

# Koome Roots For Alternative Dispute Resolutions



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*Chief Justice Martha Koome*



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# Government To Review 42 Taxes Subjected To Tea Products

By: Fatma Said  
 @themtkenyatimes



Agriculture Principal Secretary Dr. Paul Rono.

### Worth Noting:

- “In our discussion, we have looked at the 834,000 farmers who are big contributors to this sector and who also influence about 6.5 million households, with those figures it is clear that this is a key transformative crop to our economy and the livelihoods in Kenya,” he added.
- He reiterated the urge to reposition crop farming so that it becomes a key priority crop for our economic transformation.

The government is set to undertake a review of the numerous taxes affecting the tea sector, noting that tea products are currently burdened by 42 different taxes.

Agriculture Principal Secretary Dr. Paul Ronoh has said in order ease the load and enhance the industry’s competitiveness, they intend to reassess these taxes and streamline the export processes, including updating the scanning machinery used in tea exports to enhance efficiency and reduce costs.

Speaking at a Mombasa hotel during the Tea Industry Centenary Summit as the Tea Board of Kenya celebrates 100 years of tea commercialization in Kenya, Ronoh highlighted that the government remains steadfast in its commitment to the tea industry under the BETA agenda, which includes subsidized fertilizers, national Greenleaf standards, a new tea quality lab, and a global marketing strategy to boost Kenya’s tea exports.

The summit has brought delegates from major tea-producing, importing and exporting countries and leading global tea industry players.

It has also provided an opportunity to facilitate the exchange of ideologies and the latest information on tea globally and its future.

“As we engage in this 3-day summit celebration, we are going to strategize how we can best position this crop for another 100 years, and our approach and theme is ‘making farmer the King,’” he said.

The PS emphasized the need to enhance farmers’ income by making tea profitable, noting that the tax review is very necessary for this motive is in line with the current government’s plans.

“In our discussion, we have looked at the 834,000 farmers who are big contributors to this sector and who also influence about 6.5 million households, with those figures it is clear that this is a key

transformative crop to our economy and the livelihoods in Kenya,” he added.

He reiterated the urge to reposition crop farming so that it becomes a key priority crop for our economic transformation.

Ronoh added that another key approach is value addition, focusing on exporting tea in a more refined form rather than bulk.

He said that the government is setting up a common user facility, which is currently under establishment at three sites.

The PS highlighted that this facility will allow for enhanced processing and packaging, ensuring that tea is not sold in bulk, a practice that historically contributed to low value. Value-added exports, he noted, aim to significantly increase the profitability and global appeal of Kenya’s Tea.

He added that repositioning of markets is also a great approach noting that to expand the market, they need to shift to-

wards strategic sales for tea rather than relying solely on general auctions.

Moving in this direction, they plan to organize tea trade missions targeting specific clients and countries with potential demand for their tea.

The PS also said that the government, along with key industry leaders, are committed to traveling globally in search of better markets for their tea.

In this effort, they are engaging with other stakeholders, such as banks, to provide loans and enhanced financial support for farmers.

Ronoh added that while Mombasa hosts the largest global tea auction, domestic consumption remains below 10 percent.

Meanwhile, to address the government is introducing new tea products, aimed at younger consumers, encouraging greater local engagement with the tea market and fostering a culture of tea consumption among the youth.

Editor's Desk




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# NEWS PAPER

IN BUSINESS

# The Mount Kenya Times

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## NEWS IN BRIEF



Governor Joseph Ole Lenku calls for the full implementation of the Social Health Authority (SHA) across all hospital sections: ‘The SHA is working at the renal unit, but patients are raising concerns from other areas of the hospital. We urge the Ministry of Health to ensure SHA is made fully functional across the entire medical space to alleviate the current suffering of Kenyans.’



Kajiado Governor Joseph Ole Lenku has commissioned an ultra-modern outpatient facility at the Kajiado County Referral Hospital to facilitate the rollout of universal healthcare. The facility is integrated with all necessary components for quality healthcare and is set to achieve ISO certification, eliminating the need for patients to undergo similar medical tests when referred to Kenyatta National Hospital. Governor Lenku directed that Oloitoktok and Ngong Sub County hospitals be equipped with renal units as the number of patients seeking renal services, especially dialysis, has increased from an initial five and is now approaching 40. ‘‘The Social Health Authority (SHA) is working at the renal unit, but patients are raising concerns from the other sections of the hospital, and we are urging the Ministry of Health to ensure SHA is made fully functional across the entire medical space to alleviate the current suffering by Kenyans,’’ said Lenku.



The Great Lakes University of Kisumu (GLUK) has partnered with US-based pharmaceutical company Med Aditus Pharmaceuticals (MAP) to enhance students’ employability in the evolving pharmaceutical sector. MAP has secured a long-term, zero-cost lease on a 10-acre plot of land within the university’s campus in Miwani Ward, Muhoroni Sub County, to establish a state-of-the-art pharmaceutical manufacturing facility. The facility will serve as a training ground for students, offering hands-on experience with modern manufacturing technologies and helping to develop a skilled workforce to support the plant’s operations. Professor Hazel Miseda, Vice Chancellor of GLUK, described the partnership as a transformative opportunity for both the university and its students. The collaboration would revolutionize training and research, positioning GLUK as a model institution in pharmaceutical education by leveraging technology in the learning process.



County Government of Narok has hit a milestone with the completion of 20 transformative projects in Maji Moto Narosura Ward, Narok south Sub County marking a new era of growth and opportunity for the local communities. Speaking at the inauguration of new Early Childhood Development (ECD) classrooms at Maji Moto Primary School, Governor Patrick Ntutu celebrated this achievement, emphasizing the county’s commitment to delivering impactful development projects. ‘‘These 20 projects signify our dedication to uplifting our communities from education to healthcare and infrastructure, thus reshaping our county,’’ said Ntutu. The key completed projects include ECD classrooms in Lengina, Letukunyi, Ittalala, Ekiu, Loisikut, Kinunga, and Enkare Nairovia. It also includes specialized facilities like the Ewaso Nyiro Girls’ Laboratory and staff quarters at Narosura and Olekuluo.

The Busia County Department of Health and Sanitation has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Alupe University, establishing a formal collaboration with the institution’s School of Health Sciences. Officiating the signing ceremony, area Deputy Governor and also the CECM for department of Health and Sanitation Arthur Odera, emphasized the county’s commitment to supporting medical education by providing access to hospital facilities for practical training. The collaboration aims to strengthen the practical aspects of medical training, allowing students to gain real-world experience in county health facilities under the supervision of experienced healthcare professionals. Alupe University’s Vice Chancellor, Prof. Peter Barasa, welcomed the partnership, noting that it marked a significant milestone for the institution.

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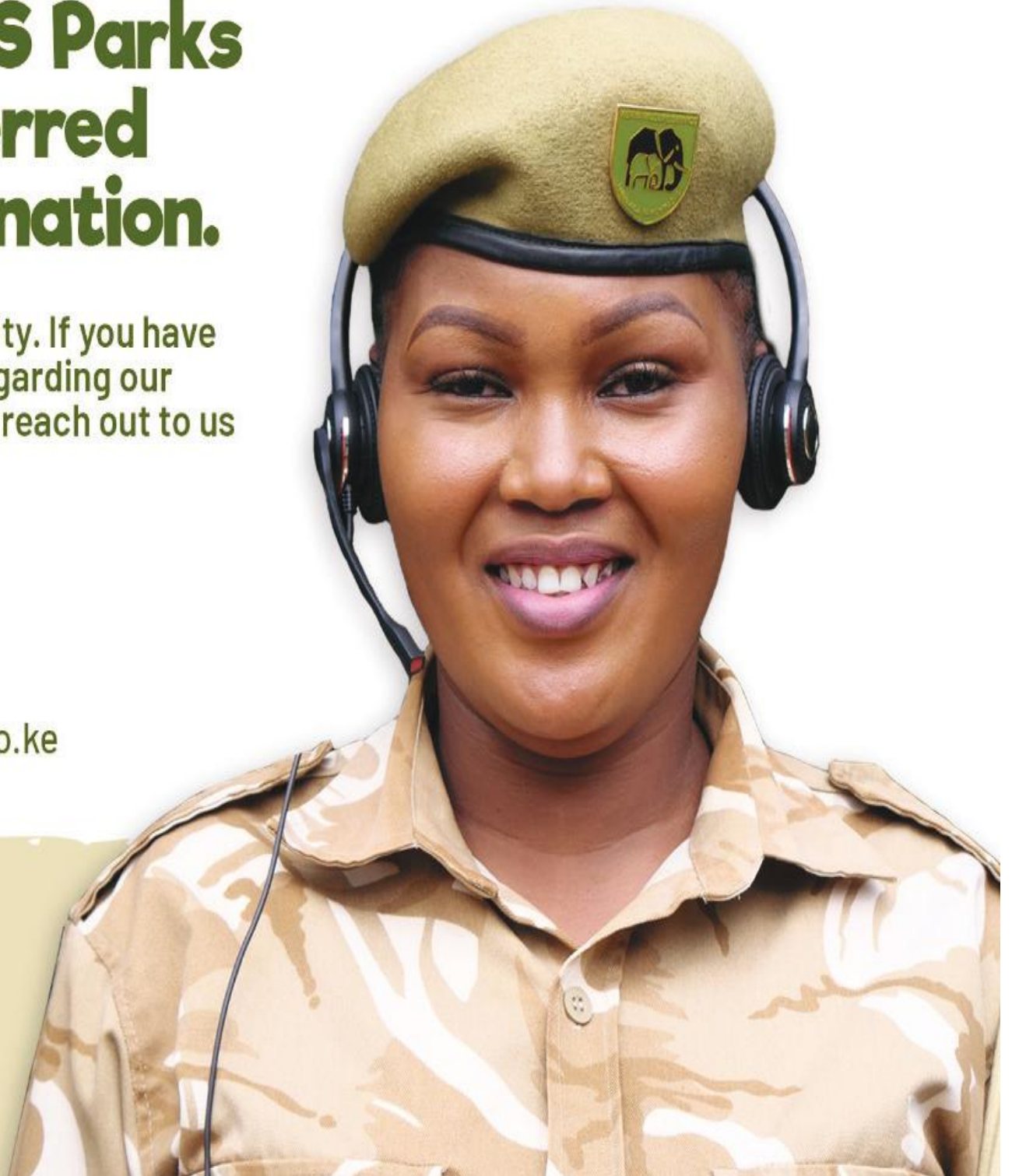
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# Construction, Renovation Of Existing Schools Among Top Proposal During NG-CDF Public Participation

By: MKT Reporter  
 @themtkenyentimes

**Worth Noting:**

- Public schools in Meru Municipality are overcrowded, with no vacant classrooms for learners to be accommodated when schools open next year.
- They insisted that the majority of the public schools especially within the Meru Municipality were overpopulated and there were currently no vacant classrooms to hold the learners once the schools are opened next year.



