



The Burden of the World's Educators: Addressing the Challenges Teachers Face in Today's Society
 Teachers, once revered as the cornerstone of society, are now facing unprecedented challenges, criticism, and even danger in their professional lives. From verbal and physical abuse by parents and students to systemic neglect by educational authorities

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P. 12. Insufficient evidence that cannot stand in court and the desire to save taxpayers money are among the reasons why high-profile cases are withdrawn by the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP)

Gachagua Urges Gen Z To Register As Voters

Several prominent Mount Kenya leaders, including former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, have expressed growing dissatisfaction with President William Ruto's administration in a series of candid remarks. These comments, which focus on loyalty, governance, and community mobilisation, indicate deepening divisions within the ruling coalition and potential realignments as the 2027 election approaches. Gachagua, speaking to congregants at the Priesthood Fellowship Church in Kahawa West, urged calm and emphasised the importance of voter registration, referring to it as "our shield."



Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, speaking to congregants at the Priesthood Fellowship Church in Kahawa West

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

Caucus For Former Freedom Fighters Descendants Seeking Huge Compensation

The group; Mau Mau War Veterans Children Post-Colonial Elite Has An Office In Nairobi City Centre Where Registration Has Been Taking Place, With 40,000 Already Registration

By: MKT Correspondents

@themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- The foundation was represented by among others, its National chairman James Njuguna Mahuria while Mzee Gikonyo Githiga and Bishop Fundi Mwai led the association team.
- In his sermon, Bishop Gichure who represents AIC Church, Central area called on Kenyans to pray for conflicts and wars ravaging various parts of the world.
- He encouraged all believers to be more in prayers as the whole world needs God's intervention and hence there should be no politics in places of worship.

Descendants of former freedom fighters have been called upon to come out and register with a caucus that is promising huge Compensation for atrocities meted against their relatives.

The initiative is being coordinated by an Non-Governmental Organisation; Jeremiah Mugi Foundation and another group of former freedom fighters; Mau Mau War Veterans Association.

Yesterday, the two groups organised a prayer and thanks giving event at AIC Kirenga Church in Lari constituency, Kiambu County.

Hundreds of both groups members jammed the church where Bishop Geoffrey Gichure led the sermon.

The foundation was represented by among others, its National chairman James Njuguna Mahuria while Mzee Gikonyo Githiga and Bishop Fundi Mwai led the association team.

In his sermon, Bishop Gichure who represents AIC Church, Central area called on Kenyans to pray for conflicts and wars ravaging various parts of the world.

He encouraged all believers to be more in prayers as the whole world needs God's intervention and hence there should be no politics in places of worship.

The members of the foundation, the Veterans Association, Post colonial Elites and Matigari Welfare Association which was led by Bishop David Kiarie had a procession from the church to Wida Motel in Zambezi area, along Nairobi-Nakuru highway where elders from Baringo, Makueni and Meru counties received their Mau Mau Registers which will be used in crosschecking compensation details.

The team was joined by various leaders led by former Lari MP David Njuguna.

Those present expressed their excitement over gazettelement of Public Benefits Organisation Act No 8 ,2013 which they



Bishops Geoffrey Gichure (left) and Bishop Fundi Mwai at AIC Kirenga Church yesterday..

said will advance their course for compensation.

During the meeting, they also discussed pressing issues concerning compensation for Mau Mau land claims and a broader recognition of their historical contributions in the fight for the country's inde-

pendence from British Colony.

Those present were also sensitized on various issues affecting the descendants of former freedom fighters.

The organizers urged those interested to join them to register at the National Archives on the second floor offices along

Moi Avenue in Nairobi.

Members of the public may contact National Coordinator Gikonyo wa Githiga on 0758 958 006 or James Njuguna Mahuria on phone number 0722 837 882.

Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times



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NEWS IN BRIEF



Kericho County Government will construct a Cultural and Heritage Museum to protect, promote, and valorize the Kipsigis community's traditional knowledge and associated assets. Speaking during the Kipsigis Cultural Festival at the Kiprugut Chumo Stadium, the County Governor, Eric Mutai, said Kericho has a very rich traditional base, especially in matters of traditional knowledge, skills, assets, and heritage sites. Therefore, the construction of a museum would be ideal, to ensure the preservation of Kipsigis traditional knowledge and cultural expressions for future generations to learn. The Governor also said the museum would be significant in promoting tourism, as people from all walks of life would visit and learn about the rich Kipsigis heritage and culture.



Chief of Staff and Head of Public Service, Felix Koskei, has said that the recruitment of Agripreneurs is in line with Kenya's Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), which aims to prioritize agriculture, to ensure 100 percent food and nutrition security for all Kenyans. Koskei, who spoke after laying the foundation stone at Madaras Senior School and International Curriculum Campus and later inspecting the ongoing works at the Lower Kuja Irrigation Project-Phase II in Nyatike Sub-county-Migori, emphasised that food security, is a key government agenda and Irrigation projects play a critical role in realizing it. He also unveiled 300 newly recruited youth as Agripreneurs in Migori, which is part of the government's broader agenda to create job opportunities for young people, particularly by empowering them as agripreneurs, to support local farmers in the rice, sugar, and other productive sectors in the county.



After nearly a month with no new Mpox case reported in the country, the National Public Health Laboratory, has confirmed three new cases from Mombasa, Nakuru, and Nairobi counties. Health Cabinet Secretary, Dr Deborah Barasa, said that the report brings the total number of confirmed Mpox cases reported in the country to 17. Three cases have been reported in Nakuru, two each in the counties of Kajiado, Bungoma, Nairobi and Mombasa, with the counties of Taita Taveta, Busia, Makueni, Kericho, Uasin Gishu and Kilifi reporting one case each. Dr. Barasa said that currently, three cases are under management, and 13 patients have fully recovered and one reported death. So far, 83 contacts have been identified, with 78 completing the required 21-day follow-up. Of the contacts, three have tested positive for Mpox, and two remain under active follow-up.

The polio vaccination campaign is here to protect our children's future! From last Saturday to Wednesday parents have been urged to make sure their children are vaccinated in any of these high-risk counties: Busia, Bungoma, Trans-Nzoia, West Pokot, Turkana, Nairobi, Kiambu, Machakos, and Kajiado.



Kagumo Teachers Training College held its 40th graduation ceremony last Friday where Nyeri Governor Dr Mutahi Kahiga was the Chief Guest. In his address, Dr Kahiga noted that the college graduands are regarded as a coveted resource in this republic, and urged the young men and women to embrace their responsibility with humility and enthusiasm. A total of 344 graduands were awarded their diplomas from the 2021/2024 cohort. The cohort is the last to graduate under the 844 curriculum, with the first intake of September 2024 under the CBC curriculum already well on course with their training. Currently, the college has 1,111 students' population, releasing an average of 300 teachers each year into the job market. Dr Kahiga was accompanied by among others; its Chief Principal Irene Mwangi, officials of the County Commissioner's office led by Commissioner Ronald Mwiwawi, James Nyaga representing the Regional Director of Education, George Thuo representing the Regional Director TSC and the TSC fraternity, KUPPET Secretary General Akelo Misoro, the Principals of Nyeri Technical and Outspan Colleges and the college board members led by Chair Prof. Beatrice Warue.



YOUR OPINION IS INVALUABLE

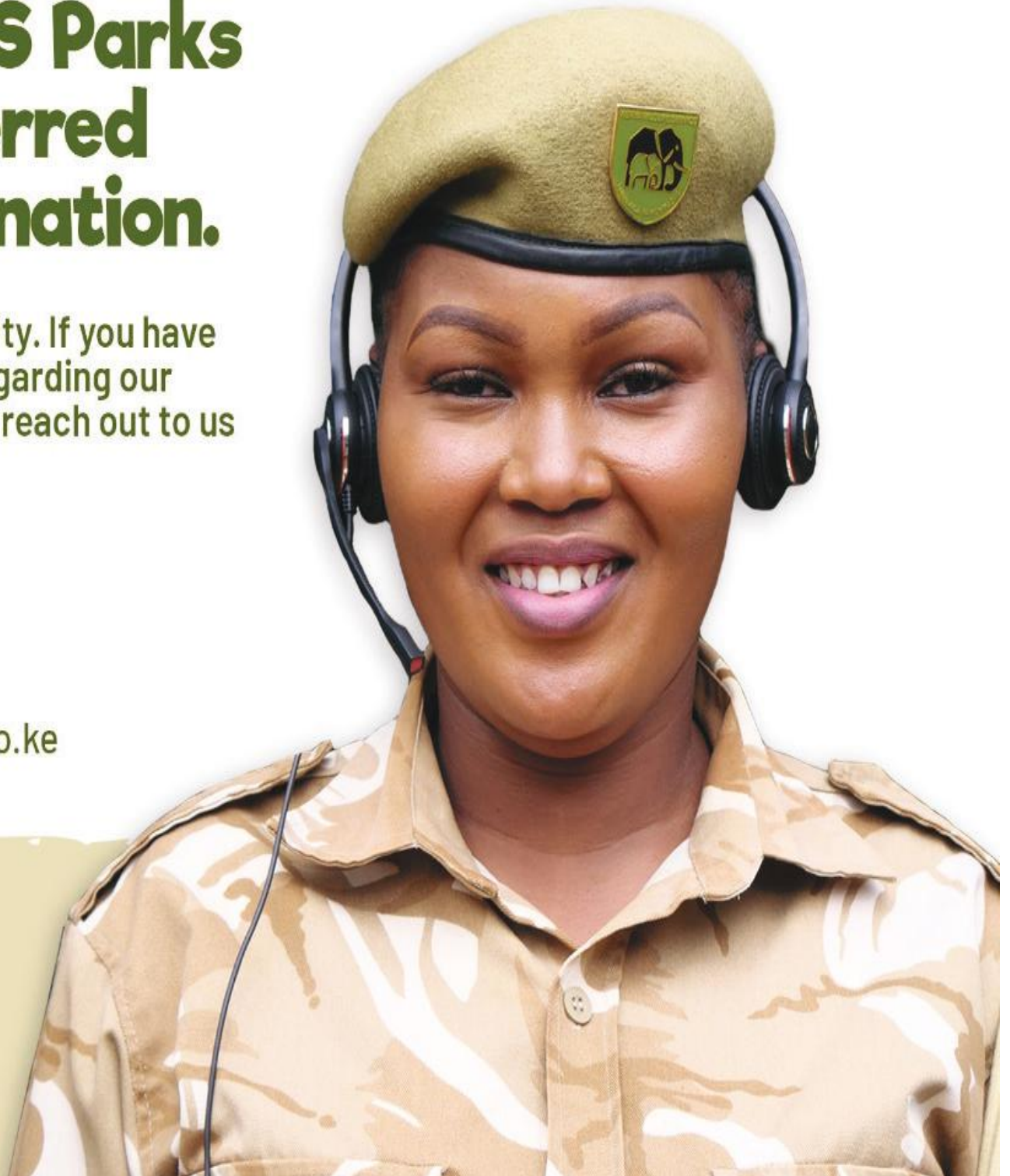
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Gachagua Urges Gen Z To Register As Voters, Declares It Mt. Kenya's 'Shield For 2027'

By: Citizen Reporter
@themkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

“I’m talking to a lot of people, and when the time is right, I will tell you,” he said. “We will tell you what we have discussed at the right time, so that you can also chime in and tell us what you think, ensuring we never find ourselves in such a hole again.”

Gachagua added a touch of humour by joking that if his followers are unable to contain their frustrations, they should express them “through songs and dance” rather than direct confrontation, reinforcing his call for peace in the midst of rising political tensions.

Several prominent Mount Kenya leaders, including former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, have expressed growing dissatisfaction with President William Ruto’s administration in a series of candid remarks.

These comments, which focus on loyalty, governance, and community mobilisation, indicate deepening divisions within the ruling coalition and potential realignments as the 2027 election approaches.

Gachagua, speaking to congregants at the Priesthood Fellowship Church in Kahawa West, urged calm and emphasised the importance of voter registration, referring to it as “our shield.”

He encouraged parents in attendance to advise their Gen-Z children to obtain IDs and register to vote, emphasising the importance of voter participation in the region’s future political influence.

Gachagua, who has become more outspoken in recent months, indirectly criticised regional legislators who supported his ouster motion.

