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It is a well-known fact, as acknowledged by countless scholars and frustrated educators, that our education system operates like a well-oiled machine, cranking out obedient workers instead of curious minds. Picture a sprawling factory: rows of desks and chairs, students lined up like assembly line products, all neatly packaged into pre-determined roles.

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News>> Governors Warn Of A Complete Counties Shutdown In 30 Days

P. 8. Governors have sounded an early warning to the national government that staff in counties risk going for Christmas without a coin as a cash crunch continue to bite, with some county staff having had to go for more than 3 months without pay.



News>> Revival Of Cotton Farming To Boost Economy, Governor Njuki

P. 12. At least 30,000 cotton farmers in Tharaka Nithi County have received free-certified seeds in a bid to revive the crop that was one of the main sources of livelihood in the region back in 1980s.

More Churches Call For Gov't Accountability

 The Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) has expressed strong support for the Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops (KCCB) in their recent demands for greater accountability from the government over what they describe as failures in managing national issues. Yesterday, Archbishop Jackson Ole Sapit spoke out, reinforcing the bishops' criticism of the administration and stating that the church would continue to highlight injustices impacting ordinary Kenyans.



Anglican Church of Kenya Arch-Bishop, Jackson Ole Sapit roots for mediation as an Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanism.

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

Government Agencies Called Upon To Be Accountable

By: MTK Correspondent
 @themtkenyatimes

Government agencies in the country have been asked to be responsible and accountable to ensure policies and measures in their jurisdictions are adhered to and implemented.

Meru Senator Kathuri Murungi, who is also the Deputy Speaker in the Senate, while giving his speech during the World Day of Remembrance national celebrations held at Muthambi in Tharaka Nithi County on Sunday said government agencies had been compromised, with existing policies not being followed up by the relevant authorities.

The Senate Deputy Speaker noted that President William Ruto had tasked departments to be accountable and responsible, adding that the government was not ready to fail due to unprofessionalism by part of the public service.

“We have no shortage of labour. We have qualified people who can run affairs and replace public servants in compromised agencies. Everyone will carry their own cross. For example, KeNHA has placed road signs all over but there is no agency to follow up. If people in charge under NTSA are not working, they should be replaced,” he said.

In addition, the Meru Senator asked all road users to be responsible and agencies to work together to avert road accidents.

“In most countries, we have minimal cases of accidents due to structures that work and adherence to traffic laws and guidelines. These are the countries that respect and obey traffic rules such as speed limits as required by law,” he said. Maara Member of Parliament Kareke Mbiuki while speaking at the event faulted road safety departments such as National Transport and Safety Authority (NTSA) for not being responsible enough to ensure measures meant for road safety were being followed.

The MP noted that most of the accidents witnessed on Kenyan roads were as a result of reckless driving.

He also asked the government to make funds available for payment of road contractors to allow completion of stalled projects which include maintenance of previously constructed ones.

The Maara MP reminded President Wil-



Stakeholders during the procession

liam Ruto on his commitment to re-design the ‘killer’ Nithi bridge and asked the Kenya National Highways Authority (KeNHA) to speed up with implementation of the design.

“The President committed that once he takes over, he will ensure the bridge is re-designed. Many lives have been lost due to accidents on the black spot. We ask the government to consider and listen to the people to ensure their safety,” he said.

The Senate Deputy Speaker asked that the government ensures the re-designing of the bridge is budgeted for in the next financial year, saying all pending projects in the region could wait until the bridge is rectified.

“We would like to see the re-designing of the bridge budgeted for in the 2025-2026 financial year. Let the government prioritize the bridge, all pending projects can wait. We have lost a lot of lives and many families have been affected,” he said.

The two leaders also advocated for consideration of an upgrade of the Makutano-Meru highway to dual carriage.

However, Central Region KeNHA Director Francis Kimata said the Nithi bridge design has already been undertaken for realignment of the stretch and separation of traffic through dualling.



Stakeholders during the procession.

The national celebrations included a walk to the Nithi bridge blackspot, testimonials from past accident victims, and a recovery and evacuation drill by the Tharaka Nithi Rescue and Emergency Team.

The day was set aside to remember all people killed and injured on roads, acknowledge the crucial role played by emergency services and promote evidence-based actions to prevent further road accidents.

Worth Noting:

- Maara Member of Parliament Kareke Mbiuki while speaking at the event faulted road safety departments such as National Transport and Safety Authority (NTSA) for not being responsible enough to ensure measures meant for road safety were being followed.
- The MP noted that most of the accidents witnessed on Kenyan roads were as a result of reckless driving.

Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times

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Group Executive Chairman
M. Danson

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

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NEWS IN BRIEF



The National Assembly Security Committee held a critical peace meeting at the Angata Barrikoi-Gwitembe border between the Maasai and Kuria communities, to resolve a long-standing border dispute. This region has been plagued by conflicts that have claimed over 30 lives in the past two decades. Speaking during a community engagement in Angata Barrikoi,

Trans Mara South Sub-County, the committee chair, Gabriel Tongoyo who also serves as the Narok West Member of Parliament reiterated the government's unwavering commitment to fostering peace and addressing insecurity in the area.



Teso South Member of Parliament Mary Emaase has called on parents to take good care of their children during the holidays. Speaking during a church event at Amongura Sub Parish on Sunday, Emaase advised parents to monitor activities of their children while at home. She noted that long holidays often came with risks, including peer pressure, drug abuse which could impact negatively on

the young people. The lawmaker at the same time urged residents to actively participate in the ongoing SHA registration exercise, emphasizing its importance in accessing health services. She dismissed claims by some individuals that the registration was a trick to collect personal data for the 2027 General Election as cheap propaganda.



The Principal Secretary State Department for Water and Sanitation Julius Korir yesterday chaired the Lamu Desalination Project, one of the Public Private Partnership proposals which is being pursued to provide potable water to the residents of Lamu County. Key Government installations like the Lamu Port, the

LAPSSET project and provision of water for irrigation to boost food security is to be realized upon completion of this important project. Korir reiterated that the government has prioritized the project as he chaired the stakeholders meeting this morning with the State Department of Mining officials, LAPSSET Director General, Lamu County County Secretary and the proponent of the project to review progress of the Privately Initiated Proposal (PIP) and agree on the way forward which includes a comprehensive public participation exercise that will bring together all parties. The PS was accompanied by the Water Secretary Eng. SAO Alima, Secretary Administration Stephen Kihara and PPP Coordinator Eng. Bonface Muluma.

A Sub-Committee of the Departmental Committee on Finance and National Planning led by the Chairperson Francis Kuria Kimani is in Isiolo County to conduct public participation on six (6) Bills current under consideration by the House. The exercise seeks to collect public views on 6 Bills under consideration by the Finance Committee, namely, Public Finance Management (Amendment) (No. 3) Act, 2024; Public Finance Management (Amendment) (No. 4) Act, 2024; Public Procurement and Disposal Act (Amendment) Bill, 2024 Others are: Business Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024; Tax Procedures (Amendment) Bill, 2024; and Tax Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024. The chairperson is accompanied by CPA Julius Rutto (Kesses), Joseph Munyoro (Kigumo) and Adipo Okuome (Karachuonyo).



Kiambu County Government, in collaboration with the revered Kiama Kia Ma elders, are supporting young men in this year's initiation ceremonies to foster positive transitions into adulthood. The Kiama Kia Ma is the cultural pillar of the Kikuyu Council of Elders, whose other pillars include economy, politics and social welfare. This year's initiation, which coincides with the December holiday season has seen the County Government, under the leadership of the Department of Culture, donate essential foodstuffs to support the initiation process. The generous contribution aims to provide sustenance and assistance to the young men participating in the traditional ceremonies, which are deeply rooted in the rich cultural heritage.



Narok County Governor Patrick Ntutu has pledged to clear Sh200 million in pending bills before Christmas. Speaking during the opening of a link road in Ikineji, Narok West Sub-County, Governor Ntutu emphasised his administration's dedication to settling the outstanding debts to ensure smooth operations and timely completion of county projects. "Our administration inherited Sh1.5 billion in pending bills, and we've already cleared a significant portion. The remaining Sh200 million will be settled by Christmas," Ntutu assured.



The National Treasury yesterday said it disbursed KSh30.8 billion to counties, setting all arrears it owed to the devolved governments. The exchequer said it had paid out KSh158 billion to counties comprising June 2024 arrears, as well as disbursements for the months of July, August, September and October. Treasury CS John Mbadia has previously attributed delays in the disbursement of county funds at the start of the current financial year to legal and administrative challenges. There has been a stalemate between the Senate and the National Assembly in the mediation committee formed to find a common ground on the Division of Revenue (Amendment) Bill.



Tourism and Wildlife Cabinet Secretary Rebecca Miano has launched the second phase of the 2024-2025 National Wildlife Census at Shaba National Reserve to gather scientific data for improving conservation policies.



YOUR OPINION IS INVALUABLE

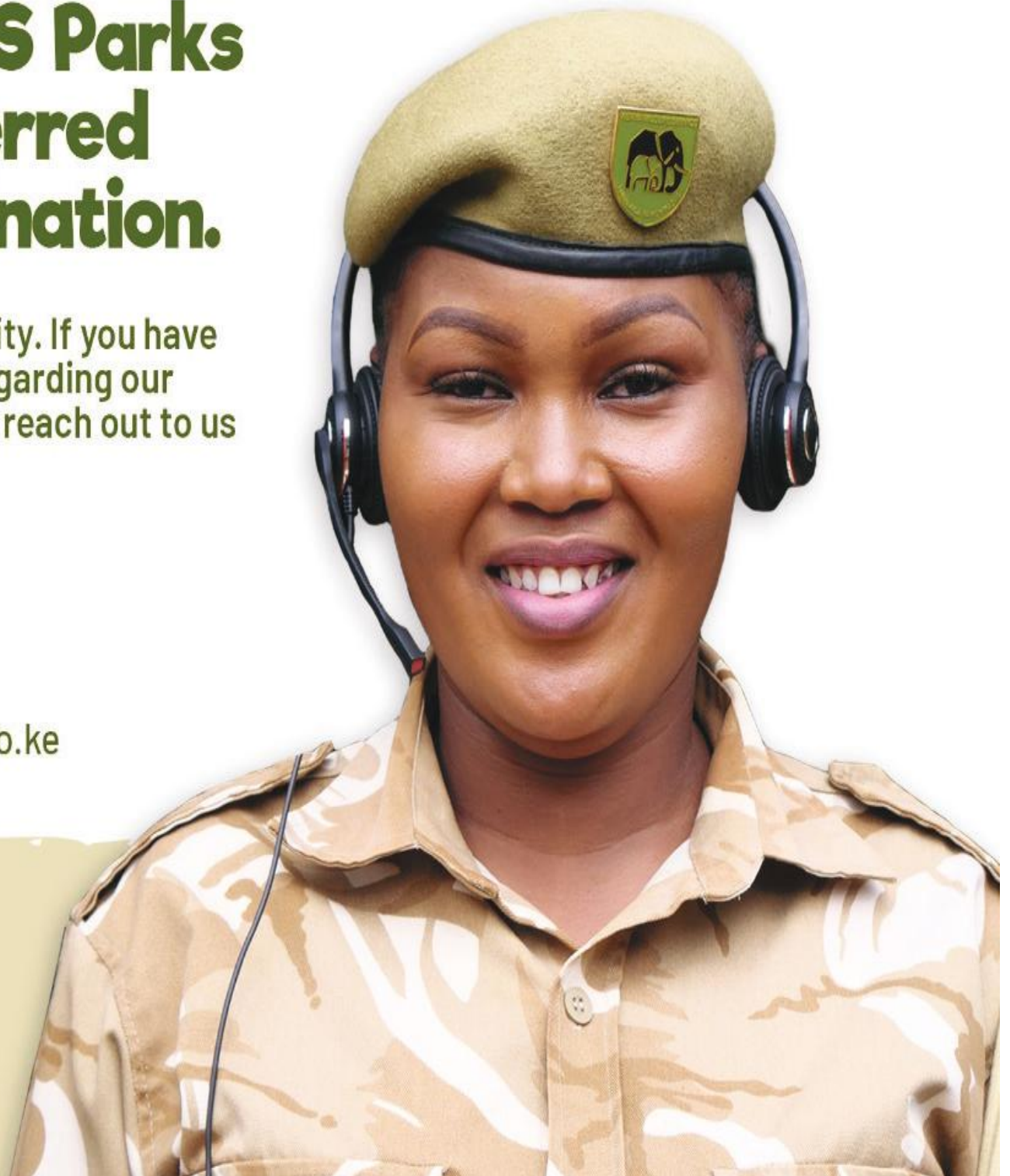
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Kakuzi Dominates the 2024 Avocado Excellence Awards by Clinching Five Nominations

By: Stephen Mwendwa
@themkenyentimes

Worth Noting:

- In the just-released nominations for the Kenya Avocado Industry Excellence Awards 2024, Kakuzi Managing Director Chris Flowers has been shortlisted for Individual Recognition for Avocado Person of the Year 2024.
- This is followed closely by the organisation's nominations under the categories: Large-Scale Orchards over 100 acres for its Murang'a orchards, Growers in Nursery and Seedlings for its Nursery in Murang'a, Large-Scale Export with over 200 containers, and Auxiliary Services for its top-notch Packhouse operations.

five nominations at this year's Avocado Industry Excellence Awards, hosted by the Avocado Society of Kenya (ASK).