North Imenti Member Parliament Rahim Dawood



Some members of public who took attended the forums.

During the North Imenti Constituency's public participation, requests for new and renovated school and security infrastructure were prioritized for funding by the National Government Constituency Development Fund in the 2024/2025 financial year. The majority of the school heads who attended the event insisted on the construction of new Junior Secondary School classrooms, especially those that will accommodate learners heading to grade nine next year. Public schools in Meru Municipality are overcrowded, with no vacant classrooms for learners to be accommodated when schools open next year. They insisted that the majority of the public schools especially within the Meru Municipality were overpopulated and there were currently no vacant classrooms to hold the learners once the schools are opened next year.

"Currently we have 324 students in Grades one to six, 99 in grade seven, and 62 in grade eight. We are however expecting more enrolment considering that there is an emerging trend where parents are withdrawing their children from private to public schools due to hard economic times." "As a result of this, we wish that the existing four classrooms be upgraded so we can accommodate the anticipated numbers," said Ms Eva Gichuru, Meru Primary School head. Other head teachers wanted perimeter walls erected around their institutions arguing that there were rampant cases of intruders who were destroying school property and leaving the institutions at a loss. Ms. Jane Mutonga from DEB township primary school has urged the NG-CDF Committee to seriously consider her case regarding unauthorized entry

and theft of electronic gadgets. In response to this, area Member Parliament Rahim Dawood called on the school heads to submit their bill of quantities and the size of the perimeter walls they wanted in terms of meters for consideration. On the issue of security, the outstanding cases concerned water and electricity connection, construction of Assistant Commissioners, Chiefs and Assistant Chief's offices in various stations as well as equipping them with furniture. On this, Dawood noted that there were stations that were allocated money for the renovation of their offices as well as fencing them, yet it was still lying in accounts. "The individual is requested to promptly address any funds that hinder their use within the next two weeks or risk having them re-allocated to other

functions," said the MP. He said he will sit with his committee to consider all the proposals and report back especially those that will be done immediately and those that will have to wait considering the resources available. However, the MP noted with concern that the constituency was in dire need of about 30 classrooms to accommodate grade nine learners urging the government through the Ministry of Education to move with speed and allocation of funds for the same.

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# Former Freedom Fighters To Meet Over Jamhuri Fete

By: MTK Correspondent

@themtkenyatimes

Representatives of various former freedom fighters groups are set to meet today over plans to attend the forthcoming Jamhuri day celebrations.

The veterans led by Mzee Gikonyo Wa Githiga who is the National coordinator of Mau Mau War Veterans Association will today be meeting at Scouting movement's Baden Powell grounds in Nyeri town.

Sources said the representatives are expected to come out with a petition on among other things, their long standing compensation.

Last week, the veterans and some of their descendants held a meeting in Kiambu where they called upon their colleagues 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.

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 Githiga and Bishop Fundi Mwai led the association team.

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.

Those present were also sensitized on various issues affecting the de-

scendants 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.

# Matatu Industry Leaders Urge Government To Rethink Countrywide Crackdown

By: John Waitthaka

@themtkenyatimes

Players in the matatu industry have called on the government to exercise caution before enforcing its proposed countrywide crackdown on public service vehicles.

Albert Karakacha, President of the Matatu Owners Association, criticized the government for what he termed as haphazard measures that could potentially harm the crucial public transport sector. According to Mr. Karakacha, any abrupt and poorly planned actions would not only disrupt the operations of matatus but also inconvenience millions of Kenyans who rely on this mode of transport daily.

Speaking to the media, Mr. Karakacha emphasized the importance of dialogue and collaboration between the government and stakeholders in the matatu industry. He urged authorities to involve all key players in brainstorming sessions to develop practical and sustainable solutions to

the challenges facing the sector.

"Abrupt decisions, especially during this critical time as we approach the December festive season, will only create unnecessary chaos. The systems are already in place; we just need to refine and enforce them without creating inconveniences for commuters," he stated.

The matatu industry leader further urged the government to be considerate of the timing of such enforcement measures. With many Kenyans preparing to travel for the holidays, he warned that a crackdown could disrupt travel plans and negatively impact the economy.

Mr. Karakacha called on the Acting Prime Cabinet Secretary to ensure that any decisions affecting public transport are well-thought-out and inclusive. He stressed that dialogue and mutual understanding are key to finding long-term solutions to challenges in the sector without penalizing either operators or commuters.

The matatu industry, a backbone of Kenya's transport system, has faced perennial challenges including allegations of non-compliance with traffic regulations. However, stakehold-



Albert Karakacha President of the Matatu Owners Association

ers argue that blanket crackdowns often fail to address root causes and instead exacerbate the situation.

As the government prepares to roll out its measures, the matatu industry hopes for meaningful engagement

and a balanced approach that safeguards the interests of operators and the traveling.

# Koome Roots For ADR To Foster Timely Resolution Of Conflicts

By: Correspondent  
@themkenyatimes



*Koome noted that the inclusive approach encourages people to resolve conflicts in settings that reflect their unique circumstances and traditions, fostering a justice system that truly meets people where they are/Judiciary*

## Worth Noting:

- “I therefore encourage the residents of Gatundu North to embrace mediation as a preferred method of dispute resolution. Mediation offers a unique opportunity for parties to collaboratively reach a mutually agreeable solution without the adversarial nature of traditional litigation,” she noted.
- “In close-knit communities like Gatundu North, where family and personal ties are often interwoven with land and business matters, mediation provides a constructive approach that can prevent the erosion of these valuable relationships,” the Chief Justice added.
- Justice Koome said by fostering amicable resolutions, mediation promotes a more cohesive society where conflicts are resolved through dialogue and respect, ultimately contributing to long-term peace and unity.

Chief Justice Martha Koome has called on Kenyans to utilize Alternative Dispute Resolution for quick resolution of cases.

Speaking during the launch of Kamwangi Law Courts in Kaimbu County on Thursday, the Chief Justice said by championing Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) methods, such as Mediation and Alternative (Traditional) Justice Systems (AJS), the Judiciary aims to provide accessible, culturally relevant, and timely resolution of disputes.

She noted that the inclusive approach encourages people to resolve conflicts in settings that reflect their unique circumstances and traditions, fostering a justice system that truly meets people where they are.

“I therefore encourage the residents of Gatundu North to embrace mediation as a preferred method of dispute resolution. Mediation offers a unique opportunity for parties to collaboratively reach a mutually agreeable solution without the adversarial nature of traditional litigation,” she noted.

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personal ties are often interwoven with land and business matters, mediation provides a constructive approach that can prevent the erosion of these valuable relationships,” the Chief Justice added.

Justice Koome said by fostering amicable resolutions, mediation promotes a more cohesive society where conflicts are resolved through dialogue and respect, ultimately contributing to long-term peace and unity.

She encouraged the residents of Gatundu North to embrace the AJS approach to preserve harmony and strengthen community bonds.

“Alongside mediation, we are championing Alternative (Traditional) Justice Systems (AJS). AJS broadens pathways to justice, allowing communities to resolve disputes through culturally relevant methods that often provide quicker and more contextually appropriate resolutions,” said the CJ.

### People-centred justice

Justice Koome noted that the launch of Kamwangi Law Courts aligns with the Judiciary’s ongoing

quest to create a people-centered justice system that is responsive to the justice needs of all Kenyans.

“Our journey to expand access to justice across Kenya requires partnerships, especially given the budgetary constraints that the Judiciary faces. The establishment of the Kamwangi Law Court here in Gatundu North is a remarkable example of what can be accomplished through collaboration,” said the CJ.

She added that Kamwangi Law Courts launch will help locals overcome geographical barriers and ensure that residents can access justice without undue hardship of having to travel long distances to neighboring constituencies to access court services.

“Under the Judiciary’s blueprint, Social Transformation Through Access to Justice (STAJ), we envision broadening access to justice to all Kenyans, including the vulnerable and marginalized. Millions of Kenyans aspire to access judicial services that can transform their lives, and today, the Kamwangi Magistrates’ Court brings us closer to realizing that vision,” added Justice

Koome.

Kamwangi Magistrates’ Court, with jurisdiction over criminal and civil matters, will be an essential part of our growing network of Magistrates’ courts across the country.

The Judiciary aims to reduce the proximity of courts to less than 100 kilometers for every Kenyan.

The goal is to establish a magistrates’ court in each of the 290 constituencies in the country.

The launch of Kamwangi Magistrates’ Court marks the 141st such court; however, this means that 149 constituencies still lack a magistrates’ court.

“I therefore take this opportunity to call upon leaders in the other 149 constituencies where we still don’t have courts, to join hands and partner with us so that we can work together to ensure that court services are easily accessible for all Kenyans across all the 290 constituencies,” said Justice Koome.

# Residents Read Malice In The Intended Impeachment Of Nyandarua Governor

By: MTK Correspondent  
 @themtkenyatimes

Nyandarua County residents have expressed mixed reactions to the planned impeachment of Governor Dr. Kiarie Badilisha through a motion prepared by Mirangine County Assembly Member Samwel Mathu.

In the Motion, the MCA has cited numerous allegations that if passed could see the first-time governor sent home.

However, the move has elicited mixed reactions from residents who have expressed their concerns over the intention to impeach the governor.

They claim that such a move would derail meaningful development and that its timing was also wrong, as it comes just a few days after Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua's immediate impeachment.

At the same time a section of residents have accused the MCA of colluding with external forces to ouster the governor in a bid to settle political differences.

In the notice of Special Motion by Samwel Mathu who also serves as the Vice Chairman of the County Assembly Service Board, the MCA notes that the governor has committed a gross violation of the Constitution or any other Law according to Article 181 (1) (a) of the Constitution of Kenya 2010.