He remarked, “Some people can sell their parents for the right price,” referring to those who signed his ouster motion.

Gachagua urged his followers to remain calm, stating that Mount Kenya leaders are “wiser now” and “will always stay awake” politically.

He assured his supporters that, despite being sidelined, he has met with religious leaders, businesspeople, and professionals to discuss future plans.

“I’m talking to a lot of people, and when the time is right, I will tell you,” he said. “We will tell you what we have discussed at the right time, so that you can also chime in and tell us what you think, ensuring we never



Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, being welcomed by Bishop JJ Gitahi at the Priesthood Fellowship Church in Kahawa West

find ourselves in such a hole again.”

Gachagua added a touch of humour by joking that if his followers are unable to contain their frustrations, they should express them “through songs and dance” rather than direct confrontation, reinforcing his call for peace in the midst of rising political tensions.

Gachagua also urged renewed efforts to address pressing social issues, such as the illegal spirit trade that has devastated many Central Kenyan communities.

His comments on governance and social issues reflect his ongoing dissatisfaction with the administration’s handling of important regional issues.

Murang’a Senator Joe Nyutu echoed Gachagua’s concerns and expressed disappointment with President Ruto’s

recent reshuffle of key Mount Kenya figures. “President Ruto, there’s something wrong!” Nyutu declared, condemning the dismissal of loyalists like Moses Kuria and Mithika Linturi.

He also expressed concern about the reported threats against Ndindi Nyoro, a Ruto ally, implying that internal divisions within the ruling coalition may be undermining unity.

“We must put our house in order,” Nyutu added, calling for stronger internal loyalty and cohesion within the Mount Kenya region as it prepares for the 2027 elections.

Embakasi Central MP Mejjadonk Gathiru joined the conversation, revealing that he had previously suggested Gachagua resign from office, which Gachagua reportedly rejected,

claiming that doing so would entail accepting unfounded accusations against him.

Gathiru also expressed concern about rising abductions and the suppression of free speech, accusing the media of emphasising tribalism only when Mount Kenya communities band together politically.

His remarks highlight a long-standing grievance among Central Kenya leaders about the perceived double standard in national political narratives, as well as the treatment of Mount Kenya figures in national discourse.

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President Ruto Leads Unity Plea In Kakamega

By: Ben Chumba
@themkenyatimes

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Calls of unity dominated a church service at Ekambuli Church of God in Kwisero, Kakamega County, where President William Ruto joined a section of western Kenya top leaders in calling for unity of purpose devoid of tribal divisions among all Kenyans.

The leaders who pledged their full support for President William Ruto's administration and vision of a united Kenya further appealed to all the citizenry to move beyond the 2022 elections and instead focus on the country's development.

The leaders drawn from Western region also warned against divisive

rhetoric noting that the country must now shift its focus to nation building for the benefit of all Kenyans.

In his address, President Ruto also focused on key initiatives for national progress, particularly in the health-care sector.

He called on Kenyans to register with the Social Health Authority, emphasizing that the scheme will ensure equitable access to healthcare for all citizens, especially the vulnerable.

The President also reaffirmed his commitment to reforming the sugar industry, following the recent signing of the Sugar Bill 2022.



President William Ruto was joined a section of western Kenya top leaders in Kwisero, Kakamega County

Kirinyaga County Rolls Out Massive Livestock Vaccination Drive Against Lumpy Skin Disease

By: MKT Correspondent
@themkenyatimes

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The County Government of Kirinyaga has rolled out a massive livestock vaccination drive against Lumpy Skin Disease.

The exercise that is being undertaken by the county's veterinary department aims at immunizing the local livestock population and targets around 80,000 head of cattle.

It is part of an elaborate program by Governor Anne Waiguru to enhance livestock production especially in the dairy sector.

Through Wezesha Kirinyaga program, dairy farmers in the county have benefitted from subsidized livestock feeds, Artificial Insemination (A.I.) services, livestock feeds production equipment, milk processing equipment, training as well as marketing opportunities.

The County Executive Committee Member (CECM) for Agriculture, Livestock, Veterinary and Fisheries, Dr. John Gachara, said that the ongoing vaccination campaign is the first cycle in the current financial year.

"We normally have two vaccination cycles in every financial year to ensure that we control livestock diseases and vectors. We had earlier on undertaken livestock disease control campaigns whereby we held about



A veterinary officer vaccinating a dog.

.....

60 farmers training barazas across the county," said the CECM, urging all farmers to ensure their animals are vaccinated during the one-month-long exercise expected to end on Saturday.

Gachara noted that the vaccination will not only safeguard the lives of the livestock but also the livelihoods of the farmers and the county's economy. He added that it's also an opportunity for the farmers to be sensitized on herd management and best livestock care practices so that their animals can remain healthy and thriving.

Farmers who had their animals vaccinated during the door to door exercise expressed their gratitude to the County Government for highly subsidizing the vaccination saying that it

has saved them a lot of money.

"I have had my 16 animals vaccinated for only KSh100 per animal. Ordinarily I could have paid KSh1,000 per animal to the private service providers. Out of the KSh16,000 that I could have paid, I have only parted with a small fee of KSh1,600, thereby saving a lot of money that I can put to other uses," said Rose Wambui, a farmer from Umbui village in Kutus.

Her animals included nine cows and several dogs and cats. She said that her family was impressed by the deep commitment by the extension officers who regularly visit her farm to offer advice on livestock management enabling her to raise a healthy herd.

Besides saving money, the door to door exercise has also been wel-



Kirinyaga County Executive Committee Member (CECM) for Agriculture, Livestock, Veterinary and Fisheries, Dr. John Gachara briefing the media.

.....

comed by the farmers since they do not have to waste time taking their livestock to the public barns.

"Vaccinating animals within our farms saves us time and also reduces interaction of many herds thereby preventing transmission from sick animals to healthy ones," observed Hillary Kamotoku after vaccination of his animals.

Margaret Thiguku, an elderly woman from Kirinyaga Central could also not hide her joy as her two dairy cows got the jab. She said that getting vaccines from private veterinary service providers was beyond the reach of many small scale farmers hailing the county government for subsidizing the exercise.

The County Head of Veterinary Services, Dr. Catherine Mulonzi, said

that the vaccination exercise also targeted thousands of dogs and cats who are being immunized against rabies. She noted that lumpy skin disease is one of the endemic diseases in the county, hailing county government's timely intervention.

According to World Organization for Animal Health, Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD) is a highly infectious disease of cattle characterized by fever, nodules on the skin, mucous membranes and internal organs, emaciation, enlarged lymph nodes, oedema of the skin, and sometimes death. The disease also causes temporary reduction in milk production, temporary or permanent sterility in bulls, damages to hides and, occasionally leads to death.

Kindiki: Economy Improving

By: MKT Correspondent
 @themkenyatimes

The country's economy is moving in the right direction, Deputy President Prof. Kithure Kindiki has said.

Thus, the DP noted, Kenyans were destined for better things.

"The macroeconomic situation in our Country is better than it was in 2022. Inflation is now at 2.7%, the lowest in 17 years," said. This is the result of the heavy lifting, hardwork and progressive economic transformation policies initiated by President William Ruto that are bearing fruit, he observed.

He added, "progressively, the government is resolving the economic challenges and improving the livelihoods of our people by boosting their household incomes. We thank the Kenyan citizens for their patience".

Prof. Kindiki noted that the country will not realise its national goals, dreams and aspirations unless citizens are united and cohesive. "Hatred

and division is the ultimate killer of our Indivisibility as a Nation. We are one people, united by the emblems of our nationhood; the Flag, the Map, the National Anthem," he reiterated.

He said that the government is determined to complete all pending infrastructure development programmes and initiate new ones, and ensure prudent management of resources by cracking down on corruption and wastage.

The DP made the remarks when he joined the congregation at Jesus Palace of Praise Church, Mwatate, Taita Taveta County for Sunday Worship and Thanksgiving Service.

He was accompanied by among others; Members of Parliament, Lydia Haika (Woman Representative, Taita Taveta County), Peter Shake (Mwatate), John Bwire (Taveta), Danson Mwashako (Wundanyi), Carolyn Ng'elechei (Woman Representative, Elgeyo Marakwet County), John Kiarie 'KJ' (Dagoretti South), Nimrod Mbai (Kitui East) and Geofrey Ruku (Mbeere North) as well as several Members of County Assembly and other County leaders.



Deputy President Kithure Kindiki addressing faithful in Mwatate, Taita Taveta county yesterday

Constitutional Crossroads: Balancing Progress And Democracy In Kenya

By: James Kilonzo Bwire
 @themkenyatimes

Francis Atwoli, the Secretary General of the Central Organisation of Trade Unions (COTU), has ignited a contentious debate by calling on President William Ruto to initiate changes to Kenya's 2010 Constitution. Atwoli argues that the current constitutional framework impedes the President's ability to implement his development agenda effectively, particularly due to provisions that allow citizens to challenge government projects in court.

Atwoli contends that these legal challenges are holding back national projects and could prevent the President from achieving his goals within his first term. He insists that while the President may want to undertake projects for the country's benefit, the constitution allows people to move to court and halt these initiatives, even when they are potentially beneficial.

This proposal, while aimed at facilitating development, raises significant concerns about the balance of power and democratic principles in Kenya. The current constitution's provisions for legal challenges serve as a crucial check on executive power, and remov-

ing or weakening these safeguards could lead to unchecked authority and potential abuses. The ability of citizens to challenge government actions in court is a fundamental democratic right, and limiting this right could erode civil liberties and public participation in governance.

Moreover, altering the constitution to restrict legal challenges could undermine the judiciary's role in interpreting and upholding the law. This could potentially lead to a concentration of power in the executive branch, upsetting the delicate balance of Kenya's democratic system.

It's crucial to note that changing Kenya's constitution is not a simple process. The constitution itself outlines specific procedures for amendments, including the popular initiative route, which requires significant public support and approval from county assemblies and Parliament. This process ensures that constitutional changes reflect the will of the people and are not made hastily or without broad consensus.

This is not the first time that calls for constitutional amendments have been made in Kenya. Previous attempts, such as the Building Bridges Initiative (BBI), have faced legal challenges and public scrutiny. The trade union movement, including COTU, has histori-

cally supported constitutional reforms aimed at promoting unity and development. However, these efforts must be balanced against the need to preserve democratic principles and civil rights.

Atwoli's call for constitutional change comes at a time when Kenya's political landscape is already complex. The country recently held a general election in 2022, and the current administration is still in its early stages. Introducing significant constitutional changes at this juncture could potentially destabilize the political environment and divert attention from pressing economic and social issues.

It's worth noting that President Ruto himself has expressed frustration with court rulings that have delayed the implementation of some of his government's projects. During the Inaugural Supreme Court Conference, he urged the judiciary to consider the manifestos that led to his election when making decisions that could impact the implementation of his projects.

The debate surrounding constitutional amendments also touches on broader issues of governance and development in Kenya. While there is a clear need for efficient implementation of national projects, it's equally important to maintain the systems of checks and balances that protect against potential abuses of power. The challenge lies in



finding a balance that allows for progress while safeguarding democratic principles.

As Kenya continues to navigate its path of democratic development, it is essential that any constitutional amendments are made through inclusive, transparent processes that prioritize the long-term stability and prosperity of the nation. The debate sparked by Atwoli's comments provides an opportunity for Kenyans to reflect on the role of their constitution in safeguarding rights and promoting development, and to consider carefully any proposals for change.

Ultimately, the question facing Kenya is not just about amending the constitution, but about how to create a governance structure that can effectively deliver development while maintaining the robust democratic safeguards that are crucial to a healthy, pluralistic society. This debate is likely to continue shaping Kenya's political landscape in the coming years, as the nation seeks to balance the imperatives of progress with the preservation of its hard-won democratic institutions.

James Kilonzo Bwire is a Media and Communication Practitioner.

County Bill To Incorporate Women In Sports Activities In The Offing

By: Kenya News Agency

Murang'a County Assembly is working on a Bill that will see women get support and be incorporated in active sporting activities.

Nominated MCA Tonny Manucho who represents youth in the Assembly has revealed the Sports Bill before the floor of the house would ensure women/girls get similar support like that accorded to men in sports.