The awards recognise outstanding individuals and organisations that continue to make significant contributions to the avocado industry.

The ceremony will take place on 5th December at the Argyle Grand Hotel in Nairobi.

In the just-released nominations for the Kenya Avocado Industry Excellence Awards 2024, Kakuzi Managing Director Chris Flowers has been shortlisted for Individual Recognition for Avocado Person of the Year 2024.

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Speaking on the nominations, the firm Managing Director stated, "These are a testament to our dedication to excellence, quality, and sustainability. We take pride in contributing to Kenya's avocado industry and supporting local farmers through training and innovation. Our integrated, traceable value chain demonstrates the highest standards from seedling to plate, showcasing Kenyan avocados on the global stage."

The Kenya Avocado Excellence Awards (KAEA), now in its fifth year, acknowledges and promotes accomplishments that drive the growth of the Kenyan avocado sector. The awards emphasise exceptional service delivery, industry advancement, innovation, creativity, and adherence to high



Kakuzi Managing Director Chris Flowers (left), and Executive Head Corporate Affairs Mr. Simon Odhiambo during a previous event at the Kakuzi farm in Makuyu, Murang'a County

standards, fostering a competitive and collaborative environment within the avocado sector.

Kakuzi's success is built on sustainable practices and a strong focus on quality control. In the last five years, the company has increased its avocado production by 24%, with its orchards now spanning over 987 hectares. In 2023, the company produced over 14,140 tonnes of avocados, serving local and international markets.

Kakuzi's avocado operations are certified by the Rainforest Alliance and FSSC 22000 standards, which verifies that its farming methods promote responsible supply chains and environmental sustainability. The company's

Global GAP-certified Packhouse in Makuyu follows strict quality standards, including internal maturity testing to comply with international phytosanitary regulations.

Beyond large-scale production, Kakuzi is dedicated to supporting local growers by offering technical extension services and free maturity testing to guarantee that only high-quality fruits meet the market's 24% minimum dry matter standard. By providing training in good agricultural practices, Kakuzi empowers smallholder farmers, playing a significant role in Kenya's agricultural development and economy.

The company is actively seeking sus-

tainable solutions to enhance its operations, such as integrated pest control, efficient water management, and improved crop husbandry techniques. Continuously, Kakuzi aims at improving its pack-out rate—the percentage of exportable fruit—targeting above 80%, demonstrating its dedication to producing high-quality goods and practising sustainable farming.

The 2024 Avocado Industry Excellence Awards will honour Kakuzi and other industry leaders at a networking Gala Dinner. The event will promote collaboration and healthy competition, fuelling growth and innovation in Kenya's avocado sector.

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Governors Warn Of A Complete Counties Shutdown In 30 Days

By: MKT Reporter
 @themkenyatimes

Governors have sounded an early warning to the national government that staff in counties risk going for Christmas without a coin as a cash crunch continue to bite, with some county staff having had to go for more than 3 months without pay.

According to the Council of Governors (CoG) in the next 30 days, counties will have to shut down operations completely if monies owed now totalling to KSh63.6 billion for the months of October and November are not disbursed immediately.

Currently, counties have been left to offer critical services as some stay at home with the biting cash crunch.

CoG chair Ahmed Abdulahi, who is also Wajir Governor, told a press conference after an extraordinary council of governors meeting in Nairobi that it was unfair that business continues for the national Government, court-

sy of a passed supplementary budget, for counties it has ground to a halt.

Consequently, governors say they cannot continue being at the mercy of commercial banks, as they constantly borrow to pay salaries and repay at exorbitant interests as they wait on the national government to disburse what should have been rightfully and constitutionally allocated to them by the 15th of every month.

Governors now want all arrears settled before a full-blown crisis erupts in counties, leading to a total shut down.

On matters health, the governors said the slow registration to the new Social Health Insurance Fund has been hampered by lack of resources, noting that availability would also have the community health promoters spearhead the drive and soar up the numbers.

The CoG also demanded that monies owed to them under the defunct NHIF, now totalling to about KSh9 billion shillings should be released to them, observing that hospitals lacked



Council of Governors members addressing the media yesterday..

medicines as KEMSA is not ready to advance them more credit because of a KSh3.8 billion debt, which they argue would be sorted if the KSh9 billion debt was sorted.

The CoG want a speedy resolution

for that matter as they called on the national government to prioritize matters devolution.

On the ongoing standoff between the Senate and the National Assembly over the division of revenue bill, the

council wants the assembly to tone down on their hard stance, and revert to the agreed KS400 billion

Kikuyu Elders Call For A Ban Of Diapers

By: Felix Njenga
 @themkenyatimes

The Kikuyu community cultural outfit 'Kiama Kia Ma' has called upon the government to ban diapers as it is ruining children's reproductive system.

Kimando wa Kagwe Kiambu sub-county chairman Kiama Kia Ma while speaking in Hillcrest Academy School in Kanunga village where over 100 initiates graduated into manhood said that during the circumcision process they were shocked to see that the reproductive organs of most of the boys had shrunk.

"It is not only one boy but we witnessed many had small manhood and through our medical specialists it was noted that the boys wore diapers for far too long where the heat may have caused the penis to shrink," kimando said.

He added that most parents do not change their children's diapers, hence the child staying with a soiled and heavy diapers for long, which is



Kimando wa Kagwe Kiambu Sub-County chairman Kiama Kia Ma speaking during the graduation of over 100 initiates to manhood in Kiambu..

causing them harm.

"The diaper can hold upto 2 litres of water and if a child goes for a short call or long call and stays with it for long without being changed, it is harming them," he said.

He said that the doctors who were circumcising had difficulty in conducting the process due to the small manhood of the boys.

"All boys were circumcised to manhood and have healed although some

it looks like a big wound," he said.

Mery Wangari, a parent, supported the call by the elders saying that the diapers are harming the children and parents should revert to nappies.

"You will find that the child has slept with a diaper during the night and in the morning they are not changed and stays with the same diaper during the day before the mother changes the child the diaper," wangari said.

She said that this is happening with



Kiama Kia Ma elders with some of the young men who underwent the initiation recently.

the young mothers because of lack of money to buy more diapers and others due to laziness.

"You will find that some young mothers are lazy and are interested in changing their children's diapers. Others are coping with the situation of lack of money to buy many diapers. This has had a toll on the children as it is ruining their genitals," she said.

She called on the government to

consider banning diapers or find alternatives so that they can prevent harm to children.

"The diapers are being littered all over, they should be banned or something better to be introduced," she said.

The elders called on the government to consider doing away with the diapers just like the polythene bags.

More Churches Call For Gov't Accountability

By: PHIDEL KIZITO

@themtkenyatimes

The Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) has expressed strong support for the Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops (KCCB) in their recent demands for greater accountability from the government over what they describe as failures in managing national issues.

Yesterday, Archbishop Jackson Ole Sapit spoke out, reinforcing the bishops' criticism of the administration and stating that the church would continue to highlight injustices impacting ordinary Kenyans.

"The bishops have spoken the minds of Kenyans and faithfully expressed the truth as things are on the ground," said Sapit, emphasizing that neither intimidation nor criticism would deter the church from addressing issues of governance and integrity.

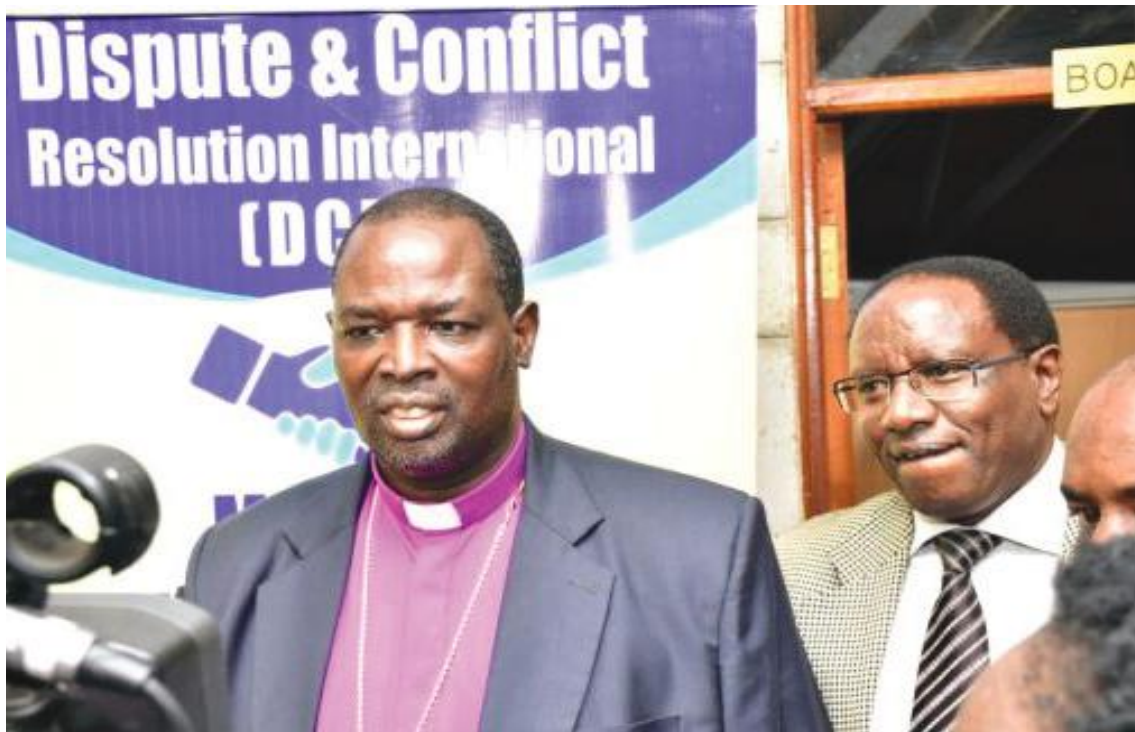
Sapit's statement outlined several key areas where ACK sees government shortfalls, such as delays in

implementing the university funding model, deficiencies in healthcare, high taxes, and growing cases of abductions and forced disappearances.

This statement follows ongoing criticisms from the Catholic Bishops, who last week condemned the government's failure to fulfill key promises. They accused President William Ruto's administration of fostering a "culture of lies," highlighting unpaid debts to healthcare providers, high youth unemployment, and unaddressed education reforms, including issues with the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). The bishops also pressed for the swift establishment of the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC), a long-overdue reform.

Both churches have underscored the pressing need for structural changes to address the economic and social challenges affecting Kenyans.

At the same time churches from Nyanza region also supported their Catholic church colleagues saying time was up for the current government to change its strategy of leading. In a statement, the leadets led by Rt



Anglican Church of Kenya Arch-Bishop, Jackson Ole Sapit roots for mediation as an Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanism.

Rev. Prof. David Kodia, Bishop of Bondo, Rt. Rev. CS John Mark Godia Bishop of Maseno West and Rt. Rev.