He says the Governor has interfered with the recruitment and deployment of county staff against the law, noting that "It is Common knowledge that Partisan Staff as provided for by SRC to facilitate the operations in the Office of the Governor, are not subjected to any Competitive Recruitment Process; whereas, the Station Revenue Heads / Officers are competitively Recruited within the County Public Service and with Clear Qualifications, Terms and Conditions of Service.

He adds that "the Governor has Illegally Hired Staff (including Retired Civil Servants), that Continue to Draw Salaries from the County Funds without going through the Legal Processes and hence Leading to Bloated Wage Bill that eats into the



Nyandarua County Governor Dr Kiarie Badilisha during his swearing in, in 2022.

Development Expenditures. This affects and reduces the services expected to trickle down to the Public,"

The MCA further notes that there are serious reasons to believe that Governor Moses Kiarie Ndirangu alias Badilisha has committed crime under Section 47A of the Anti-Corruption and Economic Crimes Act; and Part II of the Leadership and Integrity Act; a).

The Governor on several occasions

has engaged in some Criminal and Corruption Activities of demanding for Money (i.e., 10% of the Tender Amount) from the County Suppliers and Service Providers in exchange of payment for Supplies and Services offered to the County.

However, for it to go through for debate by the County Assembly, the Motion requires at least 13 MCAs out of the 41 members to assent their signatures for approval by the As-

sembly's House Business Committee (HBC) and then subjected for debate by the full House.

If it gets to this level, the Motion will need to be approved by at least 23 MCAs to impeach the Governor and the report forwarded to The Senate to facilitate the same.



# President Ruto Asks Catholic Church To Train Clergy For Other Churches



By: Joseph Mutua Ndonga  
mutuandonga@yahoo.com

## Worth Noting:

- We know some of the clergy administrating in other churches were not well prepared. This is why I ask you to consider offering them similar courses.
- In response to the attacks by Catholic bishops, he humbly asked them to be verifying the allegations against his administration.
- We know some of President Ruto's critics were envious of his successes because of political reasons.
- Dr Ruto fell short of telling the bishops to be wary of such forces.
- He however told them. As a church, we expect you to guide the people of Kenya by reporting what is factual.



President William Ruto, presiding over graduation ceremony at Tangaza University.

A day after the Catholic bishops under the umbrella of Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops (KCCB) launched attacks on President William Ruto, the head of state presided over graduation ceremony at Tangaza University.

This University is run by Catholic Church and it has been offering theological courses to Catholic priests.

While expressing his gratitude to Tangaza University for training many priests who subscribe to the doctrine of Holy Catholic, President Ruto called on the Catholic church to also train clergy for other religions.

All of us pray and believe in one God.

We know some of the clergy administrating in other churches were not well prepared. This is why I ask you to consider offering them similar courses.

In response to the attacks by Catholic bishops, he humbly asked them to be verifying the allegations against his administration.

We know some of President Ruto's critics were envious of his successes because of political reasons.

Dr Ruto fell short of telling the bishops

to be wary of such forces.

He however told them. As a church, we expect you to guide the people of Kenya by reporting what is factual.

In a statement released a day earlier, the Catholic bishops appeared to have deviated from their core mandate of guiding their flock on spiritual matters.

In it, they claimed that President William Ruto was taking the country in the wrong direction.

They would not however produce tangible evidence to support some of their claims.

Some of these bishops were opposed to the impeachment of former DP Rigathi Gachagua.

The process of impeachment of DP is exclusively handled by Parliament and Senate. The President is not a member and therefore he has nothing to do with the process.

The tone of bishop Muheria's statements left no doubt he wanted the President to save Gachagua.

The Bible says that the Truth shall let us free.

As we know, the critics of President

William Ruto have been making all manner of false allegations against him.

The ultimate is to sabotage and derail his development agenda of fulfilling the promises he made to Kenyans during the electioneering period.

They know if the President succeeds this will work against their interests of plotting to 'unseat' him come 2027 polls.

Well, this is not the first time we are seeing the Catholic bishops making this kind of allegations.

They did it during the era of President Mwai Kibaki and his successor Uhuru Kenyatta.

This did not distract these leaders from discharging their constitutional mandate of serving the people of Kenya. The two leaders were staunch Catholics.

We know Catholic Church own and run major hospitals across the country.

Therefore, the Bishops are competitors when it comes to matters of healthcare.

Many believe this explains why they are opposed to Social Health Authority and Social Health Insurance Fund (SHIF).

Yes, the rollout is encountering teething problems but this is normal in any transition. The government through the Ministry of Health is however working hard to address these challenges. The state has covered substantial grounds.

The Catholic Church run hospitals were the most expensive the country.

The Church has in particular been raking in billions of shillings from the patients suffering from critical and chronic ailments.

With the unveiling of Universal Health Coverage (UHC), this would spell 'death' of their cash cow.

*Joseph Mutua Ndonga Is A Writer And Social Commentator*

# Understanding Conflict: Some Causes Of Conflict

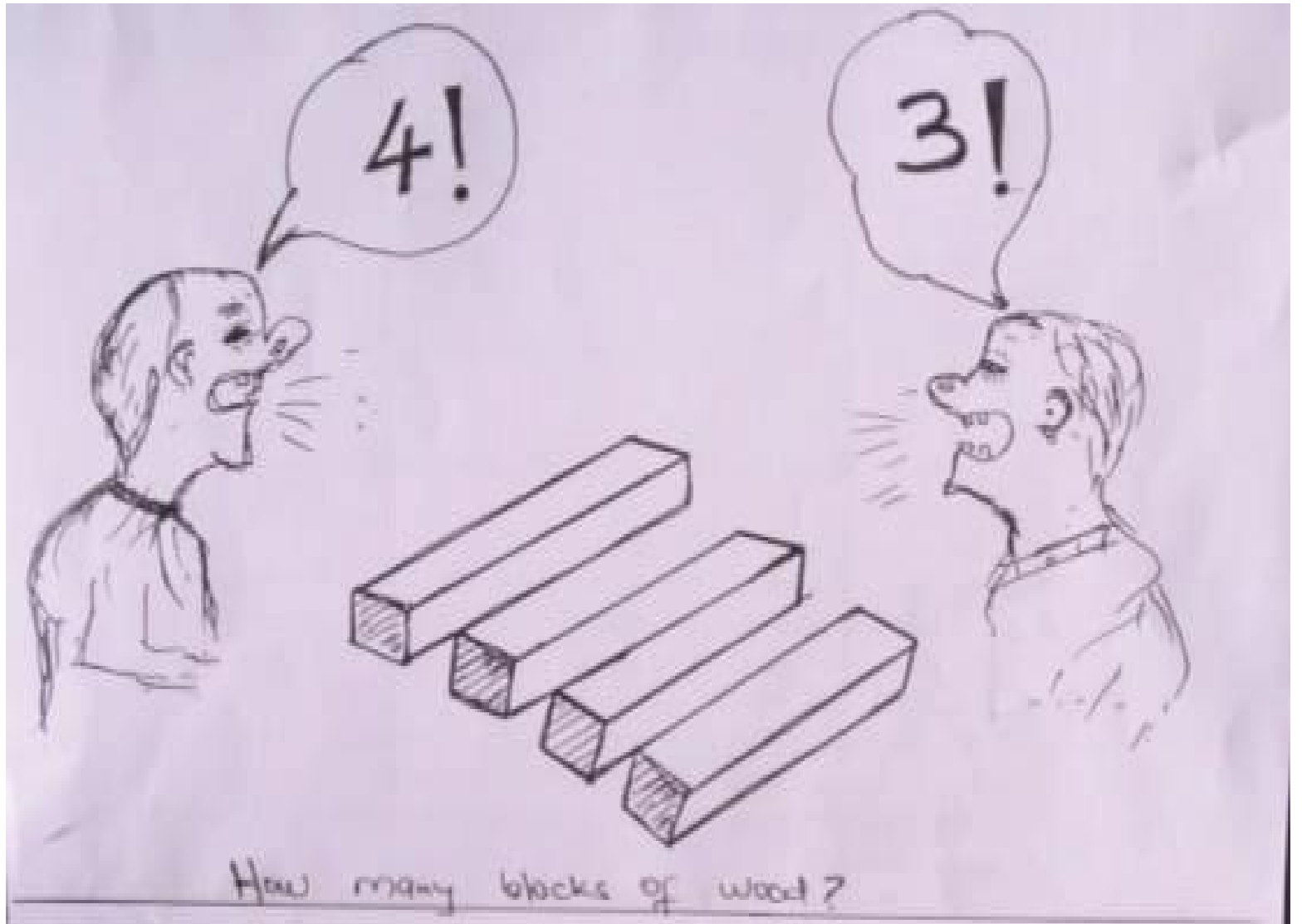


By: David Ndirangu  
@themtkenyatimes

## Worth Noting:

- So I boarded this 'Mūcūgi' to Matinyani that had been baptized 'Njoo Nazo'. I was not lucky enough to get a seat so I took my position on the isle facing backwards as required. In absence of 'Michuki Rules', these vehicles used to seriously overload, play very loud music (for some reason the music from that side of the world sounds like half the length of the song is taken up by the climax).

- In addition, smoking those days had not been banned in matatus. So the makan-ga and several of the passengers were busy enjoying their cigarettes. Behind me in the isle was a lady who I guess was on her way home from town accompanied by her two sheep.



Many years ago, there is a time I decided to go visit my Sister Hannah at some place called Matinyani in Kitui District (Now Kitui County) where she had been posted as a newly trained teacher. It was actually my first time to travel to that side of the country. Those days, the main mode of transport from Kitui town to Matinyani was some version of Mitsubishi (some people of Murima used to call them Mūcūgi) Canter matatus with a cabin separate from a built body that had only one door at the rear. The seating arrangement comprised long benches along the sides of the enclosure except for the side with the door. There were two metal bars fixed to the ceiling for extra passengers to hang on. That time 'Michuki the Great' had not yet invented the famous 'Michuki Rules for Public transport' and the Matinyani Matatus were a perfect example of bad manners. After making sure that all the available space on the benches were occupied, the extra passengers were instructed to perch on the metal bars while arranged so close that there was actually no space between them. One had to half-stand-half-bend while facing the direction the vehicle was coming from. For some reason who-

ever designed those contraptions had set the ceiling a bit too low for an average human being.