He said once it sails through, women teams would be introduced to various sports and get material and financial support to assist them participate in regional and national games.

Over the weekend, Manucho who was accompanied by nominated MCA Gladys Wambui during women's football match at Ihura Stadium, said once the Assembly resumes from recess mid this month, the MCAs would debate upon the Bill and hoped it would sail through.

"In this county, men have been favoured when it comes to support. We have many soccer teams and also teams in other various sports but

women have been sidelined. Once the Bill before the floor of the House is passed, our women and girls will get support to engage in sporting activities," added the MCA.

Manucho pointed out that most games involved men and there needed to be a Bill that would clearly stipulate and incorporate women and children in more games.

On her part, MCA Wambui said that most games have not been involving women and it was the high time they debated on the sports Bill calling on women to be more proactive in sports.

"In Murang'a, we have women who are talented in different sports but unfortunately they have not gotten the opportunity and support to nurture their talents. Once we pass the bill, those interested in sports will be engaged in sports," added Wambui.

She argued that in the recent past, gender-based violence and torture against women cases have been on increase saying the football match was meant to create awareness on the vices.

Women soccer teams namely Kiharu Queens and Murang'a Starlet participated in the soccer match where the



Murang's nominated MCA Gladys Wambui addressing the meeting last Saturday.

latter won 1-0.

During the match that was also sponsored by JCM Church, locals benefited with a free medical camp where more than 1,000 locals attended.

"We had also organized a free medical camp where more than 1,000 people were attended and about 400 patients who had eye problems, the

majority of whom had glaucoma (eye pressure), which is more dangerous than eye cataract, got optical care," said the MCA who is commonly known as Mama Mazingira.

Dr. Anne Gakii who supervised the medical camp said 25 cataract patients would be operated on for free adding that recovering eyesight for

a glaucoma patient was harder than operating on a cataract.

On his part, Bishop Ben Kamau of JCM church donated avocado seedlings for planting in a bid to support conservation of environment calling local leaders to continue uplifting women in sports.

Kenyans Urged To Disregard Misinformation Surrounding Polio Vaccine

By: Hellen Lunalo
@themtkenyatimes

Kiambu Director of Health Dr Hillary Kagwa has firmly refuted reports and propaganda circulating about the polio immunization programme, assuring Kenyans that the vaccines are safe and approved by the World Health Organization (WHO).

During a stakeholder sensitization forum held over the weekend to discuss the rollout of the second round of the Polio Immunisation Campaign in nine counties in Kenya, Dr. Kagwa emphasized that the vaccine was considered a noble one medically, while there have been rare instances of children experiencing side effects related to their genetic makeup, these effects were generally manageable and in a majority of case often resolved on their own.

"There is considerable misinformation surrounding the polio vaccine. These vaccines have been approved

by the World Health Organization (WHO) and confirmed to be safe. It's important to note that adverse effects following immunization can occur with any vaccine or medication, as individuals have varying genetic makeup, which can influence their responses," he explained.

He noted that due to the discovery of multiple polio cases in certain areas of Nairobi, an immunization campaign would be carried out across all seven sub-counties of Kiambu that surround the capital city.

"We aim at vaccinating approximately 300,000 children under the age of 5. Those who received their vaccinations during the initial phase in October can participate in this second round to enhance their immunity," said Dr Kagwa.

Stakeholders from AMREF who were also present at the event underscored the significance of the vaccination initiative, urging parents and guardians to ensure their children receive the necessary immunizations.

This follows the Ministry of Health's announcement on Friday that the Oc-



tober 2024 vaccination campaign had led to the deaths of two children.

Director General for Health Dr Patrick Amoth announced that the Ministry had received 23 reports of post-vaccination events related to the campaign, indicating that the Ministry had consulted with the Kenya National Vaccines Safety Advisory Committee (KNVSAC), which convened on October 23 and 24 to evaluate all the reported cases.

He explained that among the 23 reported and investigated cases, 16 were classified as non-serious, pre-

senting symptoms such as generalized itchy rash, fever, conjunctivitis, body rashes, abdominal pain, and diarrhoea. In contrast, 7 cases were deemed serious, featuring symptoms such as fever, convulsions, and weakness in the lower limbs.

Additionally, an analysis of both serious and non-serious events indicated that all 16 of the non-serious cases had been resolved, while 5 of the serious cases were still in the process of recovery.

Dr. Amoth noted that most cases of Adverse Events Following Immuni-

zation (AEFI) were categorized as coincidental, emphasizing the significance of thorough causality assessments to accurately differentiate between coincidental events and genuine vaccine-related reactions stating that the distinction was crucial for maintaining public trust in the safety of the immunization program.

He observed that over 3.6 million healthy children received vaccinations during the campaign, indicating that the vaccines were largely safe.

Suspects Arrested With Counterfeit Liquor Worth KSh3.4 Million In Machakos

By: MKT Correspondent
 @themkenyentimes

Three suspects have been arrested in Mumbuni of Machakos County and a vehicle impounded with Counterfeit liquor worth KSh3.4 million.

According to Machakos Deputy County Commissioner, David Rotich, the counterfeit liquor was found at a residential house in Mumbuni after a tip-off from the public and quick response from the Machakos joint security team.

The DCC, while speaking to the press at the County Commander's Office, disclosed that they were able to seize 466 boxes of Trace alcohol and 517 boxes of Super brand counterfeit alcohol from the suspects worth Sh.3.4 million.

"Police officers, acting on a tip-off from members of the public, went to Mumbuni area, arrested three suspects and confiscated two different brands of counterfeit liquor," said Rotich.

He commended the various agen-

cies, including Nacada, Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) and Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA). Who are aiding in the investigations and verification of the counterfeit liquor.

Machakos County Police Commander, Patrick Lobolia, credited the community for their good relations with the police, that led to the confiscation of the counterfeit liquor in Mumbuni.

Lobolia said the increase of Police patrol in Machakos town has caused criminals to hide their illegal activities in the villages and noted that the police are vigilant and will flush them out from their hideouts.

He sent a stern warning to the landlords and house owners in Machakos, to ensure they vet their tenants, before renting their houses to criminals or risk facing arrest.

"Those who rent out their houses or apartments, should ensure they vet their tenants, to know who they are and where they work or they will get arrested," warned Lobolia.

The Police Commander said the three suspects are in custody awaiting completion of investigation and arraignment in court.



Social Health Insurance Fund Is Making A Difference



By: Joseph Mutua Ndonga
mutuandonga@yahoo.com



Worth Noting:

- The medical reports prepared by the Oncology department show that they were responding well to treatment. Some had recovered and were waiting for the doctors to approve their discharge.
- The patients interviewed were upbeat about the services offered by SHA.
- Since SHA came, things have changed for better. SHA through Social Health Insurance Fund (SHIF) is not only paying our bills but also ensuring we are getting quality treatment.
- Makueni hospital is just one of the success stories. SHA is making a difference in many hospitals across the country.
- These success stories came in the wake of the recent media campaign apparently sponsored by those opposed to SHA/SHIF.

Social Health Authority (SHA) is making a big difference in terms of offering a comprehensive medical cover to both inpatient and outpatient in public and private hospitals it has signed a contract with.

Contrary to the impression created, the biggest beneficiaries are those suffering from critical/chronic illnesses such as cancer, diabetic and high blood pressure.

This medical cover, no matter one's economic status, is giving them a chance to live.

The cover caters for the medical bills and ensures the patients get proper and quality treatment.

For doubting Thomases and critics of President William Ruto, I wish to refer them to Makueni Level-Five Hospital.

There were a number of patients suffering from cancer who were currently being admitted there.

The medical reports prepared by the Oncology department show that they were responding well to treatment. Some had recovered and were waiting for the doctors to approve their discharge.

The patients interviewed were upbeat about the services offered by SHA.

Since SHA came, things have changed for better. SHA through Social Health Insurance Fund (SHIF) is not only paying our bills but also ensuring we are getting quality treatment.

Makueni hospital is just one of the success stories. SHA is making a difference in many hospitals across the country.

These success stories came in the wake of the recent media campaign apparently sponsored by those opposed to SHA/SHIF.

One of the station showed an image of an old man, who is battling a chronic terminal ailment, and narrated his story.

It alleged that the man had gone for days without taking drugs and receiving critical treatment.

This is because his family did not have the cash for these services.

This TV station wanted Kenyans to believe that his woes started soon after the government rolled out Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

Before, the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) cover was allegedly catering for his medical expenses.

To me, this story had been cooked and reeked of sheer/cheap propaganda and rumors.

By showing the images of this man and disclosing his name to show he hailed from Kalenjin community, this left no doubt the station was championing the narrative of the critics of President William Ruto.

One would have expected this station to carry out investigations on this matter before airing the story.

For instance, visiting the hospital where this mzee was treated and find out.

First, why he was discharged? Secondly, Did he have a medical cover? Had his personal data been successfully



Makueni Governor Mutula Kilonzo Jnr.

transferred to SHIF? Had that hospital signed a contract with SHA?

Notably, Social Health Authority (SHA) and Social Health Insurance Fund (SHIF) are key pillars of UHC.

In a simple language, the two are the main houses.

Since the transition to SHA, we have had a number of successful stories on patients suffering from critical/illnesses receiving proper and quality treatment and their medical bills cleared by SHIF fund.

Just two days ago, doctors at Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH) conducted a delicate surgery of kidney transplant. The patient is now recuperating and SHIF is catering for all needs of this patient via its numerous packages.

If iNooro TV, one of the stations under Royal Media Service (RMS) means well, one would have expected its reporters to visit this patient and other patients admitted in other hospitals who were benefiting from SHA.

Consequently, the station should have aired these as success stories. I'm sure many would agree with me

that the rollout of SHA revolutionizes healthcare in Kenya.

This confirms President William Ruto is delivering on the promises he made during the campaign.

Ensuring that Kenyans access affordable and quality healthcare stood out as one of his top priorities.

When presiding over the launch of UHC, Health Cabinet Secretary Dr Debra Barasa minced no word in congratulating President Ruto for keeping his word.

Dr Debra later admitted that the transition has been encountering some teething problems but as a Ministry we are not leaving anything to chance in addressing them.

SHA/SHIF are created by an Act of Parliament. Kenyans are now required to register as members of SHIF. The data released a few days ago showed that 13 million Kenyans have so far registered.

Under SHIF, the monthly payment is not pegged on a flat rate. The deductions from the payslips of those in formal employment is high. The rates for

the poor and vulnerable Kenyans now ranges from Sh300 and Sh500. The government will pay monthly bills for the elderly and those with severe disabilities.

Unlike the National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF) which only catered for bed expenses for the in-patients, the new SHIF card is all-inclusive. In light of this, the rollout of UHC is indeed a revolution.

It is worth noting that the previous governments of President Mwai Kibaki and his successor Uhuru Kenyatta shared a similar dream. But they had made very little progress by the time each completed his two-five-year constitutional terms.

The critics of President Ruto are envious of this success. This is because they know SHA will shape up his legacy in a big way. Their efforts to sabotage this noble course have continued to hit a dead end. This is because majority of Kenyans fully support the President.

Joseph Mutua Ndonga Is A Writer And Social Commentator

Explained; Why The ODPP Withdraws High-Profile Court Cases

By: MKT Reporter
 @themkenyaintimes

Insufficient evidence that cannot stand in court and the desire to save taxpayers money are among the reasons why high-profile cases are withdrawn by the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP)

Deputy Director of the Department of Prosecution Training Institute Mr. Aloys Kemo explained that evidence in all the cases that have previously been withdrawn could not sustain the charges and those indicted were likely to win and sue the government for compensation, so the cases were withdrawn to save the taxpayers money.

Kemo said withdrawal of cases by the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) is not strange and that over 1,000 cases have been withdrawn so far.

“The withdrawal of cases is something that is done every day countrywide. It is only that we focus on those of senior persons,” the official indicated.

Addressing legal experts, judicial officers, law students, policy makers, departmental heads and members of the public during an -Office of Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions Open Day- held at the Red Cross Hall in Nakuru, Kemo explained that before any case is withdrawn, assessment is done on its viability and the reasons must be convincing to the court. The event was themed ‘Mash-taka yenye uhaki na yenye usawa’.