Charles Onginjo Bishop of Maseno South outlined various ills facing Kenyans which they demanded ac-

countability.

Chaos As Kirinyaga MCAs Disagree Over Removal Of Majority Leader Kibinga

By: KNA

Chaos erupted yesterday at the Kirinyaga County Assembly after Members of the County Assembly (MCAs) disagreed over the removal of the Majority Leader Daniel Kibinga.

According to communication made by the deputy Speaker Jinaro Njamumo on behalf of the speaker, members demanded signatures from the supporting members of the County Assembly claiming they don't meet the required threshold.

Some sections of the MCAs want to replace Ngariama Ward MCA Danie Kibinga ,the Majority leader with Kiine ward MCA Geoffrey Murimi who is currently serving as ther county budget committee chairperson.

Supporters of Kibinga's removal,

led by Kerugoya Ward MCA Eric Muchina, said that the Ngariama ward MCA had failed to do assembly business and was impeding certain development goals.

His sentiments were echoed by Kabare ward MCA Isaiah Mbogo, accusing Kibinga of fueling divisions among the members of the county assembly for the past two years.

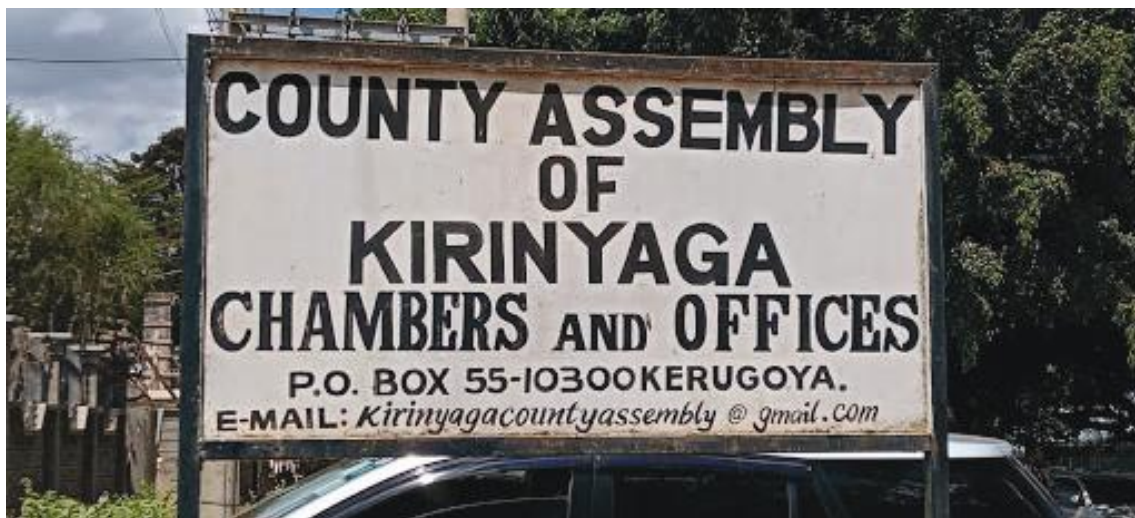
Mbogo advised Kirinyaga County Governor Ann Waiguru to stay out of the assembly's proceedings.

Kiine ward MCA Geoffrey Murimi, the proposed majority leader, said the priority of county assembly is to ensure that residents benefit from various development projects.

He added the position is a link between the assembly and executive and will do all that is required to succeed.

Murimi noted the governor is sometimes blamed for some issues that the current majority leader has failed.

Murimi pointed out that the gover-



nor has been occasionally blamed for some of the county delayed developments

However on his part Kibinga challenged those who are calling for his ouster to provide evidence of the signatures collected in support of his removal.

He maintained that he still holds

the position of the county Majority leader citing that his removal is being spearheaded by some external forces that are funding some of the MCAs.

Kibinga termed the decision as blackmail stating that some of the MCAs want to get money from the budget illegally.

Nominated MCA Bosco Gichangi, said he was shocked that the deputy speaker announced the important communication on behalf of the speaker who was within the county chambers.

Government To Release First Batch Of SHA Claims In Two Weeks Time

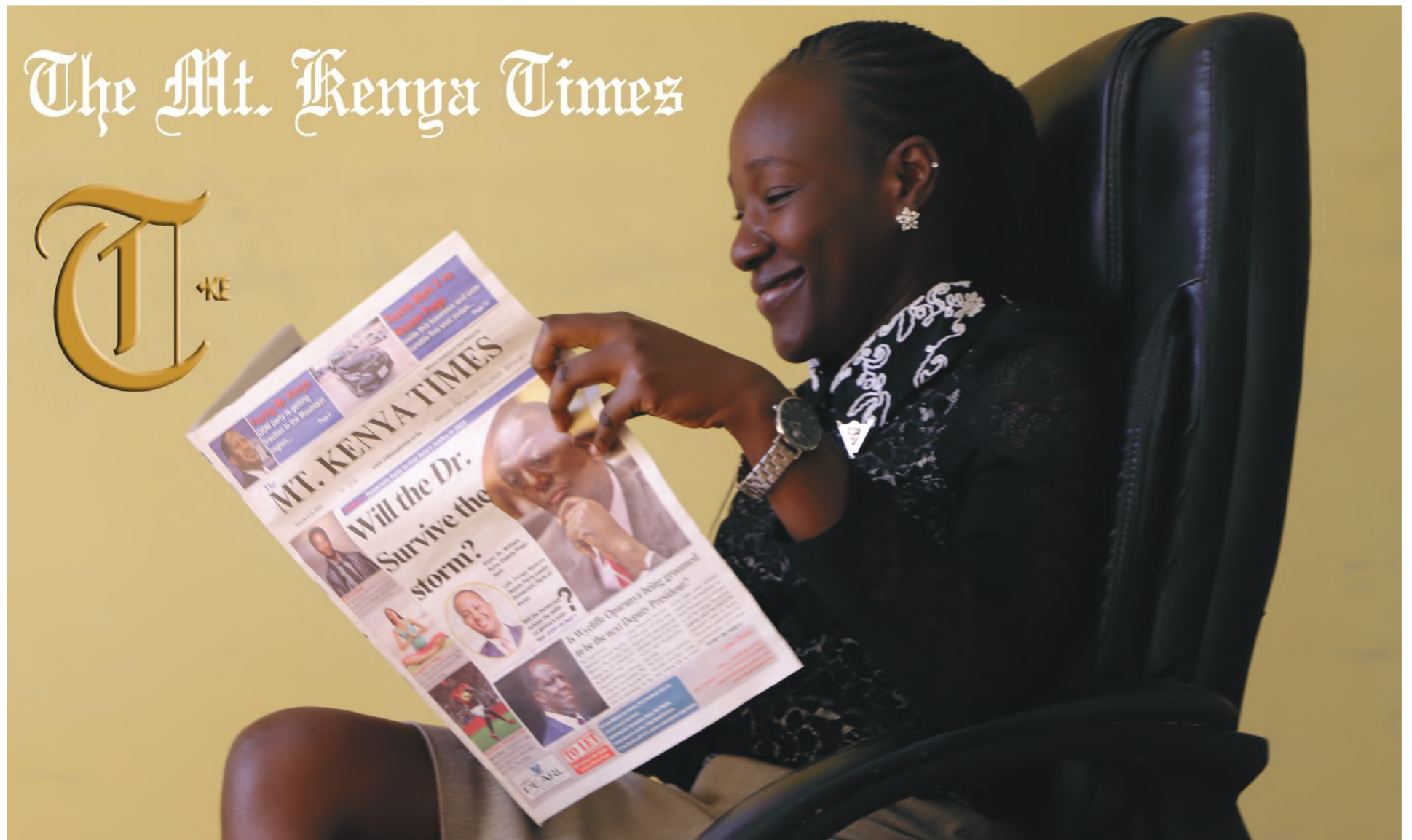
By: MTK Correspondent
@themtkenyatimes

Health facilities that have successfully rolled out the Social Health Authority (SHA) will start receiving their reimbursements in two weeks. Health Cabinet Secretary Dr. Deborah Barasa said the authority was currently processing the claims which shall be paid by the end of this month. The payments would be effected even as the government moves to clear the outstanding debt owed to hospitals by the defunct National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF). She said the Ministry of Health would this week release an additional Sh2.5 billion to health facilities to clear part of the outstanding NHIF debt. Speaking during a visit to Jaramogi Oginga Odinga Teaching and Referral Hospital (JOOTRH) in Kisumu yesterday, the CS said releasing the first payment of SHA to accredited health facilities was a testament that the scheme was working. "We are here this morning on a rou-

tine evaluation of SHA and having toured this facility I am happy to report that SHA is working," she said. A spot check across other health facilities in the area revealed that patients who had registered were receiving treatment and the referral system was working. "We are particularly concerned about the distribution of radio therapy services in the country and I am impressed that here in Kisumu we are progressing well," said the CS. The CS asked Kenyans to continue registering to ensure that they have access to quality medical care at all levels across the country. She appealed to Community Health Promoters and other health care workers spearheading the registration exercise to redouble their efforts to ensure that all Kenyans are brought on board. "We have visited the maternity wing and I am impressed with the quality of services being offered. With as little as Sh300-450, our mothers are able to deliver here through SHA. The data we have received from the facility is very encouraging," she said.



Health Cabinet Secretary Dr Deborah Barasa engaging some patients at Jaramogi Hospital, Kisumu yesterday.



Gadget-Free Zones: Creating Spaces For Family Connection and Mental Well-being



By: William Mwangi
@themkenyatimes

Ah, the school holidays are here! For the next several weeks, Kenya's public and private school students—whether navigating the twists and turns of the new CBC curriculum or enduring the 8-4-4 system—are at home while the Form Fours tackle the KCSE exams.

Parents across the country are bracing themselves, probably wondering how to keep their homes from being swallowed whole by the digital invasion of screens, apps, games, and the ever-present YouTube binge.

Fear not! It's time to create "Gadget-Free Zones," a delightful idea that could actually bring the family together (yes, it's possible!) and sprinkle some mental well-being into our lives.

Let's talk about why "Gadget-Free Zones" are more than just a cute phrase. These are moments in the day or specific places at home where screens are put aside, and real-life connection takes center stage. In an era where the average teenager has more screen time than sunlight exposure, these zones are a breath of fresh air—and the laughter, chatter, and shared memories that come from them are pure magic.

Why Gadget-Free Zones?

Parents, think of "Gadget-Free Zones" as the cultural equivalent of throwing out the junk food during exam prep. It's a detox—not just from screens, but from the sensory overload that comes with the constant pings, likes, and TikTok dances (if I had a shilling for every time I saw a kid learning the latest TikTok move at lunch!). This isn't about condemning technology; it's about using this holiday period to encourage balance, connection, and some good old-fashioned family bonding.

Here's a surprising fact: Studies show that gadget-free time can improve sleep quality, reduce stress, and boost happiness levels. As I like to tell my students, "A mind free of gadgets is a mind ready for real connection."

Step 1: Establishing Gadget-Free Times

Creating these times doesn't have to be a hard sell if you're clever about it. One of the easiest ways is to identify times in the day when everyone can agree to "unplug." Meals are a great place to start. In our home, we call it "Dinnertime Lockdown"—no phones, no tablets, just food and family. You'll be amazed at how many fascinating stories start pouring out when phones are off the table, literal-



Gadget-Free Zones

ly and figuratively.

Another easy win is a "Screen-Free Hour" before bedtime. This can be a tough sell for some teens, especially if they've perfected the art of "scrolling till dawn." But trust me on this: when they do get that one gadget-free hour, they'll fall asleep faster and wake up more refreshed. Set the example by doing it yourself—no excuses about answering work emails or "just checking one thing." You know it's never just one thing.

Step 2: Create Gadget-Free Zones in the Home

Just as we have rooms for cooking, sleeping, and eating, it's time to designate areas for connecting without screens. Living rooms, gardens, or dining rooms make for excellent gadget-free zones.