So I boarded this 'Mūcūgi' to Matinyani that had been baptized 'Njoo Nazo'. I was not lucky enough to get a seat so I took my position on the isle facing backwards as required. In absence of 'Michuki Rules', these vehicles used to seriously overload, play very loud music (for some reason the music from that side of the world sounds like half the length of the song is taken up by the climax). In addition, smoking those days had not been banned in matatus. So the makan-ga and several of the passengers were busy enjoying their cigarettes. Behind me in the isle was a lady who I guess was on her way home from town accompanied by her two sheep. Then I heard the makan-ga shouting at me something like, 'We mutumia, syoka na itina'. When I looked at him blankly he repeated the same this time even gesticulating with the hands. I guess my anger showed clearly on my face but it was time for the fellow to look at me blankly and wonder what was wrong with me. Had my hands not been busy supporting me, I would have committed a crime. Let me explain.

It is said that the people of Murima and Wakamba are cousins. It is therefore easy to somehow connect what one is saying in the other's language even though not every word. In my language 'mutumia' is a woman. So this makan-ga guy had decided to call me a woman even with my well-groomed black moustache. Secondly, where I come from you should not go throwing about the word 'itina' carelessly all over the place. It means buttocks. I was therefore every mad that this fellow had decided to call me a woman and then shamelessly shout that I should move 'towards the buttocks.' New place, strange people, uncomfortable conditions,...I didn't do anything.

I thereafter met a friendly makan-ga guy in Matinyani called Alex Kinyamasyo. After I had lamented to him how rude his colleagues were, he just laughed and explained to me that 'mutumia' in their language is used to respectfully address a man and 'itina' simply means back. So my 'Njoo Nazo' makan-ga was simply telling me something like 'hey man, move back' but I had gotten it all wrong resulting in the conflict. Use of the same words that mean totally different things in different languages can

cause disagreements. Disagreements lead to disputes which lead to conflict which can escalate to fights or war.

The two fellows in the caricature above got into a fierce fight because one was seeing four blocks of wood while the other one three depending on where one was standing. Their conflict was as a result of them seeing the same thing differently. We all see the world using our own lenses and that makes conflict inevitable in the society.

In the above examples, the role of the Professional Mediator would be to assist the disputing parties to appreciate the other party's perspective. This would be done through a technique called "Role Reversal" that is, 'putting oneself in the shoes of the other.' This might be taken in a metaphorical sense but at times it calls for the parties to literally exchange seats during the mediation process. It provides the parties an opportunity to exercise empathy.

David Ndirangu BSc. CPA (K). Certified Professional Mediator. Email: ndirangudavid2023@gmail.com

# Kindiki At The Kenya Tea Centenary Celebrations

By: MTK Correspondent

@themtkenyatimes

The Kenyan Tea is an integral part of the country's heritage and liberation history.

100 years since tea growing and production was commercialised, remarkable strides have been made and the country produces the best.

The tea is ranked top globally due to its quality, bold flavour and consistency, and generates close to KSh200B in foreign exchange earnings annually, accounting for 2 per cent of our Country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

600M kilograms of tea is produced in the Country every year and this production will be further enhanced through strategic policy and administrative interventions, including provision of subsidised fertiliser, to ensure that all stakeholders, and particularly the farmers, receive value from their hardwork.

In the last two years, the government has made available over 180,000 met-

ric tonnes of subsidised fertiliser and made it accessible to farmers at a cost of KSh2,500 per 50kg bag. This year, the government will spend KSh2B to support the distribution of 97,000 metric tonnes of subsidised fertiliser to tea farmers.

The Kenyan Tea is a key anchor of the Country's sustainability and environmental conservation.

It has also supported the education sector and the rural economy as a major source of income and employment.

To enhance the performance of the tea sector, legal and institutional reforms are ongoing and the government will ensure their strict enforcement to safeguard the interests of farmers.

Deputy President Prof Kithure Kindiki officially opened the Kenyan Tea Centenary Celebrations and Summit in Mombasa County.

He was accompanied by among others Agriculture Cabinet Secretary Dr. Andrew Karanja, Principal Secretaries; Dr. Kiprono Paul Rono (Agriculture) and Mary Mutho-



Deputy President Prof Kithure Kindiki addressing Tea industry stakeholders in Mombasa..

ni (Public Health), John Mutunga (Chairman, Agriculture Committee in the National Assembly), Alexander Mundigi (Vice Chair, Senate Agriculture Committee), Senators Wahome Wamatinga (Nyeri), David Wakoli

(Bungoma), Beth Syengo (Nominated), National Assembly Members; Ruweida Obo (Lamu East), Githinji Gichimu (Gichugu), and Joseph Chererot (Kiplelion East), Kenya Tea Board Chairman Jacob Kahiu, Kenya

Tea Development Authority (KTDA) Chairman Enos Njeru and other tea industry stakeholders in attendance.

# State Launches Regional Peace Initiative To Combat Violent Extremism Across East Africa

By: KNA

The Ministry of Interior and National Administration in Kenya has launched a new initiative aimed at addressing the root causes of violent extremism across East Africa.

The program, part of the broader Peacebuilding Architecture, offers an opportunity to assess progress, tackle challenges, and take action in alignment with new peace strategies.

Dr. Raymond Omollo, Principal Secretary of the State Department for Internal Security, emphasized the significance of this initiative, calling it a "milestone in the partnership towards lasting peace and development" and underscoring the commitment to countering the "critical challenges posed by violent extremism."

He commended stakeholders for their collective efforts in addressing

one of the region's most pressing security threats.

Omollo highlighted Kenya's long-standing advocacy for peace, noting its success in maintaining stability despite challenges such as the Westgate, Mpeketoni, Garissa University, Dusit, and Shakahola tragedies. These incidents, he pointed out, reveal the persistent threat of religiously motivated violence in the country, which has led to "devastating losses" and ongoing insecurity.

"Social cohesiveness and peace cannot be enforced; they must be willingly embraced by citizens to be fully guaranteed and sustainable," Omollo stated, emphasising the importance of community-led peacebuilding.

He also cited President William Ruto's 2023 initiative to evaluate and strengthen the Peacebuilding Architecture, which aims to address emerging threats like violent extremism.



Dr. Raymond Omollo, Principal Secretary of the State Department for Internal Security.

Omollo stressed the need for improved national legal frameworks, border controls, and regional cooperation to effectively counter these threats.

Omollo called for continued col-

laboration with agencies such as the National Counter Terrorism Center (NCTC) and community-driven Peace Committees, which integrate traditional conflict resolution mechanisms. "Kenya remains committed

to promoting peace and security... and will continue to work tirelessly towards achieving the goal domestically, regionally, and internationally," he said.

# The Role Of Fantasy Novels In The Upbringing Of The Young Generation: A Scientific Perspective

Burieva Nargiza Kuchkarovna  
PhD, Associate professor, Jizzakh state  
pedagogical university

**Abstract:** Fantasy novels have long been a staple of children's literature, capturing the imagination of young readers with their tales of magic, mythical creatures, and epic adventures. This paper explores the role of fantasy novels in the upbringing of the young generation, examining their impact on cognitive, emotional, and social development. We highlight key areas in which these books contribute to shaping values, fostering creativity, enhancing critical thinking, and providing emotional resilience. Drawing on existing psychological and educational research, this article provides an evidence-based analysis of the influence of fantasy literature on youth development.

In an increasingly complex world, the role of literature in child development is often overlooked in favor of more utilitarian forms of education. However, fantasy novels, with their unique ability to engage young minds in extraordinary worlds, have been shown to play a significant role in shaping cognitive, emotional, and social skills. While traditional literature often deals with realistic scenarios, fantasy offers young readers an opportunity to confront abstract and complex issues in ways that promote deeper understanding and personal growth. The narrative structures of fantasy novels often focus on themes of good versus evil, personal growth, moral challenges, and resilience—concepts that are critical during the formative years of a child's development. One of the primary benefits of fantasy literature is its ability to stimulate imagination and creative thinking. According to Piaget's stages of cognitive development, children in the preoperational stage (typically ages 2–7) develop the ability to engage in symbolic play, which is further enhanced by exposure to fantastical stories. These narratives encourage children to visualize scenarios beyond their immediate reality, fostering imaginative play and problem-solving abilities (Gopnik, 2009). This is particularly important in developing cognitive flexibility, which allows children to think creatively and adapt to new situations—skills essential for academic achievement and

later problem-solving in adulthood. In addition, studies suggest that fantasy literature encourages "divergent thinking"—a type of creative thinking that involves generating multiple possible solutions to open-ended problems (Smith, 2013). By engaging with fantasy narratives, young readers are introduced to abstract concepts such as parallel universes, magical systems, and alternate realities, which expand their mental horizons and encourage flexible thinking patterns. Fantasy novels also have a profound impact on the emotional development of young readers. Central to many of these stories are characters who face internal and external conflicts—issues like loss, betrayal, and identity struggles. By identifying with characters who undergo significant emotional and psychological growth, readers develop a greater understanding of their own emotions and the emotions of others (Keen, 2007). In fact, studies show that reading fiction, particularly fantasy, can improve empathy, as it allows readers to experience different perspectives and emotionally complex situations (Mar et al., 2006). Furthermore, fantasy novels often present young readers with characters who are challenged to confront their own weaknesses and grow. This mirrors the developmental process children undergo as they navigate challenges in their own lives. Protagonists like Harry Potter or Frodo Baggins must demonstrate resilience and moral fortitude, providing a model for young readers on how to navigate the complexities of their own emotional landscapes.

Fantasy literature frequently explores moral dilemmas, which helps young readers develop a nuanced understanding of ethics and justice. Concepts such as sacrifice, loyalty, friendship, and standing up for what is right are central themes in many popular fantasy novels (e.g., *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *Harry Potter*). This exposure to moral decision-making is critical in the development of a child's sense of right and wrong.

According to Kohlberg's theory of moral development, children progress through stages of moral reasoning, and literature—especially fantasy—can provide the ideal context for these developmental shifts. The fantastical settings in these novels often force characters to make difficult moral choices in extreme circumstances,



which encourages readers to question their own values and beliefs (Eisenberg, 2006). For instance, in *The Lord of the Rings*, Frodo's decision to resist the power of the One Ring challenges readers to think critically about the nature of power, greed, and self-sacrifice.