“We have had many instances where the courts have declined the withdrawal of some cases because the reasons given by the ODPP were not convincing, so we do not withdraw cases just for the sake of it,” the official elaborated.

Kemo affirmed that ODPP had no ill motive while dropping charges against some cases. He said the Prosecution should not play a passive role and prosecute every matter presented by an investigative agency that does not meet the threshold.

“One of the cardinal duties of a Prosecutor is to ensure proper facts are placed before court for adjudication hence the need to constantly review decisions to prosecute. The decision to prosecute is one of the most important aspects in the criminal justice chain. The decision to prosecute is weighty and cannot be left to the hands of an investigator,” Kemo pointed out.

The Prosecutor stated the official bears the ultimate responsibility in making the decision to prosecute while the ODPP bears the sole responsibility to interrogate every aspect of an investigative file.

“The ODPP is not and should not be a conveyor belt. The ODPP works in coordination with various investigative agencies. The entire criminal justice system is like a chain that should not be broken, it is a complementary relationship,” he explained.

The Deputy Director maintained that the docket had done well in prosecution of cases touching on high profile individuals.

He explained that some of the circumstances that forced the office to declare a case lacked enough evidence.

“When a matter is before the court, during the trial, you might encounter some information or some evidence from the defence that was not available at the time you were deciding to charge. At that point, you will need to go back and review and you may be forced to withdraw the case,” he explained.

In another circumstance, he said the witness might lose interest in the case and withdraw or in the case of the death of a witness.

He also mentioned withdrawal by the complainant; “In some cases, we have complainants declare that they have no interest in the case. They have reconciled with the suspect and don’t want us to proceed”.

Kemo further said that the office might be forced to withdraw a case considering the circumstances under which a person was charged, which might change over time due to public interest or other factors.

He also listed the incident where witnesses gave contradictory evidence, which then forced the court to go back to the drawing board.

When such withdrawal happens, the Public Prosecutor does anticipate losses resulting from the loss of time and resources in pursuing the case.

However, the Deputy Director said the withdrawals would rather save the taxpayers a lot of money that might have been paid to the accused for damages after they were acquitted.

“When the ODPP realizes that this case will lead to an acquittal under section 210 where the court will say there was no evidence whatsoever, and when such a high-profile person is acquitted and they move to civil court to claim damages, then you can be sure it can be millions because of their status in the society,” he added.

He further refuted claims of the Office withdrawing cases of only highly profiled individuals, mentioning that there were countless cases withdrawn in courts all over the country daily for lack of evidence.

Nakuru County Commissioner Mr. Loyford Kibaara stated that by or-



Deputy Director of the Department of Prosecution Training Institute Mr. Aloys Kemo

ganizing the event, the ODPP was reflecting fairness and equality in the professional prosecution process.

While upholding that integrity is the core value in the criminal justice system, Kibaara said incidences of corruption were affecting service delivery and diminishing public confidence in State run institutions.

He stated that public officers needed to foster public trust and promote ethical behaviour adding that prosecution was one of the core components of the criminal justice chain.

“The role of prosecution is entrusted in the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) as enshrined under Article 157 of the Constitution. Further, Article 157(10) provides that the DPP does not require the consent of any person or authority for commencement of criminal proceedings and in the exercise of its powers or functions, the DPP shall not be under the direction or control of any person or authority,” elaborated the administrator.

Kibaara indicated that in exercise of his powers, the DPP is bound by the provisions of Article 157(11) that required the DPP to have regard to public interest, the interest of administration of justice and need to avoid abuse of the legal process.

He explained that investigative agencies were required to adhere to various provisions of the Constitution adding that to institute criminal prosecutions, the ODPP depends on various investigative agencies.

Kibaara mentioned “Section 2(1) of the ODPP Act defines an Investigative Agency as, “in relation to public prosecutions means ... Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission...”. Once an investigative agency submits its findings, the ODPP is required to peruse the file based on laid down criteria. Section 4 of the ODPP Act provides the guiding principles that must

be adhered to in whatever decision the ODPP takes,” he noted.

These, he said, include, the rules of natural justice, the need to serve the cause of justice, prevent abuse of the legal process and public interest, among others.

The ODPP, observed Kibaara, is required to ensure all necessary evidence is gathered, and no loopholes are left.

“Once investigations are completed, the same is submitted to the prosecutorial agency to give appropriate direction, which may include no further action is required, or to investigate further certain critical areas, or direct the matter to diversion, among others,” he said.

Before the 2010 Constitution, the Police Force (as it then was) was both the investigator and prosecutor in all lower court matters.

The prosecutorial office was a mere department under the Office of the Attorney General.

ODPP was delinked from the Office of the Attorney General after the promulgation of the 2010 Constitution.

The system of checks and balances introduced by the Constitution, Kibaara said, must always be maintained to ensure fairness.

“A Prosecutor is also required to constantly review the evidence on record in order to ensure quality prosecution. Section 5(4)(e) of the ODPP Act provides for the power to review a decision to prosecute or not to prosecute any criminal offence,” the administrator said.

He noted that successful prosecution required thorough investigations using modern investigative techniques and that all players in the chain must play their role and work seamlessly.

Worth Noting:

- Kemo affirmed that ODPP had no ill motive while dropping charges against some cases. He said the Prosecution should not play a passive role and prosecute every matter presented by an investigative agency that does not meet the threshold.
- “One of the cardinal duties of a Prosecutor is to ensure proper facts are placed before court for adjudication hence the need to constantly review decisions to prosecute. The decision to prosecute is one of the most important aspects in the criminal justice chain. The decision to prosecute is weighty and cannot be left to the hands of an investigator,” Kemo pointed out.

We Rescue Children Under Distress And I'm Overjoyed, Says Benefactor

By: KNA

Eliphas Okoyo, 41, found his passion in helping children in distress and ended up coordinating activities of SCH Team Kenya Alpha, an organization reaching out to thousands of vulnerable minors and teenagers and giving them hope.

Okoyo's entry into the community kicked off with an observation. He remembers while growing up in Pipeline estate, Nakuru County, he deeply admired how his mother helped the needy in the society as she frequently visited children's homes and shared food and clothing with them.

SCH Team Kenya Alpha organization takes care of children, who were either abandoned in the streets, hospitals or churches and those whose parents' deaths spelt doom for their lives.

Some girls who are beneficiaries of this organization harbour pain and bitterness of being sexually abused by relatives or people entrusted with their safety.

David Wafula, a former street boy, is now picking up his pieces and has enrolled at a Technical Vocational Education Training Institute to pursue a plumbing course.

He is 18-years-old. His father deserted Wafula and his younger brother after serving a stint in jail never to be traced. The boys ended up at SCH Team Kenya Alpha.

Just a few years ago, Wafula was among hundreds of other shriveled street children in Nakuru's garbage-laden alleys. But today, when he speaks about his journey from the streets under SCH Team Kenya Alpha, his eyes light up with hope.

The lad reminisces the joy he felt knowing he would be sleeping on a bed, covering himself with a blanket like a 'normal person'.

He had grown accustomed to cold nights on the pavements, with only carton boxes or manila sack for a blanket at night.

This shelter is not only an arguably safe haven keeping many children out of danger, but also a dream come true for 18-year-old Joseph Chege who is now a Form Three student at Maranda High School and an aspiring aeronautical engineer.

As we settle for an interview, Okoyo's love for children, and more so, the destitute, is evident in his story as he narrates his 'missionary' journey since he was a child.

In his own words, his mother's actions helped thrust him into the journey of philanthropy after realizing that he didn't have to be wealthy to share with others.

Okoyo recalls his pain whenever he encountered a needy child in school



and feeling helpless when he couldn't offer any help.

"I have joined hands with like-minded members of the society and our passion for serving the society has grown tremendously. We subscribe to John Bunyan's (English writer and puritan preacher) notion that you have not lived today until you have done something for someone you cannot repay you," states Okoyo.

According to the coordinator, SCH Team Kenya Alpha organization which was founded in 2020, spreads love in the streets of Nakuru County, among children physically and sexually abused and those abandoned by their guardians and parents.

The organization uses the platform to create awareness on Gender Based Violence, sexual and physical violence against minors, children's rights and other related issues such as sickness, hunger, abuse and exploitation.

Okoyo laments that a growing number of under age children and teenagers are increasingly facing many challenges including malnutrition, inadequate health care, premature deaths orchestrated through mob justice and exposure to drugs.

If not well handled, these consequences may bring in long life mental health and negative social outcomes. He states that it is for these reasons that it is important for society to be aware.

Through the organization, they offer free mentorship, feeding programmes, talent nurturing, counselling, rehabilitation services, sanitary towels for girls and education on various subjects such as drugs. The

organization also does monthly outreaches where minors and teenagers could come and celebrate together.

Okoyo discloses that after interacting with the children, many have expressed their concerns about being misunderstood by the society which makes them vulnerable.

"Our greatest achievement has been seeing lives of vulnerable and marginalized children transformed. We have one beneficiary now studying at Maranda High School and another pursuing a course in plumbing. I believe that changing the life of one vulnerable child at a time equates to changing future generations," States the coordinator.

Inadequate finances are one of the major challenges the organization encounters since there is much to be done but resources are limited.

According to the Officer in charge of Pakawa Police Post Inspector Duke Sanganyi, most of the beneficiaries at SCH Team Kenya Alpha organization are victims of parental neglect, gender-based violence and drug abuse.

Inspector Sanganyi indicated that there is a need by the entire Kenyan society to put in more effort to fulfill the innocent children's basic needs.

"It all begins with an escape from a hostile family and domestic violence. Parents should take responsibility and raise their children well regardless of their differences. Domestic violence leads to psychological torture among the young ones. Parents should therefore keep their children out of it," the law enforcer points out.

He further noted that poverty at home had forced some of the children

to drop out of school and end up at the organization and that there are orphans who have been abandoned by their relatives.

Inspector Sanganyi revealed that many vulnerable children were grappling with food shortage and insufficient amenities.

He adds that most of the rescued children were victims of defilement and parental negligence and many of the cases were in the court pending conclusion.

"We have more children still being supervised under the care of their relatives and guardians since the existing children's homes are not enough to accommodate them," he stated.

Inspector Sanganyi added: "We are appealing to well-wishers to offer their support in the form of food among other donations."

The Police Officer stressed the need for more community support systems to support neglected children within their local communities as the available children's homes were stretched for resources to accommodate them all.

"The population is overwhelming, and we are rallying the members of the community to consider supporting vulnerable children for expansion of the educational rescue centres," Inspector Sanganyi explained.

Worth Noting:

- David Wafula, a former street boy, is now picking up his pieces and has enrolled at a Technical Vocational Education Training Institute to pursue a plumbing course.

- He is 18-years-old. His father deserted Wafula and his younger brother after serving a stint in jail never to be traced. The boys ended up at SCH Team Kenya Alpha.

- Just a few years ago, Wafula was among hundreds of other shriveled street children in Nakuru's garbage-laden alleys. But today, when he speaks about his journey from the streets under SCH Team Kenya Alpha, his eyes light up with hope.

- The lad reminisces the joy he felt knowing he would be sleeping on a bed, covering himself with a blanket like a 'normal person'.

Leading As A Woman: The Challenges, How To Rise Without Losing Yourself Or Breaking Down

By: John Kariuki
 @themtkenyatimes

Leading as a woman often comes with unique challenges, shaped by societal expectations, gender biases, and the pressure to balance personal and professional life. Yet, many women who navigate leadership roles find ways to rise, grow, and succeed while staying true to themselves. Here are some key challenges and strategies for rising without losing yourself or breaking down:

1. Gender Bias and Stereotyping

Challenge: Women in leadership roles often face unconscious biases. They may be expected to exhibit traditional “feminine” qualities like empathy, while simultaneously being criticized for not being tough enough or assertive enough. There is also the stereotype that women are not as competent or capable as their male counterparts.

How to Rise:

Own your leadership style: Embrace the qualities that make you unique, whether that’s empathy, collaboration, or decisiveness. Strong leadership doesn’t require mimicking masculine traits but leveraging your strengths.

Develop a strong support network: Surround yourself with allies who recognize your value and help amplify your voice.

Set boundaries: Speak up when you feel marginalized or unfairly treated and ensure you aren’t expected to take on more than is reasonable, just because of your gender.

