.

We were thrilled to learn about the outstanding accomplishments of two of our standout students from the ALX Software Engineering program, who were recognized at a prestigious tech conference. These exceptional individuals not only captured the attention of attendees but also secured an all-expenses-paid trip to Seattle for the Microsoft Build event, a showcase of AI's future. Their success is a testament to their pivotal roles in shaping the tech landscape and advancing AI in Africa. Here's a closer look at their inspiring journeys:

Meet Godfred Awudi

Godfred Awudi is a dynamic student pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in Telecommunication Engineering and Computer Science, specializing in Software Engineering at ALX as part of the 19th cohort. Hailing from Amasaman, Ghana, Godfred is passionate about data science and artificial intelligence. He envisions using these cutting-edge technologies to develop innovative solutions for real-world challenges.

Currently, Godfred is leading a project aimed at promoting mental wellness through technology, specifically targeting young adults and adolescents dealing with emotional distress. Driven by the often-overlooked issue of mental health among African youth, he is determined to use his software engineering skills to address this critical need. His project provides accessible mental health support through an online platform, offering users anonymity as they seek assistance from professional counselors. By destigmatizing mental health and providing practical solutions, Godfred's initiative aims to transform lives and foster a healthier society.

Meet Perry Kwabena Amoako

Perry Kwabena Amoako, another standout student, is in his final year of a Bachelor of Science program in Information Technology Manage-

ment, with a specialization in mobile application development and AI research. Perry's journey is deeply personal, shaped by witnessing his brother's battle with a serious illness, which has inspired his lifelong mission.

Raised in a humble but noble household, Perry's life changed dramatically when his brother was diagnosed with a tumor following what initially seemed like a minor injury. Despite medical interventions, including an MRI scan and a biopsy, his brother eventually underwent an amputation, a life-altering experience for Perry and his family.

Determined to turn adversity into opportunity, Perry is driven by the vision of revolutionizing cancer detection using AI and machine learning. His dream is to develop a technology capable of identifying cancer cells at their earliest stages through simple blood samples, reducing the need for invasive procedures and enabling early interventions. By championing the mantra "Disability is not inability," Perry seeks to empower individuals facing health challenges and pave the way for a brighter, more inclusive future.



Meet Godfred Awudi.

In Conclusion

The extraordinary efforts of Godfred and Perry exemplify the spirit of innovation and resilience that defines ALX SE students. Their unwavering commitment to using technology for social good highlights the transfor-

mative potential of education and entrepreneurship in driving positive change. As they continue to forge ahead on their respective journeys, they stand as beacons of inspiration for future generations of innovators and changemakers.



Meet Perry Kwabena Amoako