Fantasy novels also provide a unique opportunity to explore diversity and social inclusion. The diversity of characters and species often depicted in fantasy novels—such as elves, dwarves, and talking animals—mirrors the real-world diversity of race, culture, and identity. These novels often highlight themes of prejudice, inequality, and the importance of unity in the face of adversity. For example, *Harry Potter* and *Percy Jackson* tackle issues of discrimination, social justice, and inclusion in ways that resonate with young readers facing similar social issues in their communities (Trites, 2000).

Furthermore, fantasy stories often emphasize the importance of teamwork and cooperation across differences. Readers learn that despite external differences—whether species, class,

or background—characters can work together to achieve common goals. This social-emotional learning reinforces the importance of cooperation, empathy, and conflict resolution in real-world interactions.

Fantasy novels serve as a powerful tool in the upbringing of young readers. They foster creativity, enhance cognitive skills, and provide emotional and moral guidance during a critical stage of development. By engaging with fantasy stories, children are able to explore complex emotional landscapes, develop empathy, and learn important lessons about courage, sacrifice, and friendship. Additionally, these novels often create a safe space for young people to explore difficult ethical questions and gain a deeper understanding of themselves and the world around them. Ultimately, the role of fantasy novels in the development of the young generation cannot be overstated, as they provide not only an escape from reality but also a profound source of personal and social growth.

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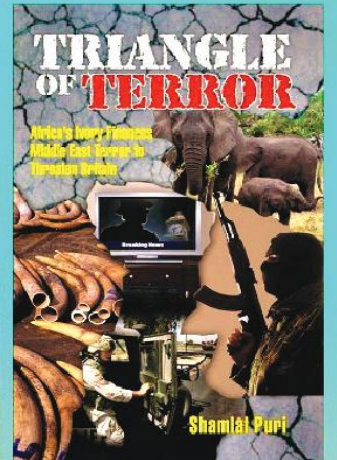
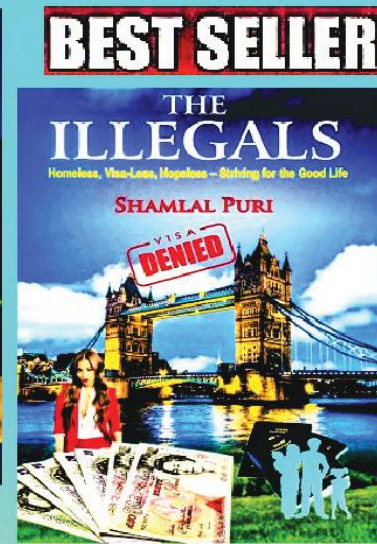
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# National Biosafety Authority Up To Task In Regulating GMOs

By: MTK Correspondent  
@themkenyatimes

The National Biosafety Authority (NBA) has assured Kenyans that there is a well-established regulatory framework that caters for persons dealing in Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and their derived products in the country.

NBA Ag Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Nehemiah Ngetich said that the framework outlines specific application requirements, safety assessment procedures and monitoring mechanisms which align to Kenya's commitment to food safety, environmental protection and the socio-economic wellbeing of its citizens.

Last week, the High Court dismissed a case against the lifting of a ban on GMOs and their derived products, re-affirming the Cabinet decision that lifted the ban on GMOs of 3rd October 2022, giving an indication that Kenya has a robust legal and institutional framework to regulate GMOs.

Mr Ngetich observed that the Authority has a mandate to exercise

general supervision and control over the transfer, handling and use of GMOs with a view to ensuring safety of human and animal health and provision of adequate level of protection of the environment.

"The Authority has already approved the commercialisation of Bt Cotton, which has been in cultivation since 2020 and no adverse effects have been noted or reported through the Authority's monitoring and surveillance system. Other crops such as Bt maize and virus-resistant cassava are at advanced stages of variety testing towards their commercialisation," Ngetich added.

Kenya is a member of the international community and is a signatory to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety which is a multilateral environmental agreement whose objective is to ensure an adequate level of protection in the safe transfer, handling and use of GMOs.

At the national level, Kenya approved the National Biotechnology Development Policy in 2006, enacted the Biosafety Act in 2009 and has so far published four Biosafety Regulations namely; the Biosafety (Contained use) Regulations, 2011;



NBA Ag Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Nehemiah Ngetich

the Biosafety (Environmental Release) Regulations, 2011; the Biosafety (Import, Export, and Transit) Regulations, 2011; and the Biosafety (Labelling) Regulations, 2012.

The Authority is also tasked with the role of creating public awareness to educate Kenyans on GMO foods, including regulatory safeguards, and the importance of informed consumer choice.

NBA has so far published four regulations namely; Biosafety (contained Use) regulations, 2011, Biosafety (import, export and transit) regulations, 2011, Biosafety (environmental release) regulations, 2011 and Biosafety (labeling) regulations 2012.

The Authority's role fits well with the government agenda, the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation

Agenda (BeTA) focusing on agricultural transformation and inclusive growth, transforming the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) economy among others.

Some of the strides that have been made by the Authority include; development and publication of necessary Biosafety regulations to support operations and mandates of the Authority.

# Suspect Who Confessed To Killing Multiple Women In Nakuru Jailed For 28 Years

By: Correspondent

A suspect who confessed to killing multiple women in Nakuru has been jailed for 28 years after he agreed to act as a state witness.

According to the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI), Evance Michori was jailed for being an accessory after the fact to murder.

The investigative agency stated that Michori, one of six suspects implicated in a series of murders in the Mawanga area of Bahati Sub-County, Nakuru will testify as a prosecution witness against the other five defendants.

"The murders, which took place on June 21, 2022, in Mawanga, Bahati, prompted an extensive investigation, leading to the arrest of six suspects. On August 2, 2022, the six were formally charged with four counts of murder in the Nakuru High Court,"

the DCI stated.

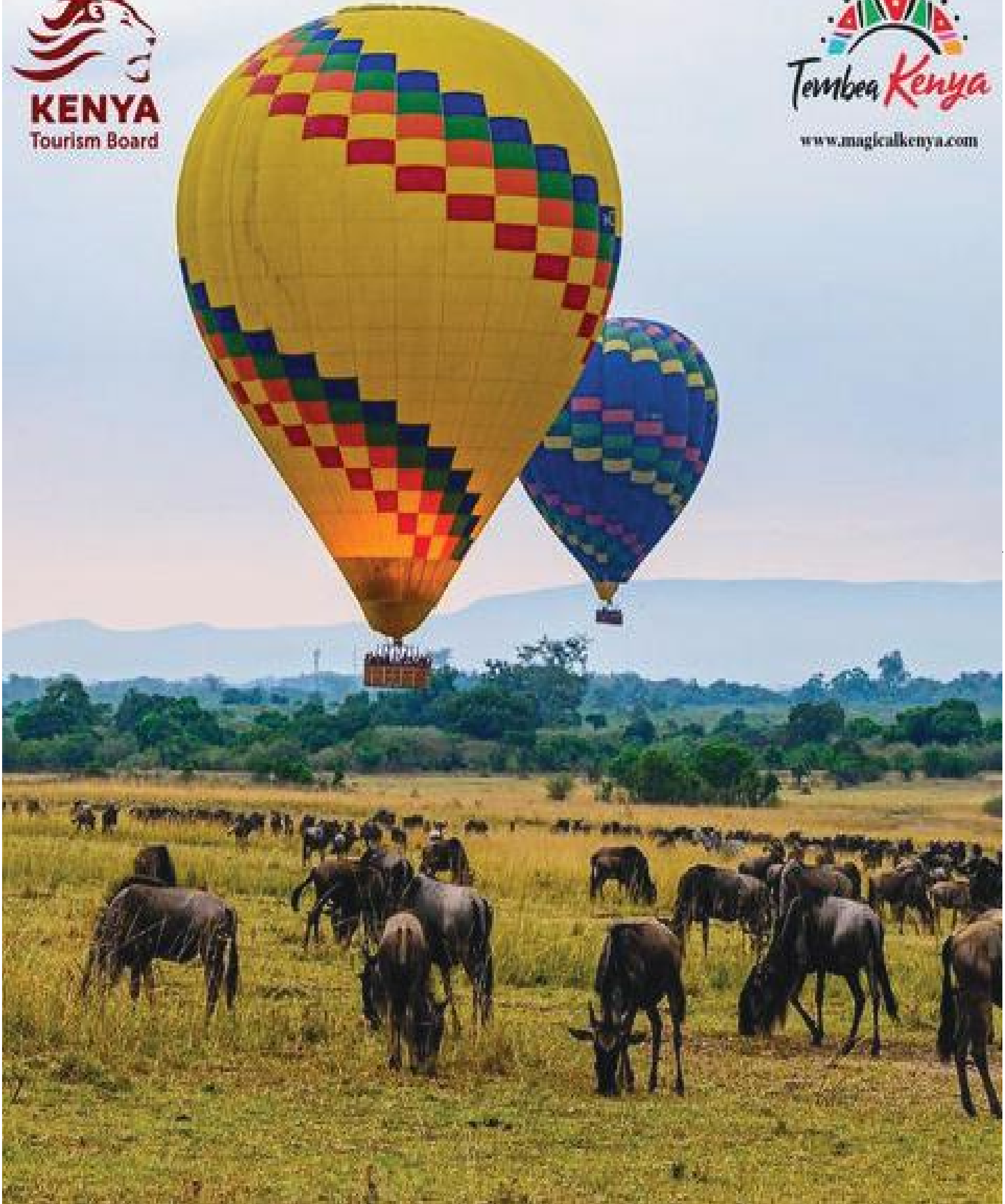
It further explained that after a detailed interrogation, Michori confessed to being a member of the Confirm Gang- a criminal gang that was operating within Nakuru and its environs.

"He admitted to the murders of four women, whom the gang robbed and left to perish in their burning homes. Michori's confession was substantiated by additional forensic evidence meticulously gathered by investigators. Following the collection and presentation of this evidence, Michori's defence team negotiated a plea bargain agreement with the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) in Nakuru," it stated.

The court accepted the plea deal on November 14, 2024, resulting in Michori's 28-year sentence for being an accessory after the fact of murder.