2. Work-Life Balance

Challenge: Many women face the challenge of balancing the demands of a leadership role with family responsibilities, caregiving, or personal obligations. This can create added stress and pressure to constantly juggle multiple roles.

How to Rise:

Delegate: Effective leadership isn’t about doing everything yourself. Build a team that shares responsibilities and trust them to deliver.

Prioritize self-care: Leadership can be exhausting, so make time for activities that replenish you, whether it’s exercise, meditation, hobbies, or quality time with loved ones.

Be honest about limitations: It’s important to acknowledge that you can’t do everything at once. Setting

realistic expectations and communicating them openly can help prevent burnout.

3. Imposter Syndrome

Challenge: Women in leadership roles are more likely to experience imposter syndrome, feeling like they don’t belong or that they are somehow “faking it.” This can create self-doubt and hesitation to make decisions or take risks.

How to Rise:

Recognize and challenge the thoughts: Acknowledge that feeling like an imposter is common and not a reflection of your actual ability. Remind yourself of your achievements, qualifications, and the value you bring.

Seek mentorship: Learning from other women who have succeeded in leadership can offer perspective and guidance on navigating those feelings.

Celebrate small wins: Each success, big or small, is a validation of your abilities. Take time to reflect on and celebrate your progress.

4. Being Too “Nice”

Challenge: Women are often socialized to be “nice,” which can sometimes be at odds with the decisive and authoritative nature expected of leaders. There’s a tendency to be overly accommodating or to avoid conflict, which can undermine leadership effectiveness.

How to Rise:

Be assertive, not aggressive: You can be kind and still set clear boundaries, make tough decisions, and assert your needs. It’s about finding a balance between empathy and authority.

Develop confidence in decision-making: Trust in your ability to make sound judgments. If you have a clear vision and purpose, it’s easier to stand firm, even when decisions are difficult.

5. Isolation and Loneliness

Challenge: As one of the few women in leadership, you may feel isolated, lacking mentorship or peers to connect with. Gender dynamics in the workplace can sometimes make women leaders feel excluded from the informal networks that men may have access to.

How to Rise:

Build a strong peer group: Seek out other women leaders, both inside and outside of your organization. Men-



Dr Ekrah Ndung'u Chairperson Kenya National Association of Private Colleges KENAPCO.

torship programs, professional associations, and networking events can be valuable for building connections.

Find allies and advocates: Look for mentors or colleagues—men or women—who will support you in your journey. Advocates can help elevate your voice and ensure you have opportunities for growth.

6. Managing Expectations and Pressure

Challenge: Women leaders often feel the pressure to “prove themselves” more than their male counterparts. There can be heightened scrutiny of every decision and action, leaving women with the feeling that they need to be perfect at all times.

How to Rise:

Set realistic goals: Perfection is unattainable. Focus on continuous improvement and growth, not perfection. Celebrate progress, not just

outcomes.

Develop resilience: Learn from failures and setbacks. Resilience is key to long-term success. Take each challenge as an opportunity for growth and self-discovery.

Seek feedback: Constructive feedback can help you understand where to focus your efforts and grow. It can also help shift the narrative away from perfectionism toward continuous development.

7. Staying Authentic

Challenge: Navigating the complex landscape of leadership while maintaining your authenticity can be difficult. There may be pressure to fit into certain molds or adopt behaviors that feel inauthentic to your true self.

How to Rise:

Stay aligned with your values: Define what leadership means to you and make sure your actions reflect

your core beliefs. When you lead authentically, it builds trust and respect.

Be transparent: Share your journey and your challenges with others. Vulnerability and authenticity can create deeper connections with your team.

Lead with purpose: When you have a clear vision and purpose that guides your actions, it becomes easier to navigate challenges without losing sight of your authentic self.

Final Thoughts:

Rising in leadership as a woman means acknowledging the unique challenges you may face, but also embracing the opportunity to make an impact and lead with integrity. By focusing on self-awareness, resilience, and authenticity, you can thrive as a leader without compromising your well-being or your sense of self.

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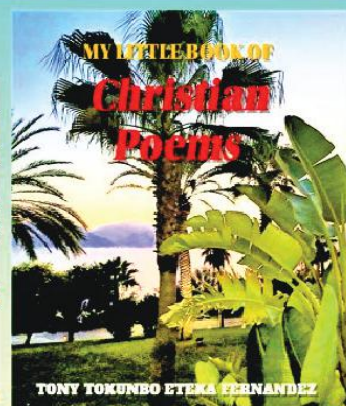
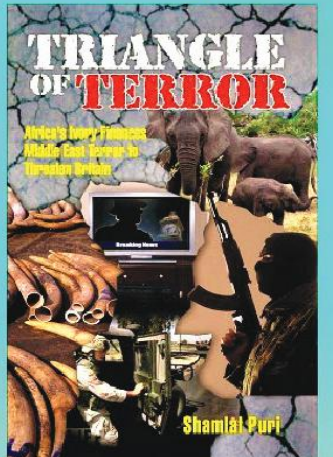
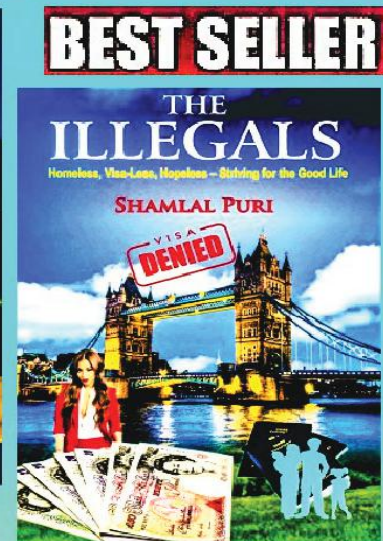
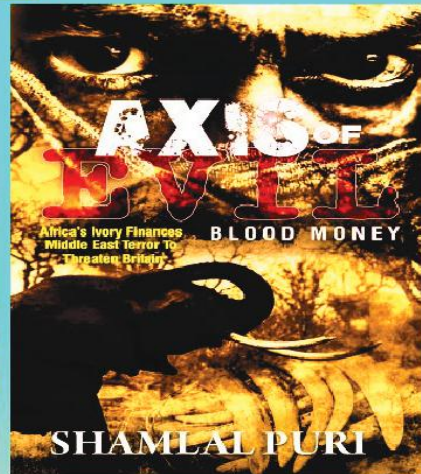
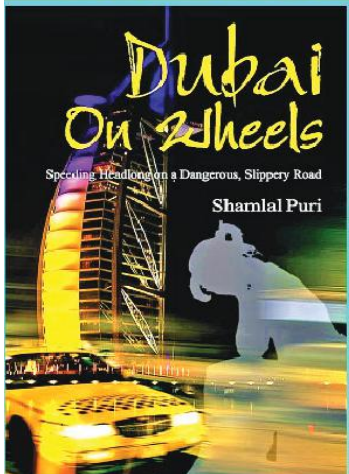
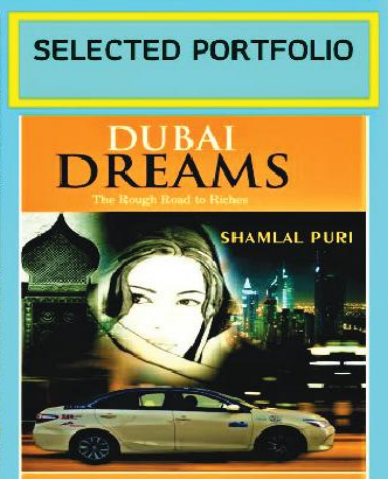
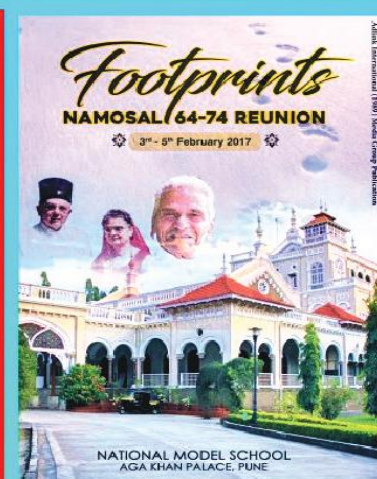
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COUNTY

County Unveils First-Ever Alleviation Policy

By: MKT Reporter
 @themtkenyatimes



Taita Taveta County, Deputy Governor, Christine Kilalo and Village Enterprise's Chief Government Relations Officer, Taddeo Muriuki with other officials during the launching ceremony..

Worth Noting:

- The Deputy Governor emphasised that the lack of a targeted poverty alleviation policy had hindered past efforts to combat poverty in the region effectively.

- She noted that this comprehensive approach is expected to address the persistent effects of marginalisation that have kept many residents impoverished.
- Kilalo highlighted several challenges faced by the County, including water scarcity, climate change, human-wildlife conflicts, and poor road infrastructure, which have hampered agricultural productivity and transportation for local farmers.

Taita Taveta County in collaboration with Village Enterprise, has officially unveiled its inaugural Poverty Alleviation Policy, an initiative that is expected to address the ongoing socio-economic challenges, facing the county's residents.

In an event held at Dan Mwazo Hall in Voi, Taita Taveta County, Deputy Governor, Christine Kilalo and Village Enterprise's Chief Government Relations Officer, Taddeo Muriuki, drummed-up support for the initiative from all quarters.

The document, which was crafted by the County government with support from Village Enterprise, aims to uplift the county's vulnerable groups, such as youth, women, and people with disabilities, by promoting self-employment and income-generating activities.

The Deputy Governor emphasised that the lack of a targeted poverty alleviation policy had hindered past efforts to combat poverty in the region effectively.

She noted that this comprehensive approach is expected to address the persistent effects of marginalisation that have kept many residents impoverished.

Kilalo highlighted several challenges faced by the County, including water scarcity, climate change, human-wildlife conflicts, and poor road infrastructure, which have hampered agricultural productivity and trans-

portation for local farmers.

"The scarcity of clean water for residents and livestock has been a significant factor in the county's poverty levels. Although we have well-thought-out plans for water provision, funding remains a major obstacle," she explained.

Kilalo pointed out that many residents' lack of land title deeds, poses a barrier to economic growth and stability in the region.

She urged both the National and County governments, to address these crucial issues, stressing that the new policy will help facilitate access to soft loans, entrepreneurial training, and support for small businesses, moves that are intended to empower local communities and drive economic growth.

"Many residents have encountered obstacles to economic stability due to limited access to jobs and basic resources. This policy introduces a structured approach to creating sustainable livelihoods, reducing poverty, and addressing the underlying factors that have held our communities back," Kilalo added.

Kilalo also encouraged residents to take an active role in poverty alleviation, urging a collaborative effort toward a more prosperous Taita Taveta County.

Muriuki expressed satisfaction with the progress achieved so far and reaffirmed Village Enterprise's commit-

ment to ongoing cooperation with the county government.

He mentioned that pilot programmes by Village Enterprise, have already benefited 1,500 families in the region by providing essential skills and resources to support self-sufficiency.

"I am delighted by the work we've accomplished together so far. This is only the beginning. We aim to explore additional avenues, for collaboration to foster the changes we aspire to see," Muriuki said.

He emphasised that the policy's implementation, will build on these initial efforts, creating a structured approach, to aid the county's most vulnerable communities.

Muriuki also encouraged residents and other stakeholders, to actively participate in the policy's initiatives, to drive community growth and development.

The Policy addresses several pressing challenges specific to Taita Taveta, including high unemployment, climate-induced hardships, limited land for agricultural activities, water shortages, human-wildlife conflicts, lack of title deeds, and inadequate infrastructure, which have exacerbated residents' struggles.

County Executive Committee Member (CECM) for Youth, Sports, Gender, and Social Services, Shedrack Mutungi, noted that these inherent challenges, required partnerships, to secure funding and implement pover-

ty reduction programmes.

He emphasised the County's dedication, to establishing a structured policy framework, to enable all partners to efficiently contribute to poverty alleviation.

Voi Senior Deputy County Commissioner, Daniel Nduti, commended the National government's support of the county's anti-poverty measures, including efforts to enhance local security.

He advised residents to focus on food security, by storing, rather than selling their harvests at low prices. He also discouraged illegal activities, including the sale of illicit brews, which he said undermines poverty alleviation efforts.