You might need to get a bit creative here. Set up the living room with board games, card decks, or, for the brave-hearted, a karaoke machine. You'll soon discover that even the most screen-obsessed teenager can't resist the lure of a good game of Scrabble, or, for that matter, roasting their dad during karaoke.

Quote: "If the living room becomes a 'No Phone Zone,' our kids actually notice we exist!" - A Witty

Step 3: Fun Alternatives to Screen Time

This is Kenya! The land of breathtaking scenery, wild safaris, and vi-

brant culture! Take advantage of what we have right here at home. Here are a few screen-free ideas for families to explore:

1. **Outdoor Adventures:** Whether it's a trip to Karura Forest for a walk or a camping night in your own backyard, nothing connects a family like getting out into nature. Fresh air and laughter are the ultimate antidotes to screen addiction.

2. **Board Games & Family Game Nights:** Dust off the Monopoly or Scrabble set, or try something new like charades. Nothing will bring out family dynamics like a competitive game of Monopoly (but keep the lawyer's number handy if anyone's really competitive!).

3. **Cooking and Baking Together:** Kenyan kitchens are full of flavors and fun! Cook a meal together—let the kids be in charge of chopping veggies or kneading dough. These moments may end up as some of the family's favorite memories.

4. **Reading Hour:** Create a "Family Book Club." Yes, it's old-school, but trust me, books still have that magical ability to transport us into a world beyond screens. Everyone picks a book (even comic books count) and spends an hour reading. When done, share thoughts and see who's had the wildest journey.

Step 4: Set a Good Example

As parents, we are our children's first teachers. If you're glued to your

screen, you can hardly expect them to look up. Create some accountability and let your kids see you embracing gadget-free time too. Use this holiday as an opportunity to be a role model in balance. After all, when you're scrolling, they're scrolling, but when you're engaging, they'll follow suit.

Why This Matters More Than Ever
The holiday season is a precious time for families to reconnect and recharge without the pressures of school, exams, or work. Gadget-Free Zones offer families a way to reset, reconnect, and create memories that screens can't replicate. Imagine a family holiday where the most significant connection isn't the WiFi, but the bond that grows when parents and children talk, laugh, and spend real time together.

So, here's to gadget-free times and spaces—where families unplug from the screens and plug into each other! After all, the best memories are made in real life, not in a feed.

"In a world of constant scrolling, let's be a family that pauses, breathes, and lives in the moment."

William Mwangi Is The Principal and Career Advisor At Crawford International School

Worth Noting:

- **Outdoor Adventures:** Whether it's a trip to Karura Forest for a walk or a camping night in your own backyard, nothing connects a family like getting out into nature. Fresh air and laughter are the ultimate antidotes to screen addiction.
- **Board Games & Family Game Nights:** Dust off the Monopoly or Scrabble set, or try something new like charades. Nothing will bring out family dynamics like a competitive game of Monopoly (but keep the lawyer's number handy if anyone's really competitive!).
- **Cooking and Baking Together:** Kenyan kitchens are full of flavors and fun! Cook a meal together—let the kids be in charge of chopping veggies or kneading dough. These moments may end up as some of the family's favorite memories.

Revival Of Cotton Farming To Boost Economy, Governor Njuki

By: MKT Reporter
@themtkenyatimes

At least 30,000 cotton farmers in Tharaka Nithi County have received free-certified seeds in a bid to revive the crop that was one of the main sources of livelihood in the region back in 1980s.

Speaking yesterday after launching distribution of the seeds at Chiakariga market in Tharaka constituency, Tharaka Nithi Governor Muthomi Njuki said a total of 70 tons will be disbursed to farmers with a target of producing over 4000 tons of cotton fiber with an expected economic impact of Sh300 million.

He said the national government in collaboration with the county governments has an elaborate plan to revive cotton farming in order to boost textile industry which is on its knees in the country.

He said the government has set a Guaranteed Minimum Return prize of Sh72 per kilogramme from the current Sh52 which will make farming one of the best ventures.

“The target is to revive cotton farming which was the main source of income for residents of Tharaka constituency and the lower parts of Maara



Tharaka Nithi Governor Muthomi Njuki (right) flags off disbursement of cotton seeds to farmers at Chiakariga ward in Tharaka constituency last week. The farmers from the lower parts of the county received 50 tons of cotton seeds in a bid to revive the farming which was the main cash crop in the region some 20 years back. Photo/Mwenda Njeru.

and Chuka/Igambang’ombe constituencies back in 1980s before liberalisation of the textile industry dealt it a huge blow,” said Governor Njuki.

He said cotton grown in Muranga, Nyeri, Kirinyaga, Meru and Tharaka Nithi County will be processed at Sungin ginnery located in Tunyai in Tharaka constituency.

The county boss asked the farmers to embrace the farming because of the availability of market and the guaranteed price of Sh72 noting that it will greatly boost the economy of the lower part of the county which does not receive enough rainfall to support

coffee and tea farming.

“Farmers from the upper parts of Maara and Chuka/Igambang’ombe constituencies have coffee and tea as their cash crops and cotton will now be your cash crop,” he said.

He said revival of the ginneries and the textile industry at large will also create job opportunities for the jobless youths and lower the cost of clothes.

Njuki who was in company of Chiakariga ward representative, Joseph Kinyua said out of the current 100,000 bales of cotton processed in the ginneries in the country, only 8000 bales come from local farmers making the



Tharaka Nithi Governor Muthomi Njuki (centre) distributes cotton seeds to farmers at Chiakariga ward in Tharaka constituency last week. Photo/Mwenda Njeru

cost of production very high.

An official from Sungin ginnery, Ms Virginia Kihoro said they currently travel several kilometers to Lamu and Western Kenya to buy cotton which is still not enough.

He said that they will support farmers to ensure that they produce the best cotton fibre and urged them to form groups for convenient reach.

“We encourage farmers to form groups to avoid brokers. Ginnery trucks will be going around the region collecting cotton from centres and we will be buying cash from farmers,” said Ms Kihoro.

The county chief blamed the national government for the delay in distribution of the seeds arguing that instead of giving the counties money to buy the seeds, the Ministry of Agriculture insisted on taking the responsibility.

He claimed that the national government is yet to fully embrace devolution and that is why devolved functions are still held in Nairobi.

“I had planned to give farmers the cotton seeds before the onset of rains when I was distributing free maize, beans and green grams seeds but the national government delayed procurement,” he said.

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Experts Advocate For Improved Disease Control To Boost Africa's Livestock Export Market

By: Suleiman Mbatiah

@themkenyatimes



Stakeholders give views during the APMD Platform's validation workshop in Naivasha, Kenya. Photo/Suleiman Mbatiah.

Worth Noting:

- According to Mr. Abdullah Gonjobe, a Borana Community elder from Isiolo County, perennial widespread livestock diseases have blocked farmers from accessing markets, preventing them from selling their animals and causing severe financial losses.
- Mr. Gonjobe, who is also a trader and herder, adds that unexplainable diseases, at times, lead to animal deaths which not only devastate livelihoods but also drive entire communities deeper into poverty, worsening food insecurity and economic hardship among pastoral communities.
- “Lack of information, early warning systems, funds, and extension services exposes us to devastating losses of livestock from diseases. Also, poor access to information on market standards makes us fail to meet health and safety requirements, effectively locking us out of lucrative markets,” notes Mr. Gonjobe.

The livestock industry in Kenya and the region is facing significant challenges due to the spread of zoonotic diseases, which have hindered the growth of livestock exports and impacted the regional economy.

These diseases, which can be transmitted between animals and humans, present health risks and lead to stringent trade restrictions that limit the movement of livestock and livestock products across borders.

Zoonotic diseases such as Rift Valley fever, anthrax, and brucellosis have become increasingly problematic for livestock farmers in the region by disrupting the supply chain, prompting immediate livestock quarantines, and, at times, the destruction of affected animals and animal products.

The livestock sector plays a major role in the Kenyan food system, contributing about 12 percent of the country's overall Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 40 percent of agricultural GDP, and employing about half of the agricultural labor force, according to a 2019 report by the Kenya Markets Trust.

However, the emergence of infectious diseases has restricted Kenya's ability to tap into high-value markets, particularly in Europe, the United States of America, the Middle East, and Asia, where countries are strict on import health standards.

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“Lack of information, early warning systems, funds, and extension services exposes us to devastating losses of livestock from diseases. Also, poor access to information on market standards makes us fail to meet health and safety requirements, effectively locking us out of lucrative markets,” notes Mr. Gonjobe.

Kenya currently exports only limited amounts of livestock and animal products to the European Union (EU), largely due to strict EU regulations on animal health and food safety. However, the recent EU-Kenya Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) presents an opportunity to increase these exports, provided Kenya can meet the required standards.

The agreement seeks to boost bilateral trade in goods, increase investment flows, strengthen the ties between reliable partners, and facilitate mutually advantageous economic relations in a sustainable manner, stimulating job creation and economic growth.

According to Dr. Richard Kyuma, Director of Livestock Marketing, Agri Business and Food Security, the government has intensified surveillance and vaccination campaigns, especially in pastoral communities, to prevent the

spread of diseases.

A week ago, President William Ruto announced that the government would vaccinate 72 million livestock from January with the aim of tackling widespread livestock diseases and enhancing Kenya's ability to export high-quality livestock products to both national and international markets.

“These diseases have been in the livestock for quite a while. Provided they are within our country, we are not able to sell our animals to especially the European market, which is a lucrative market,” stated Dr. Kyuma on the sidelines of a continental livestock market platform validation workshop.

The African Pastoral Markets Development (APMD) Platform, currently being validated by analysts and implementers, aims to strengthen the role of pastoralism in promoting inclusive economic growth, sustainable development, and improved livelihoods.

The African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR), with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, is spearheading the establishment and operationalization of the regional livestock marketing platform.

AU-IBAR is a specialized technical office of the African Union Commission (AUC) and operates under the Director, who reports to the AUC via the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture (DREA).

“The implementation of the APMD Platform will give us the opportunity to overcome these barriers. By fostering collaboration and embracing innova-

tion, we can unlock new pathways for sustainable growth,” says AU-IBAR Director Dr. Huyam Salih.

Additionally, initiatives to educate livestock farmers on biosecurity practices are underway, with AU-IBAR actively supporting regional efforts to enhance veterinary services, improve disease reporting systems, and establish a coordinated regional disease response strategy.

AU-IBAR urges member states to establish official control programs and seek disease-free status through the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH). AU-IBAR also advocates for improved access to high-quality vaccines to effectively prevent and control Transboundary Animal Diseases (TADs) and zoonoses.

The APMD Platform seeks to ensure that Kenya and the region's livestock sector achieves its full export potential through investment in infrastructure, research, and stronger collaboration with international bodies for effective disease management and better market returns.

The stakeholders validating the APMD Platform agree that improved biosecurity measures and disease control will lead to a gradual easing of trade restrictions, enabling the livestock industry to thrive in an increasingly interconnected global market.

You're The One I Loved



By: Debanjali Adhikary

You are the one to whom I came very close.
 Today there is no love because you are not there,
 I became the same as before.
 Why did you forget about me?
 If lost forever, leave me alone.
 All my life I must be alone,
 Maybe we will never see each other again.
 And what do you care?
 Do people get what they want in life?
 Lost in the city of the world
 Memories are stored in the chest,
 My helpless gaze is in you.
 Without sorrow there is no trace of happiness,
 I am finished with you. away from And how far.
 If you go, the ball can be reached.
 Address your well-being?
 you were sky blue
 You were, in the silent night
 If you were, in my unwritten poem.
 Any call heard,
 the flight you gave How to reach the ball
 The address of the bird that lost its nest?
 among the stars in the sky
 Looking for you.
 Tell me, Ogo, the target of light.
 Say, what is the address of the losers?
 I will look for him, I will see him once,

It was said to meet
 never seen again
 If you go to the state of happiness
 leave me alone
 What was my crime?
 If you just give it, it's a false love slander.
 In that blasphemous word of cynicism
 If you break my heart,
 How did you tell me?
 Goodbye Friends.
 Maybe it won't happen anymore
 you meet me
 Forgive me
 I'm leaving alone.
 Like giving away
 I have nothing
 Going away Good bye Good bye.
 If someone asks me, what is happiness?
 I may not be able to give the right answer.
 If someone asks me, what is sadness?
 I will say with a little smile,
 He is my friend, my daily companion.
 I own sorrow,
 When I was nine or ten,
 I lost my father prematurely,

I was deprived of my father's love forever.
 i got sad
 When you had to live in poverty and hunger.
 i got sad When my writing and reading were
 about to stop,
 My dream of getting higher education was
 burning in the fire of lack.