In the upcoming trial, Michori will serve as a prosecution witness, providing crucial testimony against his five co-defendants.





# The Case For A Ten-Year Term Limit For Supreme Court Judges In Kenya



By: Odhiambo Jerameel Kevins Owuor  
@themtkenyatimes



## Worth Noting:

- Accountability is another critical reason for implementing term limits for Supreme Court judges. Long tenures can lead to complacency and a diminished sense of responsibility among judges.
- When judges know they will remain in their positions indefinitely, they may feel less compelled to justify their decisions or engage with public opinion. A ten-year term would create a natural point of evaluation, compelling judges to reflect on their performance and decisions regularly.
- This accountability mechanism could be further strengthened by incorporating performance reviews conducted by an independent body at the end of each term. Such evaluations would not only assess judicial conduct but also provide feedback on how well judges have engaged with public participation in their rulings.

The judiciary plays a crucial role in upholding the rule of law and ensuring justice in society. In Kenya, the Supreme Court serves as the highest court and has significant influence over legal interpretations and the protection of constitutional rights. However, the current system allows judges to serve indefinitely, which can lead to stagnation, lack of accountability, and a disconnect from evolving societal values. Implementing a ten-year term limit for Supreme Court judges would address these issues by promoting fresh perspectives, enhancing accountability, and fostering public trust in the judiciary. This thesis argues that a fixed term would not only rejuvenate the Kenyan judiciary but also align it more closely with democratic principles that emphasize responsiveness to the citizenry.

First and foremost, a ten-year term limit would facilitate the infusion of new ideas and perspectives into the judiciary. The legal landscape is continuously evolving due to changes in societal norms, technological advancements, and emerging legal challenges. Judges who serve for extended periods may become entrenched in outdated legal thinking or resistant to change. By instituting a ten-year limit, the judiciary would benefit from regular turnover, allowing for the introduction of judges who are more attuned to contemporary issues. This dynamic approach would enhance the court's ability to interpret laws in ways that reflect current societal values and needs. Moreover, it would encourage judges to remain engaged with ongoing legal developments and

public discourse throughout their tenure.

Accountability is another critical reason for implementing term limits for Supreme Court judges. Long tenures can lead to complacency and a diminished sense of responsibility among judges. When judges know they will remain in their positions indefinitely, they may feel less compelled to justify their decisions or engage with public opinion. A ten-year term would create a natural point of evaluation, compelling judges to reflect on their performance and decisions regularly. This accountability mechanism could be further strengthened by incorporating performance reviews conducted by an independent body at the end of each term. Such evaluations would not only assess judicial conduct but also provide feedback on how well judges have engaged with public participation in their rulings.

Public trust in the judiciary is paramount for a functioning democracy, yet many Kenyans harbor skepticism about judicial impartiality and effectiveness. Historical issues such as corruption, political interference, and inefficiency have eroded confidence in the judiciary's ability to deliver justice fairly. By instituting term limits for Supreme Court judges, Kenya can signal its commitment to reforming its judicial system and restoring public faith. Term limits would demonstrate that no judge is above scrutiny or beyond replacement if they fail to meet the expectations of their role. This transparency could help rebuild trust between citizens and the judiciary, fostering a culture

where judges are seen as accountable representatives of the law rather than insulated elites.

Fixed terms can help mitigate political influence over judicial appointments. In Kenya's political landscape, appointments to the Supreme Court can be contentious and influenced by prevailing political dynamics. When judges serve indefinitely, there is a risk that they may align themselves with particular political interests or agendas during their tenure. A ten-year term limit would reduce this risk by ensuring that judges are periodically replaced through transparent appointment processes that reflect current political realities without being beholden to them. This separation from political pressures would enhance judicial independence and integrity while reinforcing public confidence in the impartiality of judicial decisions.

In addition to these benefits, implementing term limits aligns with global best practices observed in various jurisdictions around the world. Many countries have adopted fixed terms for their highest court judges as a means of promoting accountability and responsiveness within their judicial systems. For instance, countries like Canada and Germany impose term limits on their supreme court justices, recognizing that regular turnover can contribute positively to judicial effectiveness. By following suit, Kenya would not only modernize its judiciary but also position itself as a progressive nation committed to upholding democratic values.

Critics may argue that imposing

term limits could lead to instability within the judiciary or disrupt continuity in legal interpretations. However, this concern can be mitigated through careful planning regarding succession and training programs for incoming judges. Establishing mentorship initiatives where outgoing judges guide new appointees can ensure that valuable institutional knowledge is preserved while still allowing for fresh perspectives. Furthermore, maintaining a robust legal framework governing judicial appointments can help ensure that qualified individuals are selected based on merit rather than political considerations.

In conclusion, implementing a ten-year term limit for Supreme Court judges in Kenya presents an opportunity to revitalize the judiciary while enhancing accountability and public trust. By facilitating regular turnover among judges, Kenya can ensure that its highest court remains responsive to contemporary societal needs while upholding democratic principles of governance. This reform would not only align Kenya with international best practices but also demonstrate a commitment to fostering an independent judiciary that serves all citizens equitably and justly. Ultimately, embracing this change will pave the way for a more effective judicial system capable of addressing the complex challenges facing Kenyan society today and in the future.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

# Idle Days Caused By Lecturers Strike And The Impact On Students

The ongoing lecturers' strike has left thousands of public university students in a state of confusion and frustration. Once, life was about waking up for early morning lectures, attending classes, group discussions and meeting deadlines. Now, it's a cycle of idleness, eating, sleeping, and hoping that something will change soon. With no end in sight for the strike, students are struggling with the uncertainty of not knowing if exams will take place or not. Comrades are struggling with the

effects of idleness and uncertainty.

Life in the hostels has become a routine of waiting. Many students, who once filled their days with academic work, are now spending long hours in their rooms, scrolling through social media, chatting with friends, or doing nothing at all. The motivation to study has faded, and the idea of preparing for exams feels pointless when there's no clear indication of when or if they will happen.

Many are asking their parents for up-

keep money just to get by, even though they have nothing to show for their time at university. For some, the strike has bred frustration and anxiety, while for others, it has led to outright despair. With no structured activities, boredom is giving way to behaviors that wouldn't normally define a student's life, including risky distractions.

The financial toll is significant. Parents, already burdened by the cost of education, are questioning why they continue to send money when learning

has stopped. At the same time, students are left wondering whether they will even sit for the exams on time, or if this interruption will stretch into the next academic year.

The government and the striking lecturers must realize that this standoff is costing students their purpose, time, and peace of mind. Every day that goes by without a resolution is another day wasted in these idle routines. Students are in disarray whether to go home or remain in their hostels idling, this crisis

must be resolved urgently.

It's time for a solution. The government needs to understand that this strike is not just about lecturers' demands, it's about the students who are waiting for the chance to continue their education. It's time for decisive action to end this strike and restore normalcy to universities.

**Jane Wanjiru**  
Rongo university

# Empowering Youth As Digital Ambassadors: A Call For Ethical Engagement In The Digital Age

The Media Council of Kenya (MCK) is championing youth as ambassadors for ethical digital use, acknowledging their pivotal role in enhancing digital literacy and responsible citizenship. MCK officials recently highlighted that well-informed youth can significantly improve media professionalism and accountability, which are essential in today's rapidly evolving digital landscape.

By equipping young people with media literacy skills, MCK aims to empower them to navigate complex digital environments effectively. This initiative fosters an informed community and encourages youth to challenge ethical concerns in media practices. Training sessions have emphasized critical thinking and

responsible digital citizenship, enabling participants to advocate for ethical media practices within their communities.

Moreover, this movement aligns with global efforts like the Rights Youth Ambassadors Programme, which engages young activists worldwide in creating a safer digital environment. These ambassadors play a crucial role in shaping digital policy by collaborating with policymakers and tech leaders, ensuring that the voices of children and young people are respected and their rights protected. The programme has united over 200 young leaders from more than 50 countries, empowering them to advocate for a rights-respecting digital landscape.

MCK's commitment extends beyond training; it includes partnerships aimed at providing youth with the necessary skills to thrive in a digital economy. The Council's CEO, David Omwoyo, emphasizes the importance of co-creating ideas to attract funding for projects that empower young leaders. Such collaborations are vital for addressing issues like gender-based violence, particularly among young women in politics, as highlighted by Wendy Aura from Young Women Leaders Connect.

Additionally, MCK advocates for responsible digital citizenship, urging youth to utilize online spaces not only for entertainment but also for personal development and employment opportunities. The Meru Re-

gional Coordinator, Karanja Jackson, stresses the need for young people to leverage digital tools for skill enhancement and income generation while maintaining a positive digital footprint. He encourages youth to take advantage of online resources for skill development and employment opportunities, emphasizing that the internet offers various avenues for showcasing talents.

The importance of ethical engagement in the digital space cannot be overstated. As future professionals, young people must understand the ethical implications of their online actions—whether in communication, content creation, or social media usage. MCK's initiative aims not only to educate but also to instill a sense of

responsibility among youth regarding their digital presence.

In conclusion, MCK's initiative is a crucial step toward nurturing a generation of responsible digital citizens who can advocate for ethical standards and contribute positively to their communities. By empowering youth as digital ambassadors, we can foster a culture of accountability and ethical engagement that will benefit society as a whole. This movement not only prepares young people for the challenges of the digital age but also positions them as key players in shaping a safer and more inclusive online environment.

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

# Navigating The Chaos: The Urgent Need For Clarity In Kenya's Health Insurance Transition

The transition from the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) to the Social Health Authority (SHA) has ignited widespread discontent among Kenyans, particularly public sector unions and healthcare providers. COTU Secretary General Francis Atwoli's call for patience fails to acknowledge the immediate and pressing issues that have arisen from this abrupt shift.

Millions of NHIF members were migrated to SHA without their consent, leading to accusations of rights violations and a lack of transparency. Acting SHA CEO Elijah Wachira's admission of a botched rollout, including stalled claims processing due to biometric failures, highlights

the inadequacies of the new system. The Rural and Urban Private Hospitals Association of Kenya (RUPHA) reported that SHA performed poorly in establishing a functional capitation model, scoring only 42% overall on its transition performance, with critical areas like billing and e-contracting receiving even lower ratings.