"Let's retain our food during harvest season, instead of selling it at throw-away prices," said Nduti, adding, "Engage in legal businesses. Relying on illegal activities, will never help us in poverty reduction," Nduti added.

He highlighted the new policy's importance in providing sustainable income opportunities and fostering collaboration between the County and its residents, to achieve lasting improvements.

With the launch of this Poverty Mitigation Policy, Taita Taveta leaders hope the initiative, will significantly improve the livelihoods of residents across the County.

Stop Misleading Kenyans, Kalonzo Says

By: Cynthia Masibo
 @themkenyatimes

In a powerful call for accountability Wiper party leader, Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka, has urged Inspector General of the Kenya Police Service, Douglas Kanja, to “stop misleading Kenyans” about the alleged involvement of the police in abductions, disappearances, and killings of young Kenyans. Musyoka’s remarks were met with applause and resonated deeply with those present at the funeral of Baba Mwalimu Cllr. Eliud Josia Marende at Mumboha Secondary School in Luanda, Vihiga County, where he delivered his address.

The late Councillor, a respected figure in Luanda Ward and father of Speaker Emeritus Kenneth Marende, was remembered for his service to the community. However, the somber tone of the gathering quickly turned to one of concern as Musyoka confronted the recent spate of abductions and disappearances across the country.

Joined by s Democratic Action Par-

ty of Kenya (DAP-K) Party Leader Hon. Eugene Wamalwa, former Kiambu Governor Ferdinand Waititu, and Jubilee Party Secretary-General Hon. Jeremiah Kioni, Musyoka’s words appeared to channel the shared frustration felt by many. Cabinet Secretary for Co-operatives and MSMEs Wycliffe Oparanya was also in attendance, lending weight to the event and the statements made.

Musyoka addressed Inspector General Kanja’s recent denial of police involvement in these incidents, stating, “The government must stop misleading Kenyans about the abductions, disappearances, and killings. The truth cannot be hidden forever.” His remarks come in response to statements by Kanja, who claimed that the police are not involved in these cases—a statement that has sparked widespread skepticism and anger within opposition circles.

The Leader of the Opposition called for swift action, demanding that the government hold accountable any police officers found guilty of such actions. “We must see immediate arrests and arraignments of the responsible officers. There can be no justice without accountability,” he added.

Musyoka’s call for justice and transparency highlights an ongoing concern among the public and human rights organizations regarding the safety and security of Kenyan youth, who have increasingly been victims of unexplained disappearances.

Musyoka’s remarks at the funeral also touched on the broader political landscape in Africa, as he spoke of “the winds of change blowing across the continent.” His statement reflects a growing sentiment among African leaders and citizens alike who are calling for more democratic reforms, justice, and improved governance. He urged Kenyan leaders to embrace this shift and listen to the grievances of their citizens, particularly on issues of security and human rights.

Eugene Wamalwa echoed Musyoka’s sentiments, emphasizing the need for structural reforms within the police service to restore public trust. Former Governor Ferdinand Waititu, popularly known as “Babayao,” also supported Musyoka’s calls for accountability, stating that “the security of every Kenyan should be paramount.”

The event was a moment of unity among opposition leaders, who



Wiper Leader Kalonzo Musyoka issuing his address

stood in solidarity to voice their discontent with what they perceive as rising impunity within the police force. Jubilee Party’s Secretary-General Jeremiah Kioni noted that Kenyans are looking to their leaders for reassurance, particularly in times of such adversity.

As the nation grapples with these

pressing security concerns, Musyoka’s words serve as a stark reminder of the urgent need for transparency and reform within law enforcement. The issue of unexplained disappearances and abductions continues to haunt Kenyan society, with calls for accountability growing louder.

Uniformed Disciplined Officers Gather For Annual Prayer Service In Nairobi

By: Cynthia Masibo
 @themkenyatimes

In a display of unity and faith, hundreds of Uniformed Disciplined Officers from various Kenyan security agencies, along with their families, attended the annual joint prayer and thanksgiving service held at a church in Nairobi on Sunday. The event, aimed at seeking divine guidance for the officers as they serve the nation, brought together personnel from the National Police Service, Kenya Prisons Service, Kenya Wildlife Service, Kenya Forest Service, and the National Youth Service.

The Principal Secretary (PS) for Internal Security, Dr. Raymond Omollo, was the keynote speaker at the gathering. In his address, Dr. Omollo praised the officers for their unwavering commitment and sacrifice in safeguarding the nation’s security, often in challenging and high-risk environments. He acknowledged the personal sacrifices they make, sometimes at the cost of their own

wellbeing, to maintain law and order across Kenya.

“The dedication and sacrifices that each one of you makes, sometimes in the most challenging situations, demonstrate your commitment to duty and the safety of all Kenyans,” he noted, drawing appreciative applause from the attendees.

The event underscored the role of faith in the officers’ lives, both on and off duty. Emphasizing the importance of spiritual grounding, Dr. Omollo encouraged the officers to continue seeking divine guidance as they fulfill their duties to protect and serve the Kenyan people.

“Seeking God’s guidance and strength both on duty and at home is important for every Uniformed Officer,” Dr. Omollo conveyed in his remarks. He urged the officers to not only rely on their training and resilience but also to seek spiritual strength in the face of difficult situations.

Dr. Omollo also reaffirmed the government’s commitment to supporting the disciplined forces, reassuring the officers that their sacrifices have not

gone unnoticed. He emphasized that the government remains dedicated to providing resources, training, and support to enable officers to carry out their mandates effectively. This support, he said, extends beyond the professional realm, recognizing the need to enhance the welfare of officers and their families.

“Our government will continue to stand by you, recognizing the challenges you face daily and the risks inherent in your work. We are committed to providing you with the support and resources you need to succeed,” Dr. Omollo assured.

The event included a special intercessory prayer session, led by clergy members, who offered blessings for the officers, praying for their protection, guidance, and resilience. Family members of the officers were also present, underscoring the vital support system that the families provide to those serving in uniform.

The annual prayer and thanksgiving service has become a significant event in the calendar for Kenya’s disciplined services, symbolizing unity, faith, and resilience among



PS Raymond Omollo issuing his address in a Thanksgiving service at the Holy Family Basilica. Photo courtesy: Ministry of Interior.

the forces charged with safeguarding the nation. By coming together for prayer, the officers reaffirm their shared commitment to serve with honor, even in the face of adversities.

As Kenya continues to address security challenges both within its borders and beyond, the officers’ dedication to duty, reinforced by such gatherings, remains a cornerstone of

the country’s stability and progress. Dr. Omollo’s presence and words served as a reminder of the government’s commitment to uphold and support the men and women who play a critical role in the country’s security framework.

The Burden of the World's Educators: Addressing the Challenges Teachers Face in Today's Society



By: Silas Mwaudasheni Nande
@themtkenyatimes

Teachers, once revered as the cornerstone of society, are now facing unprecedented challenges, criticism, and even danger in their professional lives. From verbal and physical abuse by parents and students to systemic neglect by educational authorities, teachers are fighting a battle that undermines their crucial role in shaping future generations. In a world where they are expected to nurture, educate, and mentor, they are often left unsupported and underappreciated. This article seeks to address the growing concerns that teachers face today and explore how they can be helped to cope and perform amidst these challenges.

Emotional and Mental Strain

The emotional toll of teaching cannot be underestimated. Teachers not only have to educate, but they also serve as counselors, disciplinarians, and in many cases, surrogate parents. The pressure of handling students with behavioral issues, catering to diverse learning needs, and managing administrative tasks adds to their emotional burden. With little to no mental health support, many teachers face burnout, anxiety, and depression, contributing to an alarming number leaving the profession and in most cases dismissed due to wrongdoings caused by stress, depression and anger.

Challenges Teachers Face Verbal and Physical Abuse

One of the most disturbing trends is the increase in abuse directed toward teachers. Around the world, many teachers report being verbally and, in some cases, physically assaulted by students and parents. Disagreements over grades, discipline, or educational decisions often escalate into confrontations where teachers are unfairly blamed and mistreated. This abuse is not just a sign of disrespect but a reflection of the declining value placed on educators in many societies.

Parental Pressure and Unreasonable Expectations

Parental expectations of teachers have grown significantly, with many believing that the responsibility for their children's academic success rests solely on the teacher. When students underperform, teachers often become scapegoats, accused of incompetence or negligence. This pressure can be overwhelming, especially when teachers are expected to do more than is feasible within the constraints of overcrowded classrooms and limited resources.

Neglect from Educational Authorities

Many teachers feel neglected by the very systems that should support them. Inadequate salaries, lack of professional development opportunities, insufficient teaching materials, and outdated curricula are common issues. Teachers are expected to deliver high-quality education, but the lack of investment in their professional growth and the infrastructure they work in makes this goal nearly impossible to achieve. This systemic neglect often leads to frustration, burnout, and a high turnover rate within the teaching profession.



Teachers in classroom

Empower Teachers Through Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Continual professional development should be prioritized to empower teachers and give them the skills needed to navigate today's challenging educational landscape. Workshops on handling difficult students, managing parental conflicts, and adapting to changing educational technologies can help teachers feel more equipped and confident in their roles.

Better Pay and Working Conditions

Teachers deserve to be compensated fairly for the incredible responsibility they shoulder. Governments and educational bodies must work toward ensuring teachers are paid competitive salaries, provided with appropriate teaching materials, and given manageable workloads. Investing in better infrastructure, classroom resources, and reducing class sizes can create an environment where teachers can focus on delivering quality education.

Promoting Respect for Teachers

There needs to be a concerted effort to restore respect for the teaching profession. Public campaigns that highlight the importance of teachers and celebrate their contributions can shift perceptions. Schools can also hold forums where teachers, parents, and students engage in open dialogue, fostering mutual respect and understanding.

Increased Parental Engagement and Accountability

Parents play a crucial role in supporting their children's education and should be held accountable for their behavior. Schools can implement policies that encourage more productive parent-teacher relationships, such as

regular parent-teacher meetings and workshops that educate parents on their role in their child's education. Holding parents accountable for abusive behavior is also critical. Schools must not hesitate to take legal or disciplinary action against any parent or student who harms a teacher.

Strengthening Teacher Unions and Advocacy

Strong teacher unions are essential in advocating for the rights of educators. Teachers should be encouraged to join unions that fight for better wages, improved working conditions, and protection from abuse. Governments must ensure that these unions are given the power to negotiate fair working terms and provide a safe, supportive environment for teachers.

Conclusion

Teachers are the backbone of society, shaping the minds and futures of every generation. Yet, despite their essential role, they face a myriad of challenges that make their work difficult and, at times, dangerous. It is time for society to recognize the value of educators, not only through words but also through action. By providing mental health support, professional development, better pay, and stronger protections, we can ensure that teachers are not only able to cope with their challenging roles but can thrive and continue to nurture the minds of tomorrow's leaders. Teachers deserve more than just our gratitude; they deserve our respect, support, and protection.

Worth Noting:

- Parental expectations of teachers have grown significantly, with many believing that the responsibility for their children's academic success rests solely on the teacher. When students underperform, teachers often become scapegoats, accused of incompetence or negligence.
- The emotional toll of teaching cannot be underestimated. Teachers not only have to educate, but they also serve as counselors, disciplinarians, and in many cases, surrogate parents. The pressure of handling students with behavioral issues, catering to diverse learning needs, and managing administrative tasks adds to their emotional burden.
- Teachers deserve to be compensated fairly for the incredible responsibility they shoulder. Governments and educational bodies must work toward ensuring teachers are paid competitive salaries, provided with appropriate teaching materials, and given manageable workloads.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Corruption Conundrum: Kenya's Ongoing Battle For Transparency In Public Procurement

By: James Bwire Kilonzo
 @themtkenyatimes

Oscar Sudi's recent announcement promising to expose corruption in government procurement has once again thrust Kenya's perennial struggle with transparency and accountability into the spotlight. While such revelations are not new, they underscore the deeply entrenched nature of corruption in Kenya's public sector and the urgent need for comprehensive reforms.

Sudi's claims, if substantiated, paint a troubling picture of a system where high-ranking officials manipulate procurement processes for personal gain. The alleged use of proxy companies to secure lucrative government contracts not only undermines fair competition but also potentially deprives the public of quality goods and services. This practice, if true, represents a significant breach of public trust and a misuse of taxpayer funds.