Today when from the mind,
 erases all sad memories,
 Dreaming of a beautiful life
 Then sad memories hit my mind.
 Wants to break my arranged dream.
 Will life go like this?
 keep thinking
 How much sorrow and I will endure.
 Won't I get a touch of happiness in this life,
 I don't know if I mean happiness.
 You suddenly came into the light of the eye
 I lost it in a flash
 Yet you were in the corner of the eye
 I kept it with great care
 I love you first
 When you came to the light of the eye
 You were always in my heart
 Love is not contrary to the mind.
 Is this the feeling of love??
 So how many ways have I come back.
 Suddenly your shadow calls
 So forget what retreats
 I love you first
 When you came to the light of the eye
 You were always in my heart
 Love is not contrary to the mind.
 Why don't you understand sometimes?
 So much pain around you
 Don't forget the darkness and come to the light
 I will wrap myself in Maya's blanket

I love you first
 When you came to the light of the eye
 You were always in my heart.
 Love is not contrary to the mind!
 It is late at night
 No one is awake anywhere
 There is no shadow of sleep in the couple.
 Sleep is as if insulted
 I won't see you again today.
 The whole night will be spent in bed.
 There is only one reason
 Today you are not around.
 So I sat down, with the diary
 I will write a poem about you
 A fairy tale of song and rhythm.
 The pen doesn't give me any ink,
 He is angry today.
 There is only one reason
 Because you are not around.
 I opened the south window
 I will see the magical face of the moon.
 The moon repeats itself
 Defeated by your looks
 And hiding behind the clouds in shame.
 Seeing this scene,
 A tide of joy is flowing in my heart
 But this tide has no value.
 There is only one reason
 Today you are not around.
 I have learned to live without seeing you
 Learned not to talk to you
 I have learned to keep you in my mind

Blackpink Willow



Do not caress my black-eyed bead,
 Ingram is next to me, breaking my heart.
 Don't remind my half my only son,
 It has been many years since I laid it in the
 grave.

Do not caress the black-eyed madman,
 Do not leave alone on the street

Without you, not a single day has passed
 Why is there no smile in your eyes?

Do not caress my black-eyed tentacle,
 Tell me, are you upset about your stone?
 Why can't I have joy in my heart,
 I don't have a day without you.

Don't caress my sweet black eye,
 Don't hurt my lonely daughter
 If I'm not there, watch and be an eye and
 an ear
 Don't tell me that I'm not here!

ALIMOVA'S BODY

Alimova Jasmina, a 9th-grade student
 of the 44th general secondary school of
 Guzor district, Kashkadarya region

Echoes In The Haze



By: Godwin Infantina G

In the haze where love and togetherness
 fade,
 We are the fragments of a bond unmade.

Drops that cascade from the corners of
 my eyes,
 Questioning changes that love can't
 disguise.

Holding the vision of you, too far to reach,
 Longing to heal wounds that words
 cannot breach.

In this blend of feelings, so tender, so true,
 I find myself yearning, endlessly, for you.

Though you're distant, a star I can't
 touch,
 Your presence within me still matters so
 much.

In shadows you linger, a whisper, a breeze,
 I strive to ease your sorrows, if only to
 please.

Our bond, like a poem, flowing beyond
 rhyme,
 Connecting our hearts through love's
 endless time.

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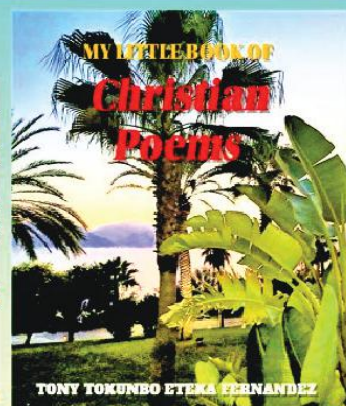
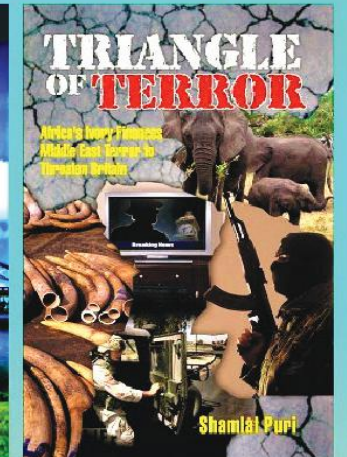
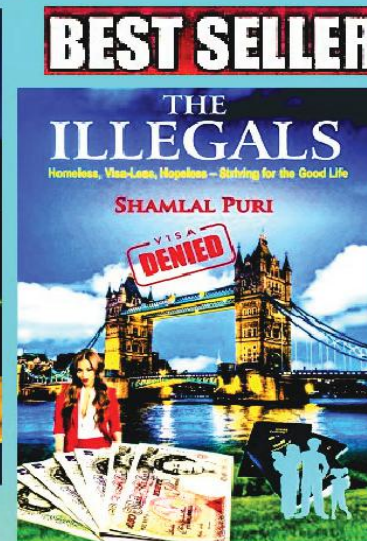
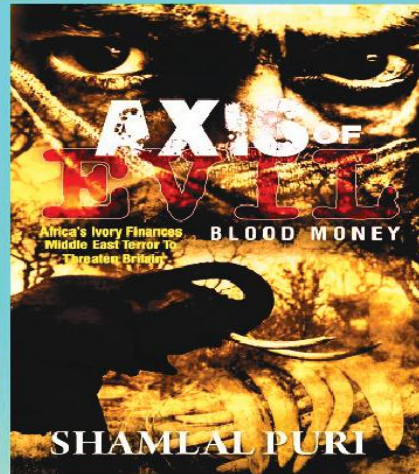
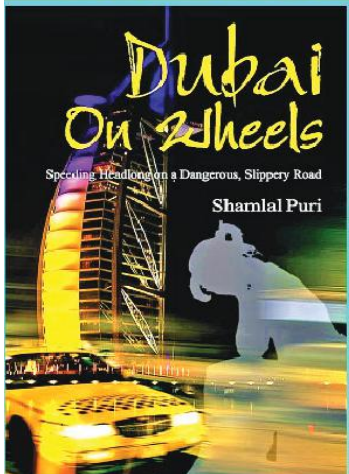
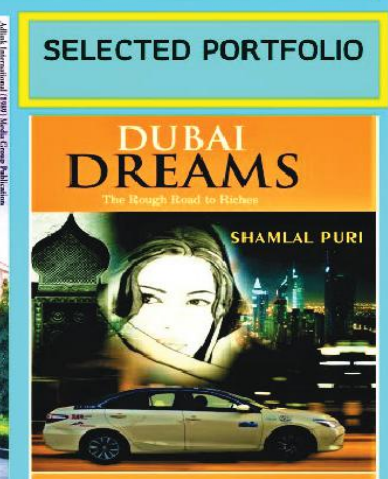
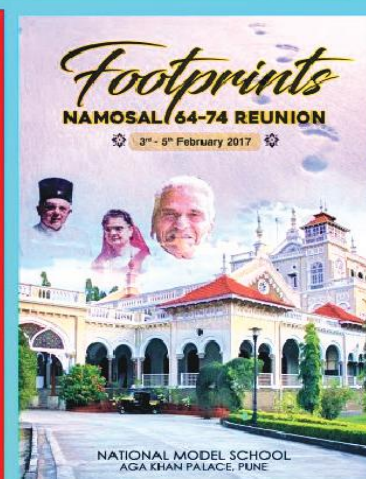
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Nairobi County Prioritizes Affordable High Quality Childcare Through Mamapreneurs

By: Kenya News Agency

Worth Noting:

- Mrs. Sakaja highlighted that the Kidogo team has been transformative by expanding to new communities, developing innovative training programs for caregivers and forging new partnerships that amplify the impact of raising early childhood development and education.
- “The commitment, passion and tireless dedication you all show in transforming the lives of young children and families is nothing short of inspiring. Your work is truly changing the future, one child, one family, and one community at a time,” she expressed.
- She at the same time commended the Nairobi City-County Government for setting out an ambitious target to make Nairobi a city of hope, dignity and opportunity for all children to thrive by 2030.



Kidogo CEO and Founder, Sabrina Habib



Mrs Beatrice Sakaja while addressing the forum.

Nairobi City County has partnered with Kidogo Organization with an aim of nurturing child care by providing affordable childcare.

The County Government together with the organisation also aims at supporting and providing adequate nutrition to every child and high quality of early childhood care in the capital.

Kidogo is an organisation that has a mission of ensuring that every child has the opportunity to reach their full potential by providing affordable and high quality early childhood care.

Beatrice Sakaja, the wife to Nairobi Governor Johnstone Sakaja, has reiterated that Kidogo is giving children the foundation they need to succeed socially, emotionally, health-wise and developmental-wise by not only offering service, but also providing hope, opportunity, dignity and a brighter future to the Kenyan child.

Mrs. Sakaja highlighted that the Kidogo team has been transformative by expanding to new communities, developing innovative training programs for caregivers and forging new partnerships that amplify the impact of raising early childhood development and education.

“The commitment, passion and tireless dedication you all show in transforming the lives of young children and families is nothing short of inspiring. Your work is truly changing the future, one child, one family, and one community at a time,” she expressed.

She at the same time commended the Nairobi City-County Government for setting out an ambitious target to make Nairobi a city of hope, dignity and opportunity for all children to thrive by 2030.

Mrs. Sakaja noted that the county government has prioritized in promoting good health and responsive child caregiving to children aged below three years through initiatives such as the provision of quality, stimulating and nurturing care services, and quality opportunities for early learning through the over 230 Early Childhood Development (ECD) centers in Nairobi County.

Other priorities, according to the First Lady of Nairobi County, include provision of adequate nutrition to all children through Nairobi County initiative such as Dishi na County, support for provision of nurturing care and opportunities for outdoor play in communal spaces as well as creating awareness.

She urged Kidogo and other organizations in the child care space to collaborate and support counties including Nairobi, Kiambu, Machakos and Kajiado in transforming the lives of the children in Kenya since ECD is considered as one of the most powerful investments in the future of any nation.

Further, Mrs. Sakaja acknowledged the commitment of the government and stakeholders for their investment mission in the future of Kenya and helping every child to access quality care and education they need to reach their full potential in a society regardless of background or circumstances.

“As we look forward to the future, let us continue to build on the momentum of today. Let us be bold in our vision, ambitious in our goals and let us be unwavering in our commitment to the children and families who depend on us,” rallied Mrs. Sakaja.

Additionally, she encouraged the Kidogo team, partners, ‘mamapre-

neurs’ and ‘papapreneurs’ to collaborate in creating a great future for inspiration and empowerment to every Kenyan child.

Director of Education, Nairobi City County Ruth Owuor highlighted on what the city has done including the formation of the child collaborative action where all partners in the child care space have come together.

The Director added that Nairobi County has a multi-sectoral approach in its transformative agenda on health that works together in ensuring that every child is immunized and monitored for child growth by working closely with community health promoters to reach every household level.

She further revealed that the county government, through the Governor, has a school feeding programme that reaches all the ongoing school-aged children in public schools and ECD centers to the junior secondary level. “We provide free ECD capitation, where one joins without paying a single coin. This is to help the parents and guardians have a breathing space from paying school fees for their children,” stated Owuor.

Owuor disclosed that, under the policy and regulations of Child Care Facilities, Nairobi County has drafted regulations that will help the daycare space be regulated and work together with Kidogo Organization to come up with the standards that will ensure that every child gets the proper quality care that they need.

Kidogo CEO and Founder, Sabrina Habib reported that the organization has currently impacted 2,000 ‘mamapreneurs’ persons who care for children directly reaching 50,000 children and still has a goal of reaching a

million children.