Healthcare providers have faced significant challenges, including inadequate training in claims management and pre-authorization processes, which have left many unable to effectively treat patients under the new system. Reports indicate that 64% of providers lacked access credentials, preventing them from admitting patients or processing claims. This has

forced many patients to pay out-of-pocket for services that should be covered, exacerbating financial burdens on vulnerable populations.

Moreover, SHA's technical failures have compounded these issues. Many patients found their names missing from the new system, complicating their ability to receive care. The SHA's integration of two digital claims processing systems has been fraught with problems, leading some hospitals to revert to manual claims processing. This chaotic environment has resulted in a significant number of private hospitals—over half—still not fully transitioned to SHA.

As frustrations escalate, with threats of strikes from unions, it is impera-

tive for the government to prioritize effective communication and actionable solutions. The SHA must not only restore public trust but also ensure that it delivers on its promise of improved healthcare services. Without swift action to address these systemic failures, the SHA risks becoming a burden rather than a benefit for Kenyans, undermining the very purpose of health insurance reform.

The High Court's upcoming decision on whether to quash SHIF's implementation adds another layer of uncertainty. Legal challenges highlight concerns over the lack of necessary subsidiary legislation and transparency in awarding contracts for health information systems. These

issues must be resolved promptly to avoid further destabilizing an already fragile healthcare landscape.

In conclusion, while the goal of transitioning to SHA is commendable—aiming for universal health coverage and improved healthcare access—the execution thus far has been flawed. The government must take decisive steps to rectify these challenges, ensuring that every Kenyan can access quality healthcare without undue financial strain or bureaucratic hurdles.

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

# Who Will Steer The Sinking Ship Of Financial Accountability In Stormy Waters

*Examining the Unchecked Power of Banking Titans in a Crisis-Ridden Economy*



By: Midmark Onsongo  
@themtkenyentimes



## Worth Noting:

- The symphony of blame plays on, yet the chorus remains unchanged; the powerful remain insulated, while the vulnerable bear the brunt of the fallout. As we peer through the looking glass of this financial labyrinth, we see a web woven with the threads of greed, ambition, and, yes, audacity.
- Take the recent debacle surrounding Silicon Valley Bank in March 2023, a dramatic fall that sent shockwaves through the tech sector. CEO Greg W. Becker, once heralded as a visionary, now finds himself under scrutiny as the institution's swift demise left startups gasping for breath.
- The ramifications were profound: over 10,000 employees were affected, their livelihoods hanging in the balance.

As the sun rises over the financial district, casting a golden hue on glass towers that scrape the sky, one cannot help but marvel at the architectural wonders that symbolize wealth and power. Yet beneath this shiny facade lies a troubling truth: the banking sector, that towering titan of finance, often operates in a shadowy realm of accountability, leaving the average citizen adrift in turbulent economic waters. Who, you might wonder, will rise to hold these financial behemoths accountable for the crises they engineer, wreaking havoc on lives while they emerge unscathed, their coffers overflowing like a fountain of ill-gotten gains? The irony is stark: those who orchestrate financial disasters seem to dance away, richer and more powerful than ever, while the rest of us struggle to stay afloat, clutching at the remnants of stability in a sea of despair.

In 2008, we witnessed the catastrophic collapse of Lehman Brothers, a pivotal moment in history that sent shockwaves through the global economy. Yet, as the dust settled, key players like Lloyd Blankfein, the former CEO of Goldman Sachs, walked away with their golden parachutes, secure in their lavish lifestyles, while countless families faced foreclosure, their dreams shattered like glass on the pavement. It raises a pertinent question: when will the architects of such calamities be held accountable for their actions? Is it a paradox that the very institutions designed to uphold economic integrity are the ones that per-

petuate cycles of crisis?

The symphony of blame plays on, yet the chorus remains unchanged; the powerful remain insulated, while the vulnerable bear the brunt of the fallout. As we peer through the looking glass of this financial labyrinth, we see a web woven with the threads of greed, ambition, and, yes, audacity. Take the recent debacle surrounding Silicon Valley Bank in March 2023, a dramatic fall that sent shockwaves through the tech sector. CEO Greg W. Becker, once heralded as a visionary, now finds himself under scrutiny as the institution's swift demise left startups gasping for breath. The ramifications were profound: over 10,000 employees were affected, their livelihoods hanging in the balance. Why does this pattern repeat itself? Is there not a moral obligation for these financial titans to uphold a standard of accountability, or do they simply play a high-stakes game, betting with our futures?

The repetition of this narrative serves as a chilling reminder of the inherent instability of our financial systems. Here we stand, on the precipice of yet another potential crisis, as inflation surges and interest rates climb, threatening the very foundation of economic security. The Federal Reserve's attempts to stabilize the economy often feel like trying to hold back a tidal wave with a mere sandcastle; the outcome remains uncertain, with the average citizen left to wonder: what is the price of our collective complacency? The juxtaposition of power and responsibility is striking: the banks, like goliaths,

roam freely, while the David of the common man is left to grapple with the aftermath of their unchecked ambition. What of regulation? The Dodd-Frank Act, enacted in the wake of the 2008 crisis, was meant to be a fortress against the reckless behavior of financial institutions. Yet, in 2018, the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act weakened many of its provisions, a move celebrated by many in the industry as a step toward growth but lamented by others as a return to dangerous practices. This dance of legislation creates a paradoxical environment where the very safeguards intended to protect us are dismantled, leaving us vulnerable to the same forces that caused past calamities. It seems the regulators, too, have fallen victim to the allure of the banking sector's influence, a classic case of foxes guarding the henhouse.

To illustrate the farce further, consider the concept of "too big to fail." The notion that certain institutions are so essential to the economy that their collapse would be catastrophic has led to a dangerous complacency. In 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic triggered economic turmoil, the U.S. government swiftly implemented measures to bail out corporations, yet individuals and small businesses often found themselves in the lurch, waiting in vain for assistance. The stark irony of such favoritism is not lost on those who toil daily, their efforts contributing to a system that seems rigged against them. What are we to do, then? Are

we to accept this fate with a shrug, resigned to the belief that accountability is a mere illusion, a pipe dream in the face of rampant capitalism? Or should we take a stand, demanding transparency, equity, and justice? The onus lies on us, the citizens, to wield our voices, to demand reforms that ensure accountability permeates the banking sector. Perhaps we can ignite a movement, one that echoes through the halls of power, compelling lawmakers to enact meaningful change that protects not just the few but the many.

The road ahead may be fraught with challenges, but if history has taught us anything, it is that the tides can be turned. Just as the phoenix rises from the ashes, so too can we rise above the murky depths of financial despair. A movement that champions ethical practices, that demands accountability from those who wield power, is not merely a dream but a necessity. We must strive to ensure that the lessons of the past are not lost, but rather serve as a beacon of hope guiding us toward a more equitable future. Let us rise, united in our call for justice, for the banking sector must be held accountable for the crises it creates, lest we continue to endure the stormy seas of financial instability, forever wondering who will steer this ship toward calmer waters.

*This article was scripted by;  
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# Govt To Settle Outstanding Dues To Faith-Based Hospitals: Mwaura

By: PHIDEL KIZITO  
 @themtkenyatimes

The government has confirmed that it will soon clear outstanding bills owed to faith-based hospitals.

Government spokesperson Isaac Mwaura in a statement asserted that the government had already released Sh938 million to the health facilities with an additional Sh2.5 billion expected to be disbursed in the coming days.

Mwaura emphasized the government's commitment to resolving the long-standing National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF) debt, which totals an estimated Sh19 billion owed

to healthcare providers across the country.

"The Government is actively addressing the historical NHIF debts, including the Kshs. 19 billion owed to healthcare providers," read the statement in part.

"As of now, sh 5.05 billion has been disbursed, with faith-based hospitals receiving Kshs. 938 million, and an additional Sh2.5 billion scheduled for distribution in the next few days."

Mwaura's statement comes in the wake of criticism from the Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops (KCCB) over government's failure to clear dues amounting to Sh 3 billion owed to the faith-based health facilities.

The prelates averred that the amount

stems from dues accrued from the defunct National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF).

The Catholic Church leaders have long been vocal on the matter of NHIF, urging the government to settle its outstanding debts to FBOs, which play a crucial role in providing healthcare to vulnerable communities across the country.

Government spokesperson Isaac Mwaura..



# Western Regional Commissioner Officiates Launch of New Security Facilities in Luanda Sub-County

By: MKT Reporter  
 @themtkenyatimes

In a bid to strengthen security and improve access to government services, Western Regional Commissioner Samson Irungu, representing the Principal Secretary for Internal Security and National Administration, Dr. Raymond Omollo, inaugurated the newly constructed Ekwanda Police Station in Luanda Sub-County and the Maseno Location Chief's Office on Thursday.

Speaking during the official opening ceremony, Mr. Irungu emphasized the government's commitment to ensuring citizens' safety and fostering economic development through improved service delivery. He highlighted that these new facilities are part of a broader initiative by the Ministry of Interior to decentralize services and enhance security in rural and urban areas alike.

"The establishment of these facilities reflects the government's dedication to bringing services closer to the people. We recognize that security is the cornerstone of development, and through such initiatives, we aim to boost community confidence and encourage economic growth in this region," said Mr. Irungu.

The Ekwanda Police Station is strategically located to address the rising

demand for security services in Luanda Sub-County, a region experiencing steady growth in population and economic activities. Mr. Irungu noted that the station would provide round-the-clock law enforcement services, ensuring swift responses to crime and fostering a safe environment for businesses and residents.

The Maseno Location Chief's Office, on the other hand, will serve as a one-stop hub for administrative services, enabling residents to access government resources without the burden of traveling long distances. This move is expected to enhance efficiency in service delivery and deepen the relationship between the government and local communities.

Area residents lauded the government for the milestone, expressing optimism about the positive impact the facilities will bring. "We are grateful for this development. It will not only improve our security but also encourage investors to set up businesses here, creating jobs for our youth," said Mary Achieng, a business owner in Luanda.

During the event, Mr. Irungu underscored the link between security and economic prosperity, noting that a secure environment attracts investment and facilitates trade. He urged local leaders and residents to collaborate with law enforcement to maintain peace and order, stressing that sustainable development requires a collective effort.