The context of Sudi's announcement is crucial. Kenya has long grappled with corruption in public procurement, a sector that accounts for a substantial portion of government expenditure. According to the World Bank, public procurement roughly accounts for 25-30% of developing countries' expenditures, making it a high-risk area for corruption. In Kenya, the situation is particularly dire, with estimates suggesting that the government loses about one-third of its national budget to corruption, with 80 percent of all corruption cases before the Kenya Anti-Corruption Commission being related to procurement.

The Public Procurement and Asset Disposal Act of 2015 was enacted to promote transparency, accountability, and fairness in public procurement. However, the persistent allegations of corruption suggest that the implementation of these legal frameworks remains inadequate. The Act fails to provide strong enforcement mechanisms, and despite its enactment, Kenyan public procurement continues to be marred by corruption scandals.

The reported loss of business opportunities for American firms due to bribery demands, as highlighted by the US Trade Office, is particularly concerning. It not only tarnishes

Kenya's reputation on the international stage but also potentially deters foreign investment, which is crucial for economic growth. The 2024 National Trade Estimate Report on Foreign Trade Barriers revealed that American businesses are finding it hard to secure Kenyan government contracts because senior officials seek bribes before awarding such jobs. This level of corruption, according to the report, will cause Kenya to lose future investment from businesses and countries that shun or punish corrupt activities.

The doubling of the average bribe size, as reported by the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission, indicates an alarming escalation in the scale of corruption. A survey by the commission showed that the country's interior, health, and transport ministries are the most corrupt, with the size of the average bribe doubling in 2023.

While the government's initiative to implement an e-procurement system is a step in the right direction, it is clear that technological solutions alone are insufficient. The root causes of corruption – including lack of political will, weak institutional capacity, and a culture of impunity – must be addressed comprehensively. The government is in the process of implementing a Ksh560 million e-procurement system to automate processes and potentially save taxpayers billions. However, as of now, there is no comprehensive e-procurement system in the country, with only some functionality existing within the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS).

The effectiveness of anti-corruption measures in Kenya has been hampered by several factors. Firstly, there's often a lack of follow-through on corruption allegations. Many high-profile cases are initiated with much fanfare but fizzle out without concrete results, leading to public cynicism. The Anglo-Leasing multi-million dollar scandal, which saw USD 33 million vanish into thin air, is a prime example of this pattern. Secondly, the politicization of anti-corruption efforts often means that investigations are seen as politically motivated rather than genuine attempts at reform.

Moreover, the complexity of procurement processes and the technical nature of many government



Kapsaret MP Sudi.

contracts create opportunities for manipulation that are difficult for the public to detect or understand. This opacity allows corrupt practices to flourish unchecked. The lack of transparency is evident in the fact that annual procurement plans and large government contracts are rarely published, contrary to international good practice.

The impact of corruption in public procurement extends far beyond financial losses. It erodes public trust in government institutions, distorts market mechanisms, and ultimately affects the quality of public services delivered to citizens. In sectors like healthcare and education, corrupt procurement practices can have dire consequences, potentially costing lives and compromising the future of the nation. The recent expose on Covid irregularities at the Kenya Medical Supplies Agency (KEMSA) by the Auditor General and Parliament oversight committees is a stark reminder of how corruption can directly impact public health and safety.

To address these challenges, Kenya needs a multi-faceted approach. Strengthening institutional capacity is crucial. The Public Procurement Regulatory Authority and other oversight bodies must be empowered with adequate resources and independence to effectively monitor and enforce procurement regulations. Enhancing transparency through full implementation of open contracting principles, including the publication of procurement plans, tender documents, and contract awards, can significantly increase public scrutiny

and reduce opportunities for corruption.

Protecting whistleblowers is another critical aspect. Robust mechanisms to protect individuals who report corruption are essential to encourage the exposure of wrongdoing without fear of reprisal. Improving public participation by engaging civil society and the public in monitoring procurement processes can create an additional layer of oversight and accountability.

Leveraging technology is crucial, but it must go beyond just implementing e-procurement systems. Data analytics and AI-driven tools to detect patterns of corruption and anomalies in bidding processes should accompany these systems. Reforming political financing is also vital, as addressing the nexus between political funding and government contracts is crucial to breaking the cycle of corruption.

Enhancing prosecution capacity is equally important. Strengthening the capacity of investigative and prosecutorial bodies to handle complex procurement fraud cases is essential for ensuring accountability. This includes providing specialized training and resources to handle the often intricate nature of procurement-related corruption cases.

The role of the media and civil society in exposing and investigating corruption cannot be overstated. Investigative journalism has played a crucial role in uncovering major scandals in Kenya, and continued support for independent media is vital. Civil society organizations also play a crucial role in monitoring pro-

urement processes and advocating for reforms.

As Kenya moves forward, the effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts will depend not just on the actions of government officials but on the sustained engagement of all sectors of society. Citizens must demand transparency, businesses must refuse to participate in corrupt practices, and civil society must continue to play its watchdog role.

The road to a transparent and accountable public procurement system in Kenya is long and fraught with challenges. However, each step towards reform, each exposed scandal, and each implemented safeguard brings the country closer to realizing the promise of its constitution – a government that truly serves the interests of its people. As we await the details of Sudi's report, let it serve not just as another headline, but as a catalyst for meaningful change in how Kenya manages its public resources. The fight against corruption in public procurement is not just about saving money; it's about ensuring that public resources are used efficiently and effectively to improve the lives of Kenyan citizens, create a level playing field for businesses, foster innovation, and attract investment. Most importantly, it's about building a society where merit and fair competition, not connections and bribes, determine success.

James Bwire Kilonzo is a Media and Communication Practitioner.

How Imported Beliefs Turned Africa Into A Paradox Of Beliefs

A fearless satire on Africa's imported spirituality and the hidden truth of a distant paradise



By: Midmark Onsongo
@themtkenyetimes



Worth Noting:

- The visit of these gods did not come with a simple welcome. No, they traveled on ships run by traders and colonists who wrapped salvation like an invisible rope around the necks of African children. Think back to 1884, the Conference of Berlin – the day Africa was carved up, cut into pieces, each piece folded neatly for the European empires.
- Along the borders drawn in blood, the languages and gods followed and flowed smoothly like a river through which ancient beliefs were drawn. A game of spirit and land, the English played to win, trading culture for equality and heritage for holiness.

The quiet drum of Africa beats loudest when no one's listening—an irony, if you will, for a continent that roars silently under layers of imported reverence, wrapped up like foreign goods in cargo crates. “The empty debe makes the loudest noise,” they say, and indeed, here we are, drowned in the echo of prayers shipped from ancient lands, gods born in foreign soils, while our own spiritual wells dry up unnoticed.

Africa, the land of mountains, rivers, and sunlit valleys, yet we import not just clothes and cars but beliefs too. And here lies the paradox: if heaven is a true destination, why must we search for it elsewhere? Look around: Yahweh arrived on the shores of Africa from the sands of Israel, a god tangled in Hebrew scriptures and myths.

We have Jesus, his European image hanging in every church and every mind, a bearded man with pale skin - a far cry from the colors of the country he worships. So, from the deserts of Arabia, we thanked God whose voice was ringing in the churches across the country, a divine presence from lands we had not yet entered. Like Africa, the nest of man has nothing of his own. God, his own paradise, his own truth. But perhaps this is more about power than religion.

The visit of these gods did not come with a simple welcome. No, they traveled on ships run by traders and colonists who wrapped salvation like an invisible rope around the necks of African children. Think back to 1884, the Conference of Berlin – the day Africa was carved up, cut into pieces, each piece folded neatly for the European empires.

Along the borders drawn in blood, the languages and gods followed and flowed smoothly like a river through which ancient beliefs were drawn. A game of spirit and land, the English played to win, trading culture for equality and heritage for holiness.

However, Africa, in all its wisdom, has forgotten the question: Is it the promised paradise or just a prison dressed in a glorious dress? If we wait, if we really look at the humor carved into this tape, won't we laugh? A god is imported to bring help, but hell remains at home. Poverty, disease, war - these disasters do not require a passport.

They grow from our soil and are watered by the blood of their rela-

tives. Isn't it time to get rid of this hell, this hell that we have created with our own hands while we look to other gods to forgive us? Maybe it's time to get into heaven again, cut through the guards, avoid the healers, and get the right ticket to the heaven we want. But here the sarcasm hides the bitter truth. In fact, religion is not just a belief. These opiates are sugar-coated pills that ease our pain even as we become blind to our limitations.

History is holding its breath waiting for Africa to rise. It's 2024, but we cling to 2,000-year-old stories from dusty deserts, as if our own stories don't matter. We see churches built like palaces in slums, churches built on dilapidated buildings.

The paradox is - If people are starving, if children are dying with worms on their lips and hunger in their stomachs, what is the use of these temples? It may be a rhetorical question, but it must be answered. Do these imported gods serve us, or do we serve them? We bow, we kneel, we stretch our hands to the sky, but the sky is silent, it does not respond to our prayers. As Africans, we are proud of the energy, strength and spirit of Ubuntu – the belief “I am because we are”.

However, we have abandoned our gods, our spiritual anchors, to foreign gods who do not understand our struggles, our stories, our souls. Ubuntu seems to be self-sustaining, but here we are spiritually dependent on imports. Look at Ethiopia, a country full of ancient Christianity, reasons for the conversion of King Azana in the fourth century. Ethiopia clung to its own Christian identity, a symbol of resilience in the face of colonial forces.

Ethiopia, an African country that refused to bind the body and soul, chose to preserve its sovereignty and pride. But Ethiopia stands alone in this field. For the rest of the country, not only the borders, but also the intellectual borders, are beautifully wrapped in the Bible and the Koran. Synthesis is the narrator here - a country blessed with natural resources, but burdened by the curse of poverty. For every church in Kinshasa, there is a broken school.

For every church in Lagos, there is a hospital without beds. It seems that faith has become a cruel currency, a currency that sells hope but not medicine that promises salvation but not life. So we live in a paradox where



we bring the gods to console us for the hell we cannot escape. But how did we deal with this problem? The answer lies in the rhetoric of power. Power, used as a weapon, turned African religions into pawns on the chessboard of empires.

Missionaries came with crosses and promises, but behind them were guns and greed. The victory of the African spirit is not about liberation, but about surrender. The control is simple and easy. And we, the owners of this legacy, bow not to heaven, but to the shadows of the imperial spirits who taught us that our gods are not enough.

It's time to rewrite the script. We must ask boldly and fearlessly: Who benefits from our sacrifice? The starving child, the farmer in trouble, the widow in her sorrow? Are these pastors, priests, imams working while their students are poor? It's a bitter pill, but we have to swallow it. For every dollar spent on building churches and mosques, how many dollars are spent on building hospitals and schools?

For every prayer that is prayed, how many things go undone? This, dear Africa, is the contradiction that enslaves us. Heaven is not a place we enter, nor is it a price we can buy. Maybe it's a human form, a kingdom within our own power to create. Africa, the motherland, the land of ancient wisdom and infinite power, does not need foreign gods to fulfill its destiny. If we can reject the hell we have created, if we can free ourselves from the shackles of

imported beliefs that do not serve us, we may find the heaven we seek.

We are not in heaven, but here, on this earth, in the world. to create the warmth of the Community, the power of courage and the beauty of the culture that will not disappoint us. In the end, Africa must choose: Continue the path of faith that was brought or regain the spiritual freedom we had before borders, before the gospel, before the bell.

The choice is ours alone. Heaven or hell - in our hands. We should not kneel before imported gods, but rise up as the creators of our own destiny. This article does not oppose religion. In fact, I remember my lecturer, Mr. Haningtonne Sitati, who, before every exam, would firmly ensure no cheating—“remove those sweaters,” he'd say with a sharp eye.

Then, after his thorough check, he'd lead us in prayer. Yet he taught us that prayer alone doesn't replace preparation; it was integrity in prayer that mattered. Many may dislike the truth, but as long as your relationship with God is genuine, you are blessed. Long live Mr. Sitati.