“Our goal over the next five years is to expand to 50,000 ‘mamapreneurs’ reaching a million children to get the bright start to life and grow up to become the citizens of the country,” she announced.

The CEO recalled how Kidogo started with two centers with the first gala having five ‘mamapreneurs’, upon which the current number has risen to 2,000 mamapreneurs as caregivers to children, maintaining that the growth of Kidogo is no longer just a vision but a reality.

“We think that in order to run a good child care center, you need to have the nurturing, loving qualities of a mama. But you also have to be a problem solver, a hustler who possesses those skill sets of an entrepreneur,” stressed Habib.

She also presented the considerations for one to be a caregiver insisting that the operators in addition to having the love and ability to care for children, should also tailor the relevant message to the government on the issues of policy and that is what Kidogo does through the mamapreneur program by finding daycares being run from home, stand-alone centres of part of a school.

“We do the upskilling, then train, mentor, coach and connect mamapreneurs to other communities so that they can provide that peer-to-peer accountability as we ultimately perform quality assurance,” mentioned Habib.

She emphasized collaboration in order to make child care a norm in Kenyan society and an election issue since valuing child care is a necessary component of a thriving economy.

County Drafts Policy To Boost Creativity In Vocational Training Centers

By: Suleiman Mbatiah
 @themkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- The Governor underscored that VTC courses are now designed to ensure graduates are not only knowledgeable but also capable of applying their skills in practical settings.
- In her 2022 manifesto, she pledged to transform VTCs by enhancing infrastructure, modernizing tools, and providing financial support to deliver high-quality training for youth.
- In the 2023/2024 financial year, the County constructed eight training rooms and workshops at a cost of Kshs 15.2 million. Additionally, nine VTCs were equipped with modern tools and equipment worth KSh15.7 million.
- To encourage enrollment and ease the financial burden on parents, the County offers a Capitation Fund of KSh30,000 per trainee. Needy students also benefit from bursaries and support for lunch programs.



Governor Susan Kihika presenting a certificate to Austin Irungu who graduated with a certificate in Building and Construction - Plumbing Option. Photo/Courtesy

The County Government of Nakuru is formulating a draft policy to promote creativity and problem-solving among students in vocational training centers (VTCs). The proposed initiatives include the establishment of innovation hubs within VTCs, enabling students to work on projects, access advanced technology, and collaborate with peers and mentors. According to Governor Susan Kihika, these efforts aim to enhance the learning experience and equip graduates to compete effectively in the global job market. Speaking during the graduation ceremony of 4,146 students from Nakuru County VTCs, Governor Kihika highlighted the importance of innovation and practical skills in today's rapidly changing world. "The ability to think creatively and apply practical skills is what sets our graduates apart," she stated, urging students to embrace innovation and develop solutions to real-world challenges. The Governor underscored that VTC courses are now designed to ensure graduates are not only knowledgeable but also capable of applying their

skills in practical settings. In her 2022 manifesto, she pledged to transform VTCs by enhancing infrastructure, modernizing tools, and providing financial support to deliver high-quality training for youth. In the 2023/2024 financial year, the County constructed eight training rooms and workshops at a cost of Kshs 15.2 million. Additionally, nine VTCs were equipped with modern tools and equipment worth KSh15.7 million. To encourage enrollment and ease the financial burden on parents, the County offers a Capitation Fund of KSh30,000 per trainee. Needy students also benefit from bursaries and support for lunch programs. "Through financial support, we have enhanced facilities, upgraded equipment, and are now providing comprehensive training that aligns with the demands of today's job market," Governor Kihika noted. The County has expanded vocational training by operationalizing seven new VTCs this year, bringing the total number to 40. It also boasts 10 Centers of Excellence, with plans to launch 10 additional centers soon. The enrollment figures have ris-

en from 5,361 trainees last year to 6,250 this year, a growth attributed to the County initiatives and increased awareness of vocational training's value. To address staffing needs, the County has increased the number of instructors to 158 and hired additional administrative staff. A quality assurance officer was recently appointed to ensure training standards are upheld. "We have introduced continuous professional development programs to ensure our trainers stay updated with the latest teaching methodologies and industry trends," the Governor explained. During the graduation ceremony, several students were recognized for their outstanding achievements. Charles Mwangi, an ICT graduate, has built a thriving tech business serving local and international clients. While Fidelis Lisheshi, a welding graduate from Mirera VTC, is currently working at KenGen. Viola Cherotich, a Fashion and Design graduate, was recently recruited into the Kenya Defense Forces (KDF), showcasing her discipline and commitment. Ann Mumbi, an Electrical Installation graduate, is prepar-

ing to represent local talent abroad with a promising career in Qatar. "Their journeys inspire us and underscore the immense potential of vocational training in transforming our county's workforce," Governor Kihika remarked. To maintain high training standards, the County collaborates with the National Industrial Training Authority (NITA) and the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) as examining bodies. The County has also established partnerships with local businesses and industries to provide students with practical experience through attachments, internships, and apprenticeships. These collaborations not only enhance learning but also create pathways to employment post-graduation. "By working with industry partners, we are bridging the gap between training and job placement, ensuring our graduates are prepared to excel in their careers," the governor concluded.

Education Is A Factory That Turns Dreamers Into Drones

Exploring how our education system stifles creativity and nurtures conformity in the name of productivity



By: Midmark Onsongo
@themtkenyatimes



Worth Noting:

- When the national curriculum is reduced to a mere checklist of facts, we sacrifice innovation on the altar of compliance. Think of the late 20th-century reforms that aimed to bolster our educational framework: No Child Left Behind in 2001, for instance. Intended to elevate educational standards, it instead shackled teachers with the heavy chains of standardized testing, ultimately producing students who can regurgitate answers rather than engage in meaningful discourse.
- Consider my friend James, a brilliant young man with a knack for unraveling complex problems. He dreamt of revolutionizing technology, but after years of navigating a rigid educational structure, he found himself trapped in a cycle of monotony, where creativity was suffocated under the weight of assessments.

It is a well-known fact, as acknowledged by countless scholars and frustrated educators, that our education system operates like a well-oiled machine, cranking out obedient workers instead of curious minds. Picture a sprawling factory: rows of desks and chairs, students lined up like assembly line products, all neatly packaged into pre-determined roles.

The bells ring, the teachers instruct, and the students comply, marching dutifully through their days. It's ironic that in an age where innovation is paramount, our classrooms resemble a Victorian factory more than a vibrant marketplace of ideas. The ringing of bells echoes through the halls like the clanging of hammers, reminding us that punctuality and compliance are more valued than creativity and critical thought.

When did the quest for knowledge become synonymous with rote memorization and mindless repetition? As we question the very foundation of our education system, we must confront a paradox: how can we ignore the reality that our schools prioritize conformity over creativity?

The visionaries of the past, like Sir Ken Robinson, an education reform advocate, have long criticized this system, famously stating that "creativity is as important as literacy." Yet, this profound statement often falls on deaf ears. Our institutions, like clockwork, continue to churn out students who fear questioning authority, a tragedy masked by the euphemism of "standardized education."

When the national curriculum is reduced to a mere checklist of facts, we sacrifice innovation on the altar of compliance. Think of the late 20th-century reforms that aimed to bolster our educational framework: No Child Left Behind in 2001, for instance. Intended to elevate educational standards, it instead shackled teachers with the heavy chains of standardized testing, ultimately producing students who can regurgitate answers rather than engage in meaningful discourse.

Consider my friend James, a brilliant young man with a knack for unraveling complex problems. He dreamt of revolutionizing technology, but after years of navigating a rigid educational structure, he found himself trapped in a cycle of monotony, where creativity was suffocated



under the weight of assessments.

Ironically, as James immersed himself in his corporate job, he realized that the very skills he had honed—those of obedience and compliance—were all that mattered. Instead of challenging the status quo, he became another cog in the wheel, his dreams quietly eroded like sandcastles washed away by the tide.

Such is the fate of many bright minds who slip through the cracks of an education system that prizes obedience over inquiry. Our political leaders play a role in this dance of conformity, perpetuating an educational model that champions compliance. Figures like George W. Bush and Barack Obama, with their sweeping educational reforms, focused on accountability and metrics, often neglecting the deeper issues at play.

They fail to recognize that while we may produce workers who can perform tasks, we are not nurturing individuals who can think critically or innovate. A society that values conformity will inevitably face stagnation, as the innovative sparks of creativity flicker out in favor of the dull glow of obedience. Education should be a journey, not a regimented march towards a predetermined destination.

Instead, we see students shackled by an assembly-line mentality, where critical thinking is sacrificed at the altar of practicality. We need only look to Finland's education system, often hailed as one of the best in the world, for inspiration.

Finnish educators emphasize student autonomy, creativity, and critical thinking—qualities that produce thinkers rather than drones. Students in Finland enjoy longer recesses and fewer standardized tests, creating a rich environment for exploration and engagement. Their approach serves as a glaring antithesis to the rigid systems we currently uphold.

Yet, even as we look outward for inspiration, we must confront the harsh reality of our own system here in Kenya. The Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) perpetuates a cycle of rote learning and examination anxiety. As students prepare for the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE), the focus shifts entirely to passing tests rather than fostering genuine understanding or igniting curiosity. It is an irony not lost on us that our brightest students, those who excel in exams, may be ill-equipped to tackle real-world challenges.

Are we, then, willing to let this cycle continue unchallenged? Must we remain passive observers in a system designed to produce obedient workers rather than thinkers? The answer lies in our collective willingness to challenge the narrative that has long dictated our educational policies. It is time to embrace educational reform that values creativity, critical thinking, and the courage to question authority.

Education should not merely be a means to an end, a conveyor belt that churns out compliant workers ready to join the workforce. It should be

a sacred space, a vibrant community where students are encouraged to explore, experiment, and express their thoughts without fear of repercussion. Our classrooms should ring with the sounds of spirited debates and innovative ideas, rather than the monotonous drone of conformity.

Yet, how do we achieve this transformation? It begins with educators and policymakers redefining success. We must ask ourselves: Is it success if our students can regurgitate information, or is true success found in their ability to think critically, to innovate, and to challenge the world around them? By embracing this ethos, we can create a system that nurtures thinkers rather than workers. Time for complacency has passed.

As we peel back the layers of our education system, we reveal a stark truth: we must ignite a movement that values creativity and critical thought above all. Let us not become a society of drones, where conformity reigns supreme, but rather a community of thinkers, innovators, and dreamers who dare to challenge the status quo.

It is time to dismantle the assembly line of education and build a vibrant marketplace of ideas that fosters the next generation of critical thinkers. The future depends on it, and it is up to us to demand the change we wish to see.

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



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Strengthening Science Communication: A Call For Collaboration In Kenya

By: **James Kilonzo Bwire**

The Media Council of Kenya (MCK) has underscored the critical need for enhanced collaborations to improve science communication within the country. This initiative is not merely a bureaucratic maneuver; it represents a profound recognition of the role that effective communication plays in bridging the gap between scientific communities and the general public. In an age where misinformation can spread rapidly, fostering partnerships among media professionals, educational institutions, and government bodies is essential for ensuring that scientific information is accurately reported and understood.

Science communication is vital for public engagement and understanding of scientific issues that affect everyday life, from health and environmental concerns to technological advancements. The MCK's advocacy for collaboration aims to equip journalists with the necessary skills and knowledge to report on these complex topics effectively. By developing targeted training programs and communication strategies, MCK seeks to enhance the quality of science reporting in Kenya,

ultimately leading to a more informed citizenry.

One significant challenge facing science communication in Kenya is the prevalent gap between scientists and journalists. Often, scientists may lack the skills to communicate their findings in an accessible manner, while journalists may not have the requisite background to understand or accurately report on scientific studies. This disconnect can lead to misinterpretations or oversimplifications that distort public understanding. MCK's initiative to promote partnerships can help bridge this gap, encouraging scientists to engage with media professionals and share their insights in ways that resonate with the public.

Moreover, collaboration can foster a culture of accountability and ethical reporting among journalists. The MCK's emphasis on ethical standards and professional development is crucial in this regard. By establishing clear guidelines and providing training on best practices in science communication, journalists can be better equipped to navigate the complexities of reporting on scientific issues. This not only enhances their credibility but also builds trust with audiences who

rely on accurate information to make informed decisions about their health, environment, and technology.