Samson Irungu, representing the Principal Secretary for Internal Security and National Administration, Dr. Raymond Omollo, inaugurated the newly constructed Ekwanda Police Station in Luanda Sub-County

"Security is not just the responsibility of the police; it is a shared duty. We call upon community members to be vigilant and support the authorities by reporting any suspicious activities. Together, we can create a safe and prosperous environment for all," he added.

The Regional Commissioner also used the occasion to outline other government programs aimed at fostering development in the region. He

cited ongoing infrastructure projects and youth empowerment initiatives as evidence of the government's commitment to uplifting the lives of Kenyans.

The inauguration of these facilities marks a significant milestone in the government's efforts to decentralize services and strengthen the social fabric of Luanda Sub-County. With improved security and better access to government services, the region is

poised to experience a surge in economic activities and enhanced quality of life for its residents.

As the community celebrates the new developments, the challenge now lies in sustaining these gains through continued collaboration between citizens and government agencies. With shared responsibility and a united vision, Luanda Sub-County can look forward to a future defined by growth, security, and prosperity.

# SPORTS NEWS

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Sports >> \*Ruud van Nistelrooy said Friday he would “cherish the memories” of his time at Manchester United in an emotional farewell message days after he left the Premier League club.

## Van Nistelrooy: I Will ‘Cherish’ Man Utd Memories



Manchester United’s Dutch interim head 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) /

Ruud van Nistelrooy said Friday he would “cherish the memories” of his time at Manchester United in an emotional farewell message days after he left the Premier League club.

The Dutchman was put in temporary charge after the sacking of Erik ten Hag late last month.

He oversaw three wins and a draw in his four-match spell, signing off with a 3-0 victory against Leicester in the Premier League last Sunday.

The former PSV Eindhoven boss, appointed as an assistant coach in July on a two-year contract, had voiced a desire to stay at Old Trafford under new man-

ager Ruben Amorim.

But United issued a statement on Monday confirming the 48-year-old would not be part of the new coaching set-up.

Van Nistelrooy, a star striker for United and Real Madrid, said the English club would always have a “special place” in his heart.

“To everyone at Manchester United Football Club, in particular the backroom staff, the players and the fans - I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your incredible efforts and support,” he said in an open letter on his social media accounts.

“It has been a privilege and honour to represent the club as a

player, coach and manager, and I will always cherish the memories we have shared together.

“@ManUtd will always have a special place in my heart, and I hope there are many more glory days at Old Trafford very soon - not only because I want the club to do well, but because you all deserve it!”

Amorim’s first match in charge will be away at struggling Ipswich on November 24, following the current international break.

United are 13th in the Premier League table after a poor start to the season but are only four points off the top four.

AFP

# GET THE BEST OF WORLD

**Sports >>>** \*Following the Football Kenya Federation (FKF) County elections held on Thursday across the country, voices of presidential candidates have reflected in the results tallied so far.

# Petra's Team Blue Dominate In FKF County Elections



*FKF Vice President Doris Petra, who is set to run for presidency with current boss Nick Mwendwa as the running mate..*

**By Citizen Sports**

Following the Football Kenya Federation (FKF) County elections held on Thursday across the country, voices of presidential candidates have reflected in the results tallied so far.

Leading alliances in the polls; Team Blue (affiliated to Doris Petra) and Team Fresh (affiliated to Hussein Mohammed) say that majority victories in the Counties are by candidates who support their candidatures, as well as Cleophas Shimanyula's camp.

This support, however, can only be confirmed fully on the ballot, during the December 7 polls, when the eight presidential candidates will know their fate.

According to Petra's Team Blue, so far, Chairmen elected in 29 Counties are allied to them - thus supporting her presidential candidacy.

"We are satisfied with the way the exercise was carried out across the country, although there were few isolated cases where there were challenges. I can confirm that Team Blue has so far won 29 seats, which is a commanding lead considering that some counties are yet to conclude the exercise.

"I thank the delegates for the confidence they have shown in my team. It is not about Nick and I, it is about the entire team which understands where our football is and where we want to take it," said Petra.

"The work continues because the County elections will pave the way for the national elections. We hope all will end well on December 7," added Petra.

Reports indicate that Team Fresh, which is allied to Murang'a SEAL Vice Chairman Mohammed, garnered 14 counties. Shimanyula

is reported to have managed one County.

Crucial branches of Nairobi were shared between Petra/Mwendwa and Hussein/Mariga's men, as Dickson Doyo won the Nairobi East chairmanship while Hussein's affiliated Bernard Owino won in Nairobi West.

Petra's side claims to have assured support from four of the six counties where chairmen were unopposed. Team Fresh also claims support from the same branches.

Swaleh Mohammed of Kitui, Peter Karino of Narok, Kilifi with Dickson Kahindi of Kilifi and Taita Taveta's Duncan Maganga also won, all associated with Petra's Team Blue. Others are Alfred Kirui in Kericho, Eugene Okello in Busia and Samson Lotian in West Pokot.

Team Blue claims victories in Bungoma, Kirinyaga, Makeni, Samburu, Tana River, Tharaka

Nithi, Narok, Kisii, West Pokot, Kericho, Machakos, Bomet, Kwale, Siaya, Lamu, Tana River, Busia, Uasin Gishu, Nairobi East, Kitui, Embu, Nyeri, Laikipia, Nakuru, Nyamira, Mombasa, Kilifi, Vihiga and Taita Taveta.

However, there are pending cases as elections in Homa Bay, Turkana, and Mandera were rescheduled, while repeat elections will be conducted in Nyandarua and Vihiga following ties in key positions.

Specifically, Nyandarua will hold repeat elections for the Chairperson and Secretary roles, while Vihiga will conduct a rerun for the Secretary position.

The election was held after the High Court on Tuesday lifted conservatory orders that had barred the county elections that had been originally scheduled to be held last Saturday.

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# Dr Prafulla Kumar Panda Is No Joke, A Professor And A Great Poet From India



By: Wanjohi P. Mugambi  
@themkenyatimes

## Worth Noting:

For a writer every day begins with a new experience. I keenly observe every incident and situation that happen around, and patiently await for a new and a fruitful thought to rise and get a new shape on paper. To be precise, ideal day for me is, when I see my emotion finds thought and my thought is woven with appropriate words into the tapestry of poetry.

Through verses I delve into the intricacies of human relationship diving in its myriad shades of love, passion, emotion, mortality and death. At times I love to take my readers on a poetic flight into the cosmic world of Nature where they can taste Nature with its variegated beauty and bounty.



Prafulla Kumar Panda.

My name is Prafulla Kumar Panda, MA, M.Phil, Ph.D (b. 1978-). I hail from Odisha, India. I am a lecturer(at Degree level) by profession and a poet by passion. In spite of my busy professional schedule, I manage to concentrate on poetry writing. I am a widely published poet. My poems have been published in various national and international anthologies, magazines and online platforms and translated and intensely reviewed too. I have received nearly a thousand of awards and honours for my poetry writing. So far, I have published one Anthology of Poems "Bounty of Silence" and edited one too, "Beyond the Horizon" (and five more are on the line). I am a voracious reader. I love to read short stories, novels, travelogues and columns written in Odia, Hindi and English. However, for me, poetry has been the centre of attraction over everything. It brings me all solace and comfort for life.

I am a self-motivated person. I feel restless until and unless I give due justice to my emotion and thought. Besides, my family has been a con-

stant source of motivation for me. My parents, grand mother encourage me a lot. Besides, my friends especially my younger colleagues who love reading my poems and their appreciation and helpful suggestions inspire me and guide me to go ahead. And because of their encouragement, I am able to write daily and quite passionately.

For a writer every day begins with a new experience. I keenly observe every incident and situation that happen around, and patiently await for a new and a fruitful thought to rise and get a new shape on paper. To be precise, ideal day for me is, when I see my emotion finds thought and my thought is woven with appropriate words into the tapestry of poetry.

Through verses I delve into the intricacies of human relationship diving in its myriad shades of love, passion, emotion, mortality and death. At times I love to take my readers on a poetic flight into the cosmic world of Nature where they can taste Nature with its variegated beauty and bounty. I also write with a purpose

to enthuse, correct and to preach for a peaceful coexistence between men and men, between men and nature. If my poetry can have any impact in this direction, then I will feel extremely happy and my poetry will get due justice.

Writing poetry itself is not an easy task. Unless I improve upon myself daily, I feel it's worth nothing. Besides, to walk ahead maintaining a balance between profession and passion has always been the hardest part in my life. And it's equally difficult too to remain upto the expectations of the readers.

Indeed, I have faced numerous challenges in my work. As a poet, I find that life's complexities and societal expectations intensify these challenges. I feel a deep sense of responsibility towards my community and country, recognizing that writers are often regarded as role models. To uphold this ideal, I strive to remain morally upright, humble, and kind, using my words to inspire positivity and make a meaningful impact on people.

I am a self-motivated person. I think none is there to make me happy unless I am prepared for it. I feel, happy is he, who feels happy he can be. If none is with me, I don't stop, rather I prefer to move alone. Sometimes, in order to enthuse myself I listen to Hindi and Odia songs, and watch children playing, and read stories, novels and poems of renowned writers and get immensely motivated.

Normally I don't advertise my works. But on occasions, when situation so occurs, I often read out my poems to my friends and students. Besides, I post them in different Facebook Groups and feel extremely happy when I get positive responses, comments or reviewed from friends and fellow poets and critics.

Every writer is unique in his own way. He can't be equal with anyone so far style and approach and expression are concerned. Still my advice to the aspiring poets will be such that,- they should sit and catch whenever a thought comes to them and write. Every day they should write atleast something to hone their poetic sensibility and passion. Initially they may stumble for an expression or face difficulty in finding appropriate words to express their thoughts but the perfection will definitely come afterward and they themselves can feel growing up every day.

I believe Art as a manifestation of culture casts formidable impact on human psyche and action. Being primarily a writer or in a sense artist, I will definitely try to inform, influence and interpellate individuals and society for substantial humanitarian pursuits. Moreover given a chance I should try though not succeed to make the world and mankind to love, serve and glorify Mother earth in order to make this planet a better place for the posterity.

I am quite active in Facebook. One can find me with the name, DrPrafulla Kumar Panda. Almost everyday I post my poems there. My anthology namely, "Bounty of Silence", and the edited anthology "Beyond the Horizon" are available on Amazon for readers.