*This article was scripted by:
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Expanding Justice: The Case For Increasing Kenya's Supreme Court Bench

By: James Kilonzo Bwire
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Worth Noting:

- The potential for political influence in judicial appointments is a concern that cannot be overlooked. In many countries, attempts to alter the composition of supreme courts have led to accusations of politicization and undermining judicial independence. Therefore, it is crucial that any changes reflect not only a desire for efficiency but also a commitment to uphold the rule of law and protect judicial integrity.
- Chief Justice Koome's leadership has already made significant strides in promoting human rights and gender equality within Kenya's legal framework. As a renowned advocate for women's and children's rights, she has worked tirelessly to reform laws affecting these vulnerable groups. Her dedication was recognized when she was named runner-up for the UN's Kenya Person of the Year Award in 2020 for her advocacy work.

Chief Justice Martha Koome's proposal to expand the Supreme Court bench from seven to eleven judges is a transformative initiative that addresses the critical challenges facing Kenya's judicial system. This expansion is not merely a numerical adjustment; it represents a strategic response to the overwhelming backlog of cases that has long plagued the judiciary. The current bench size has been described as "limited," which constrains the court's ability to manage multiple cases efficiently. By increasing the number of judges, the Supreme Court can conduct simultaneous hearings, alleviating pressure on existing judges and improving access to justice for all Kenyans.

The necessity for reform within Kenya's judicial system has become increasingly apparent. With thousands of cases pending in courts, many citizens face prolonged delays in seeking justice. Chief Justice Koome has articulated that an expanded bench would not only expedite case resolution but also enhance the overall functionality of the court. She emphasized, "It is very difficult because this is a very small bench. It doesn't allow for much latitude." This limitation affects not only the judges but also litigants who are left waiting for justice that should be timely and accessible.

Moreover, expanding the bench aligns with Koome's broader vision to modernize the judiciary. Her initiatives include implementing e-filing systems and alternative justice mechanisms aimed at streamlining legal processes. The recent inauguration of new law courts and e-filing systems in Samburu County exemplifies her commitment to improving access to justice, significantly reducing travel distances for litigants. For instance, the launch of a High Court sub-registry in Samburu has cut down travel distances from over 300 kilometers for many residents, thereby making justice more accessible.

However, implementing this expansion is not without its challenges. It requires constitutional amendments, specifically altering Article 163 of the Constitution, which currently stipulates that the Supreme Court shall consist of the Chief Justice, a deputy, and five other judges. This proposed change could ignite debates surrounding judicial independence and political influence. Constitutional lawyer Bobby Mkangi has highlighted that such an amendment might necessitate a referendum if it implies that current judges are susceptible to manipulation. This raises critical



Chief Justice Martha Koome.

questions about how to balance efficiency with maintaining the integrity of Kenya's judiciary.

The potential for political influence in judicial appointments is a concern that cannot be overlooked. In many countries, attempts to alter the composition of supreme courts have led to accusations of politicization and undermining judicial independence. Therefore, it is crucial that any changes reflect not only a desire for efficiency but also a commitment to uphold the rule of law and protect judicial integrity.

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Koome's tenure as Chief Justice has

been characterized by her commitment to transparency and accountability within the judiciary. She has emphasized that justice should not only be delivered but also perceived as being delivered swiftly and impartially. Her efforts in establishing alternative justice systems (AJS) further demonstrate her innovative approach to resolving disputes outside traditional court settings. These systems provide platforms where parties can engage in dialogue and negotiation, fostering understanding and offering amicable resolutions.

In conclusion, Chief Justice Koome's proposal represents a courageous step towards transforming Kenya's judicial landscape. It embodies her dedication to justice reform and her vision for a more robust judiciary capable of addressing contemporary challenges. As discussions around this proposal unfold, it will be essential for stakeholders—including legal experts, government officials, and civil society—to engage constructively.

The path forward requires collaboration among all stakeholders to create

a judiciary that is not only efficient but also equitable and accessible for all Kenyans. This means ensuring that any changes made do not compromise judicial independence or integrity while effectively addressing the pressing needs of citizens seeking justice.

Ultimately, Chief Justice Koome's initiative could set a precedent for judicial reform across Africa, showcasing how strategic changes can lead to improved access to justice in regions historically underserved by their legal systems. As Kenya stands at this crossroads, it is imperative that all voices are heard in shaping a judiciary that truly serves its people—swiftly, fairly, and transparently.

James Kilonzo Bwire is a Media and Communication Practitioner.

SPORTS NEWS

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Sports >> *Manchester United signed off Ruud van Nistelrooy's temporary stint in charge with a 3-0 win over Leicester yesterday as Ipswich stunned Tottenham 2-1 for their first Premier League victory in 22 years.

Man Utd Win As Nistelrooy Bows Out, Ipswich Shock Spurs



Manchester United's interim coach Ruud van Nistelrooy acknowledges fans at the end of the English Premier League football match between Manchester United and Leicester City at Old Trafford in Manchester, north west England, on November 10, 2024. (Photo by Darren Staples / AFP)

Manchester United signed off Ruud van Nistelrooy's temporary stint in charge with a 3-0 win over Leicester yesterday as Ipswich stunned Tottenham 2-1 for their first Premier League victory in 22 years.

Third-placed Nottingham Forest's fine run came to an end in a 3-1 home defeat to Newcastle.

Ruben Amorim will be in charge for the first time when United return from the international break.

But Van Nistelrooy was able to hand over the reins with a four-game unbeaten run since stepping up to replace the sacked Erik ten Hag.

Bruno Fernandes marked his 250th United appearance in style by smashing in his fourth goal in four games after a neat interchange of passes with Amad Diallo.

Fernandes' burst into the box also created the second goal as his glancing touch deflected off Leicester defender Victor Kris-

tiansen and in for an own goal.

Diallo's two-goal showing in a 2-0 Europa League win over PAOK on Thursday earned the Ivorian a start over Alejandro Garnacho.

The Argentine, though, came off the bench to show what he is capable of with a stunning strike into the top corner to round off the scoring.

United remain down in 13th but are now just three points off fifth in a congested table.

-Ipswich off the mark-

Ipswich will play host to Amorim's first match in two weeks and go into that game buoyed by their first win since ending a two-decade wait to return to the top flight.

Spurs were finally made to pay for their slow starts at home as they went behind for the 13th time in 15 Premier League games at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium in 2024.

Sammie Szmodics took advantage of statuesque Tottenham defending to open the scoring with an overhead kick on 31 minutes.

Liam Delap doubled the visitors' lead in far less spectacular fashion as he lashed in from point-blank range after Radu Dragusin directed a cross towards his own goal.

Spurs had come back to win in eight of the previous 12 matches they conceded first at home this year but this time left themselves with too much to do.

Rodrigo Bentancur reduced the arrears with a powerful header from Pedro Porro's corner but they fell to a fifth league defeat in 11 games.

Ipswich move out of the relegation zone at Crystal Palace's expense, while Spurs slip to 10th.

Forest had won three games in a row to sit just behind Liverpool and Manchester City at the top of the table and their dream run looked set to continue at the City

Ground.

Murillo's towering header from Anthony Elanga's free-kick opened the scoring.

But Newcastle hit back strongly after half-time.

Alexander Isak's fourth goal in as many games began the fight-back.

Joelinton then curled in a sensational strike from the edge of the box before Harvey Barnes sealed the three points that lifts the Magpies into eighth.

Arsenal and Chelsea both start the day 10 points behind leaders Liverpool and in desperate need of a win if they are to challenge for the title.

Captain Martin Odegaard starts for the first time in two months for Arsenal, who are aiming to snap a three-game winless streak in the Premier League.

AFP

Sports >> *Trent Alexander-Arnold's injury cast a shadow over Liverpool's 2-0 Premier League win at home to Aston Villa on Saturday

Alexander-Arnold's Injury Puts Damper On Liverpool's Win Over Villa



Liverpool's Dutch manager Arne Slot (L) speaks with Liverpool's English defender Trent Alexander-Arnold (R) after he leaves the game injured, during the English Premier League football match between Liverpool and Aston Villa at Anfield in Liverpool, north west England on November 9, 2024. (Photo by Paul ELLIS / AFP).

By Reuters

Trent Alexander-Arnold's injury cast a shadow over Liverpool's 2-0 Premier League win at home to Aston Villa on Saturday, with the English defender being taken off in the first half with what manager Arne Slot said was a "serious" concern.

Alexander-Arnold left the pitch clutching his right hamstring in the 25th minute of the victory, which helped Liverpool open up

a five-point lead at the top of the Premier League standings.

The 26-year-old has been named in the England squad for their Nations League games against Greece and Ireland, but Slot said he would be surprised if Alexander-Arnold was able to play in those matches.

"It's difficult to say how serious it is, but it's always serious if a player goes out in the first half. Not because I didn't like him, but because he asked for it himself,"

Slot told reporters.

"He didn't ask for it because he was tired, he asked for it because he felt something. That's first of all not a good sign, but it is always difficult so close after the game to tell you exactly what it is. Let's wait and see.

"I would be surprised if we will see him playing for the England national team this week, but hopefully he can."

Liverpool, who return to action at Southampton on November

24, have a tough run of fixtures coming up as they take on Real Madrid in a Champions League clash before league meetings with Manchester City and Newcastle United.

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SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



A Polish Poet Who Writes With Inspiration No Matter Her Health Status



By: Wanjohi. P. Mugambi
@themkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- I have been chronically ill for over 20 years, and each day is a fight for survival. Over this time, many people have come and gone in my life. Some taught me valuable lessons, while others were a burden, yet each person has shaped who I am today. However, the most important influences were my grandmother and my father. They showed me how to live, to be a good person, to help others, and to be present for those around me.
- I don't have one specific ideal day—every day that I live through is ideal. As I mentioned, my illness impacts me from the inside out, so if I'm able to open my eyes and see the dawn, that already makes it an ideal day.

Tell us briefly who you are and share more about yourself.

My name is Kasia Dominik. I am from Poland. By profession, I am a historian, but my passion is poetry. I have always written poetry, though I also love exploring essays, columns, and short stories. I can't imagine a day without writing. My friends call me the "Halina Poświatowska of the 21st century."

What motivated you to become who you are now?

I have been chronically ill for over 20 years, and each day is a fight for survival. Over this time, many people have come and gone in my life. Some taught me valuable lessons, while others were a burden, yet each person has shaped who I am today. However, the most important influences were my grandmother and my father. They showed me how to live, to be a good person, to help others, and to be present for those around me.

What does your ideal day look like?

I don't have one specific ideal day—every day that I live through is ideal. As I mentioned, my illness impacts me from the inside out, so if I'm able to open my eyes and see the dawn, that already makes it an ideal day.

What is your favorite aspect of your work?

Writing poetry that carries a message and can help others. It's a beautiful feeling to know that someone read my poem and was able to improve their life because of it.

What is the hardest part of what you do?

Writing is becoming more challenging as my hands continue to weaken. Each day, they grow less able, which makes functioning difficult. Despite this, I strive to do what brings joy, so I can share that joy with others and send it out into the world with gratitude for life.

Have you ever encountered challenges in your work? Please tell us about them.

Certainly—every day is a challenge for me in many ways. Being

someone who serves as an example for many people is a responsibility. However, I try to stay grounded as an ordinary girl who loves people, loves to write, and loves life.

How do you encourage yourself to keep moving forward?

I walk a lot, aiming to cover a few kilometers each day. After all, movement extends life, oxygenates the brain, and releases the happiness hormone.

Do you promote your work? If so, please tell us how it has helped.

I don't formally promote my poetry. I post it in Facebook groups and wait for feedback, comments, corrections, and advice. I love learning from others

What advice would you give someone who wants to be like you?

Everyone is unique, and you should never want to be someone else. Our individuality makes us one of a kind. So, let's be ourselves—the best version of ourselves—by sharing kindness with others and spreading smiles around us.

If you had the chance, what impact would you want to have on the world, your country, and yourself?

I would want people to be more open to one another, to help each other, and to share joy and happiness. We are only here for a short time, so let's leave a legacy in the form of smiles and kindness reflected in the eyes of those who will remember us.

If someone wants to check out your work and what you do, where can they find you? Your handles?

I'm on Facebook, and anyone is welcome to write to me
My handles are Kasia Dominik.



Kasia Dominik