The role of educational institutions cannot be overstated in this collaborative effort. By incorporating science communication into journalism curricula, universities can prepare future journalists to tackle scientific topics with confidence and competence. Institutions like the Kenya Institute of Mass Communication have already begun producing skilled personnel capable of addressing these challenges. Additionally, partnerships with research institutions can facilitate internships and practical experiences that expose students to real-world science reporting challenges. Such initiatives will cultivate a new generation of journalists who are not only skilled communicators but also passionate advocates for science literacy.

Furthermore, government bodies play a pivotal role in this ecosystem. By supporting policies that promote science communication and funding initiatives aimed at enhancing media capabilities, governments can help create an environment where accurate science reporting flourishes. This support is particularly crucial in addressing

pressing issues such as climate change, public health crises, and technological innovations that require informed public discourse. The MCK itself is mandated by law to promote media freedom and professionalism, ensuring that journalists adhere to ethical standards while reporting on critical issues affecting society.

In addition to these structural changes, there is a pressing need for innovative approaches to engage diverse audiences effectively. As mobile internet access expands across Kenya—where over 85% of the population is online—media organizations must leverage digital platforms to disseminate scientific information widely. Social media channels provide unique opportunities for interactive engagement with audiences, enabling scientists and journalists to communicate directly with the public.

Moreover, addressing language barriers is essential for effective science communication in Kenya's multilingual society. While English and Swahili dominate mainstream media, incorporating vernacular languages into science reporting can significantly enhance accessibility for rural populations who may not be fluent in these

languages. This approach would ensure that scientific knowledge reaches all segments of society, fostering inclusivity in public discourse.

In conclusion, the Media Council of Kenya's push for increased collaborations in science communication is a timely and necessary initiative. By fostering partnerships among media professionals, educational institutions, and government bodies, we can enhance the quality of science reporting in Kenya. This collaborative approach will not only empower journalists but also ensure that the public receives accurate and accessible information about scientific issues that impact their lives. As we navigate an increasingly complex world filled with rapid advancements and challenges, effective science communication will be paramount in building a well-informed society capable of making sound decisions based on reliable information. The time for action is now; let us embrace collaboration as a cornerstone of our commitment to advancing science communication in Kenya.

James Kilonzo Bwire is a Media and Communication Practitioner.

Education On Hold: Students Bear The Brunt Of The Ongoing Lecturer's Strike

Across the country, public universities are in the grip of an ongoing lecturers' strike, leaving thousands of students stranded with uncertain academic futures. While the reasons behind the strike are multi-faceted, it is students who are feeling the full weight of its consequences. Classrooms are empty, campuses are quieter than usual, and students are left grappling with disrupted learning and growing uncertainty.

The lecturers' strike, a tool used by academic staff to press for better pay and working conditions, has become a recurrent problem in many public universities. As negotiations between the government and university unions break down, students find themselves at the receiving end of an education system in crisis. While students understand the reasons for the strike, the toll it takes on their academic and personal lives is hard to ignore.

The strike has caused significant disruption in the learning process. In affected universities, students have been without lectures for weeks, with no clear indication of when nor-

mal academic activities will resume. What began as a brief interruption has now stretched into a prolonged period of educational stagnation, with no clear plan for making up lost time.

While the strike is primarily an academic issue, its financial impact cannot be overlooked. For many students, the extended period without classes means additional costs that they were not budgeting for. Tuition fees, accommodation, and other related expenses continue to accrue, but with no guarantee of academic progress. In some cases, students find themselves returning home, further complicating their academic plans. With no clear indication of when the strike will end, the uncertainty adds to the growing financial burden, making it harder for families to manage the cost of education. Moreover, students on government-sponsored loans or scholarships may face complications, as delays in academic progression could impact their eligibility or payment schedules. With no clear resolution in sight, the ripple effects

of the strike stretch far beyond the lecture halls, touching students' financial stability and future prospects.

The ongoing strike isn't just an academic or financial issue, it's an emotional one as well. For students, the anxiety surrounding an extended strike is overwhelming. As deadlines are postponed, and the future becomes increasingly uncertain, mental health issues such as stress, depression, and anxiety have seen a noticeable rise. While the strike is fundamentally a dispute between lecturers and the government, it is the students who bear the brunt of the consequences. Many are left feeling powerless in the face of a system that seems indifferent to their needs. For some, the emotional toll of waiting in limbo, with no end in sight, is beginning to outweigh the frustration of the academic disruption itself.

As the strike continues, questions loom about when a resolution will come and what the long-term effects will be for students. Some have called for a greater investment in education, both in terms of funding



and fair compensation for university staff, while others advocate for more dialogue between the government and academic unions. However, until a solution is reached, students remain at the mercy of a system that has left them behind.

In the end, the strike serves as a stark reminder of the fragile nature of public education. While the lecturers' grievances are legitimate, the students who rely on this system for their education should not be the ones to pay the price. As universities

and the government work toward a resolution, it is the students who must carry the burden, with their academic futures hanging in the balance. As this crisis unfolds, one thing is clear: the longer the strike lasts, the more profound its impact will be on the students who are caught in the middle. They are waiting for the day when education will resume, but until then, their futures remain on hold.

Sherine Emelda and Sally Anyango (media students Rongo University)

Golden Advice: Prof Catherine Gachutha's Guide to Ending Violence Against Women

By: John Waithaka
 @themkenyatimes

Ending violence against women is not just a women's issue; it is a collective responsibility that demands everyone's participation. Prof Catherine Gachutha, the Chairperson of Kenya Counselling and Psychological Association (KCPA), Director Kenya Institute of Business and Counselling Studies (KIBCo) and a passionate advocate for women's rights, believes that meaningful change begins with simple yet powerful actions we can all take to create a safer and more equitable world.

The first step is to listen to and believe the survivors. When a woman shares her story of violence, she is taking a courageous step towards breaking the cycle of abuse. Offering her a safe space to speak without judgment is crucial. It's important to understand that factors like her clothing, sobriety, or behavior are

irrelevant to the violence she endured. Responsibility lies solely with the perpetrator. Victim-blaming only perpetuates the cycle, so instead of questioning her choices, we must stand with her, affirm her experience, and advocate for justice. A simple phrase like, "We hear you. We believe you. We stand with you," can make a profound difference in her journey to healing.

Change also begins with the younger generation. The values and beliefs we instill in children today will shape the future. By starting early, we can teach them about gender equality, respect, and the importance of consent. Conversations about bodily autonomy and accountability can help break down harmful stereotypes and encourage a culture of acceptance and inclusion. Empowering boys and girls with knowledge about their rights creates a foundation for a society that respects everyone's dignity. Listening to children and learning from their experiences further strengthens this effort, fostering

mutual understanding and growth.

Catherine emphasizes the importance of services tailored to meet the needs of survivors. Access to shelters, helplines, counseling, and legal assistance is not a luxury—it is a necessity. These services provide a lifeline for survivors seeking safety and justice, and it is our responsibility to ensure they are readily available and effective. Advocacy for such essential support systems can save lives and offer hope to those in despair.

Recognizing the signs of abuse is another critical aspect of this fight. Abuse comes in many forms, including physical, emotional, and psychological harm, and each can leave lasting scars. If you suspect someone you know is in danger, learning how to approach the situation with care and connect them to the resources they need is vital. A small act of support can lead to transformative change in their life.

Violence against women and girls is a violation of human rights that has



Prof Catherine Gachutha

persisted for far too long. While pervasive, it is not inevitable. Remaining silent only perpetuates the problem. By listening, educating, and taking action, we can challenge the norms that allow violence to thrive and create a world where women

and girls feel safe, valued, and empowered.

Catherine's golden advice is a reminder that change starts with each of us. Together, we can break the silence, support survivors, and end the cycle of violence once and for all.

FIDA-Kenya and KELIN Kenya Raise Concerns Over Social Health Insurance Fund Implementation

By: Cynthia Masibo
 @themkenyatimes

The Federation of Women Lawyers-Kenya (FIDA-Kenya) and the Kenya Legal and Ethical Issues Network on HIV and AIDS (KELIN Kenya) have jointly called out the government over challenges in the implementation of the Social Health Insurance Fund (SHIF). The two organizations raised alarm during a press briefing yesterday, highlighting systemic gaps in the transition from the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) to SHIF under the Social Health Insurance Act, 2023.

In their statement, the two legal advocacy organizations emphasized that the shift has disrupted access to healthcare services, disproportionately affecting vulnerable groups, particularly women and low-income households. They warned that this could jeopardize the constitutional right to health, guaranteed under Article 43 of Kenya's Constitution, and called for urgent government action to address these issues.

FIDA-Kenya and KELIN Kenya

underscored that while the SHIF was designed to streamline healthcare access and promote universal health coverage, its rollout has revealed critical shortcomings. These include delays in registration, inadequate communication with the public, and an unclear operational framework, all of which have hindered equitable access to healthcare.

"The transition from NHIF to SHIF was supposed to strengthen healthcare delivery and ensure universal access. Instead, it has exposed glaring systemic gaps that disproportionately affect the most vulnerable members of our society," said FIDA-Kenya in its remarks.

Echoing these sentiments, KELIN Kenya expressed concern over the exclusionary nature of the ongoing transition process. The organization emphasized that vulnerable populations, particularly those living with chronic illnesses like HIV, have reported difficulties in accessing the care they require due to delays and disruptions in SHIF's implementation.

"Health is a fundamental human right, and any reform in health financing must ensure that no one is left behind," stated KELIN Kenya,



Hortense Minishi, the deputy chairperson of KELIN Kenya issuing her address

adding that the SHIF must prioritize equity and inclusivity in its operational design.

Both organizations noted that the shortcomings of the SHIF violate Article 43 of Kenya's Constitution, which guarantees every individual the right to the highest attainable standard of health. They stressed that unless immediate corrective measures are taken, the SHIF risks undermining Kenya's progress toward achieving universal healthcare, a key pillar of the government's development agenda.

"The right to health is non-negotiable. The current gaps in the SHIF structure not only hinder access but also violate the constitutional man-

date to ensure equitable and affordable healthcare for all Kenyans," the joint statement read.

FIDA-Kenya and KELIN Kenya urged the government to conduct an independent audit of the SHIF's operations to identify and address the challenges that have emerged since its inception. They also called for a more participatory approach involving civil society organizations, healthcare providers, and citizens to ensure the SHIF fulfills its mandate.

They further recommended that the government immediately address delays in service provision and develop clear guidelines to ensure a seamless transition for patients previously covered under the NHIF.

"With proper oversight and collaboration, SHIF has the potential to transform healthcare access in Kenya. However, the existing challenges must be resolved swiftly to prevent further harm to vulnerable populations," the organizations said.

As the government faces growing pressure to address these issues, the advocacy by FIDA-Kenya and KELIN Kenya highlights the urgent need to align the SHIF with its intended goal of universal health coverage. For now, the future of accessible healthcare under the new framework remains uncertain, leaving millions of Kenyans in limbo.

Commemorating World Day Of Remembrance For Road Traffic Victims: A Call For Safer Roads In Kenya

By: Cynthia Masibo
@themtkenyatomes

The Digital Boda Drivers and Deliveries Association of Kenya (DBDDAK), under the auspices of the National Transport and Safety Authority (NTSA), on Sunday joined the global community in marking the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims. Observed annually on the third Sunday of November, the event underscored the urgent need to address road safety challenges in Kenya while paying tribute to the lives lost and those forever impacted by road accidents.

As part of the commemoration, the National Transport and Safety Authority (NTSA) released a report highlighting nine habits that significantly contribute to road accidents in Kenya, costing the nation dearly in both human and economic terms. According to NTSA Board Chair Manoj Shah, the economic loss due to road traffic crashes is estimated at about 5% of Kenya's GDP annually—equivalent to Ksh310 billion or US\$3.1 billion.

Among the key behavioral causes identified, "drunk-walking" ranked as a leading factor. This habit, coupled with others like reckless driving, distracted road use, and failure to observe traffic rules, contributes to

thousands of road deaths and injuries annually.

"The economic loss due to road traffic crashes in Kenya is staggering and demands immediate action to address the root causes of this crisis," Shah emphasized in the report.

The report also highlighted that a country where 90 percent of its transport needs, both cargo and passenger, are met via road transport, approximately 3,000 people succumb to road accidents every year which is just a fraction of the 1.3 million globally.

The day provided an opportunity for Kenyans to reflect on the devastating impact of road traffic accidents on families, communities, and the nation. The DBDDAK President, Calvince Okumu, delivered a heartfelt message of solidarity to families who have endured the pain of losing loved ones to road crashes. "Your loss is a loss for us all—a poignant reminder of the urgency with which we must act to prevent more lives from being lost," he said.

This year's commemoration was particularly personal for DBDDAK as the association paid tribute to one of its own, Joel Kinoti, who tragically lost his life on 10th November 2024. His death underscored the pressing need for collective action to improve road safety and prevent further tragedies.

DBDDAK reiterated its commitment to the vision of zero road traffic



The Head of Digital Boda Drivers and Deliveries Association of Kenya (DBDDAK), Calvince Okumu issuing his statement

fatalities, aligning itself with President William Ruto's call for "Safety and Sanity" in Kenya's transport systems. The association also backed the National Transport and Safety Authority's (NTSA) National Action Plan, which seeks to significantly reduce road traffic deaths through enforcement of traffic laws, enhanced infrastructure, and public education.

"Achieving zero road traffic fatalities is not just a vision but a necessity," Okumu emphasized. "It demands steadfast commitment, strict enforcement of traffic laws, and collective responsibility from all stakeholders, road users, and the public."

DBDDAK outlined specific measures to address the road safety crisis.

The association urged the NTSA to intensify the enforcement of traffic laws to curb reckless driving and reduce accidents. It called on the Kenya National Highways Authority (KeNHA) to ensure that all roads meet safety standards, including the installation of proper signage, lighting, and road markings to protect all users.

Additionally, the association appealed to all road users to embrace responsible behavior, prioritizing safety over speed and respecting traffic rules. "Together, we can work toward safer roads for all Kenyans and honor the memories of those we have lost by preventing future tragedies," Okumu stated.

Road traffic accidents remain a significant challenge in Kenya, claiming thousands of lives annually and leaving countless others with life-altering injuries. The World Day of Remembrance is a stark reminder of the urgent need to address this crisis through concerted efforts by government agencies, private organizations, and individual citizens.

As Kenyans marked this day of reflection and advocacy, the hope for safer roads resonated strongly. For families mourning their loved ones, like those of Joel Kinoti, the push for transformative change in Kenya's road safety landscape is not just a policy issue—it is a matter of life and death.

M-PESA Foundation Impacts 3,000 Kericho County Residents In A Free Medical Camp

The Camp Culminates A Week-Long Series Of Activities In The Region As Part Of Safaricom's Sambaza Furaha Campaign

By: John Kariuki
@themtkenyatomes

Over 3,000 residents in Kericho County have benefited from a medical camp hosted by the M-PESA Foundation in partnership with Zuri Health and Lion Sight First Eye Hospital at Kapacheluch Primary School, Belgut Sub-County, Kericho County.

The camp offered an array of services, including eye care consultations, breast cancer screening, dental care, general doctor consultations, and women's health. Additionally, 24 patients suffering from diabetes and hypertension received free medica-

tion for 24 months.

During the camp, 24 patients were registered and onboarded onto SHA to receive free medical cover for one year.

"This medical camp in Kericho marked the culmination of a week-long series of activities in this region, celebrating and spreading Christmas cheer to our customers through the Sambaza Furaha campaign. We were delighted to see such a large turnout, with many people coming to take advantage of the free medical checkups we are offering," said Peter Ndegwa, CEO, Safaricom.

The camp marked the Foundation's 18th medical camp in the second phase of the initiative, where over 33,000 individuals have benefit-

ed from essential medical services across counties such as Nairobi, Siaya, Migori, Kiambu, Kajiado, Nakuru, Bomet, Kisii, Bungoma, Migori, Muranga, Turkana, and Machakos.

The medical camp also marked the culmination of a week-long of activities in the region as part of Safaricom's Sambaza Furaha Campaign.

The company spread festive cheer through various gifts, including goats, chickens, food hampers, and airtime, among other gifts, traversing Narok, Baringo, Bomet, Kericho, Nandi, Kapsabet, Eldoret, and Nakuru, celebrating its customers as the company also marks 24 years of transforming lives.

Beyond the medical camp and



spreading festive cheer, Safaricom also hosted Safaricom Hook workshops in Nakuru and stakeholder en-

gagements involving media and dealers' engagement forums in Eldoret.

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Sports >> *Tottenham's Rodrigo Bentancur was yesterday given a seven-match domestic ban by the Football Association over an alleged racist remark made about teammate Son Heung-min in a TV interview.

Bentancur Banned For Seven Games Over Alleged Racial Slur



Uruguay's forward #07 Rodrigo Aguirre celebrates with teammate midfielder #06 Rodrigo Bentancur after scoring his team's second goal during the 2026 FIFA World Cup South American qualifiers football match between Uruguay and Colombia at the Centenario stadium in Montevideo on November 15, 2024. (Photo by DANTE FERNANDEZ / AFP).

Tottenham's Rodrigo Bentancur was yesterday given a seven-match domestic ban by the Football Association over an alleged racist remark made about teammate Son Heung-min in a TV interview.

The midfielder was charged by the FA in September in connection with an alleged breach of its rules during the interview in his home country of Uruguay.

The former Juventus player, who has also been fined £100,000 (\$126,000), had been asked in June by a presenter for a Spurs player's shirt.

He replied: "Sonny's? It could be Sonny's cousin too as they all look the same."

Bentancur, 27, apologised to

the South Korea international but because it was deemed an "aggravated breach", an independent regulatory commission panel was required to either uphold the FA charge or dismiss the case.

The panel upheld the charge and Bentancur will have to sit out Tottenham's next seven domestic fixtures, though he will be able to play in Europa League matches against Roma and Rangers.

The FA said in a statement that it was alleged that the incident constituted an "aggravated breach... as it included a reference - whether express or implied - to nationality and/or race and/or ethnic origin."

"Rodrigo Bentancur denied

this charge, but the independent regulatory commission found it to be proven and imposed his sanctions following a hearing," it added.

Son, speaking in late September, said: "He apologised straight afterwards when we had holiday. I was at home. I didn't even realise what was going on. He sent me a long message and you could feel it was coming from his heart."

Tottenham manager Ange Postecoglou said Bentancur had acknowledged his mistake and had pleaded for leniency.

Bentancur will not return to domestic action until December 26, missing Premier League matches against Manchester City, Chelsea and Liverpool as well as Tottenham's League Cup quarter-final against Manchester United.

The Uruguayan has played 15 times for Tottenham this season, scoring one goal.

AFP

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >>> *FKF presidential aspirant Tom Alila says alliance building ahead of the FKF presidential elections set for December 7 is not a remote possibility.

FKF Polls: Presidential Hopeful Alila Does Not Rule Out Alliances



Tom Alila last Tuesday launched his bid for teh FKF presidency.PHOTO/Courtesy

FKF presidential aspirant Tom Alila says alliance building ahead of the FKF presidential elections set for December 7 is not a remote possibility.

In fact, Alila wants rivals, Kakamega Homeboyz Chairman Cleophas 'Toto' Shimanyula, Gor Mahia Secretary Sam Ochola, former International Sammy Owino 'Kempes', and Chris Amimo to team up instead of splitting their votes.

He said of the polls, "That's why I'm saying that we want to talk and agree - on forming an alli-

ance-among ourselves.We want to ensure that Nyanza, Western and Coast speak in one tone and cast all their votes in one basket."

Nyanza, where I come from, should guard its votes, just as our brothers in Western should. Coast region should also do the same so that we may ensure we speak loudest come the Election Day, by fronting one candidate to be endorsed by the coalition team - in order to nail the victory at the helm of Kenyan football," Alila said.

Alila who once served as the

FKF National Executive Committee member representing Nyanza region has also claimed that as things stand, there is no favourite candidate for the seat.

"There is nobody who is an outright candidate to win this election. I have gone round the country to meet these delegates. I have travelled as far as Mombasa and I can assure you that these votes are not and can't be asked on the social media platform.

Those running around on social media saying that they are favourites to win have no idea or know

what the reality has for them on December 7," said Alila.

The alliance, if formed, could also rope in former federation president Sam Nyamweya who has thrown his weight behind Shimanyula's ticket.

Citizen Sport

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Backpage



A Review Of Siri Ya Mapambazuko Novel

By: MKT Reporter
@themkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- The novel is set in Matopeni village. It influence the power and will of citizens playing a role in developing their community and counteracting the leaders ways that according to them, will enable the villagers to continue supporting the politicians in their doings.
- The novel is orchestrated through two strangers Jaki and Kiio who later become friends and eventually gets to understand they are step brothers.
- An important quality of this novel is its massiveness of the two travellers together with their father and the secret of rising.
- The fascinating thing about Siri ya Mapambazuko is that Kiio through a calculative approach to portray the humble castle of the secret to rising on new levels in a way that a reader won't take his sense out of the picture.

The Swahili novel 'Siri Ya Mapambazuko, a book written by Wanjohi P Mugambi aptly explores the problems with Africa countries such as Betrayal, Vengeance, Corruption, Unemployment and Neocolonialism. African leaders themselves are less serious in finding solutions to these ill as seen with different leaders whose motive is remaining in power and can even do anything to see themselves there.

The satire in this text is top notch. It's a worthy read, however the complex plot may make it a little bit tougher to comprehend on first reading

Siri ya Mapambazuko reflects the African communities and their relations. The Novel explores various problems faced by Africans politically; unemployment, impunity, violence, betrayal, unemployment, poor leadership, neocolonialism.

It is not about different problems affecting different African countries but common problems faced by the continent in totality.

The novel is set in Matopeni village. It influence the power and will of citizens playing a role in developing their community and counteracting the leaders ways that according to them, will enable the villagers to continue supporting the politicians in their doings.

The novel is orchestrated through two strangers Jaki and Kiio who later become friends and eventually gets to understand they are step brothers.

An important quality of this novel is its massiveness of the two travellers together with their father and the secret of rising.

The fascinating thing about Siri ya Mapambazuko is that Kiio through a calculative approach to portray the humble castle of the secret to rising on new levels in a way that a reader won't take his sense out of the picture.

The unfortunate turn of events in the text makes it more appropriate for a young adult who really wishes to learn a lot about the secret to rise in the apt to understand the discourses of discomfort immediately after things have been done to you.

Sarcastically and little tensed environment created by Katiti in the text makes it more evaluative in its effort to explain plainly the mound picked out of the African continent.

Siri ya Mapambazuko is a captivating novel by Wanjohi. P. Mugambi that mocks leadership in Municipality called Matopeni that is plagued by runaway corruption and impunity. The novel is set in Matopeni Municipality. With the use of biblical allusion, the writer tells a story in the story of things that ever happened to two families and how they understood the secret of sun rising. This is an online platform for sharing information to improve public welfare and also put a spotlight on corrupt leaders by exposing their corrupt deals.

I would unequivocally recommend this political satire since it mirrors the social, political and economic realities in our society today thus providing an avenue for introspection as a society.

The writer has brought about different themes that cut across many injustices in our community today. He brought how one should make a stance and save himself or herself from many bounds that tie him or her to a society which is mediocre and a society that does not support its own people who have visions. The novel has really touched on power and how persons misuse it for their own gain. How people take advantage of those who are less fortunate in the society.

The writer has used different styles of writing, he has used a story withing a story and also poetry. The poem used has brought about a hopeful fate to everyone that believes.

"Kumbi limekuwa fuu, fuu leo mtaimbo" with this phrase in the poem shows that everything in this earth is a process. One should not take shortcuts as they do have consequences. We should always take things a step at a time knowing that whatever we did yesterday is what we reap today and what we do today the fruits will be seen tomorrow. We should be keen with everything we do, say and act upon.



Wanjohi P Mugambi .

