



African Health Experts Advocate Harm Reduction In Tobacco Control Policies

Stakeholders in the health policy sector have been urged to embrace science-driven regulation in policymaking to support harm reduction efforts across Africa and improve public health outcomes. This call was made during the fourth edition of the Harm Reduction Exchange in Nairobi, Kenya

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News>> Cultural Beliefs And Views Contributor To SGBV In The Country

P. 8. Cultural beliefs have contributed to sexual and gender-based violence within the country as it has placed one gender to be superior to the other.



News>> We Are Not Fighting Women, Kiambu Elected MCAs Say Over Delegation Voting System In The Assembly

P. 12. The Kiambu County Assembly elected members have laid blame on the county executive for orchestrating a fight between them with nominated members by spreading rumours that they are fighting women due to a pending motion that seeks to have the assembly vote through a delegation system.

Ruto: Kenya To Align Foreign Policy With Global Realities

 The government is using technology and innovation to create jobs and tackle the unemployment challenge in the country, President William Ruto has said.

The President said Kenya is scaling up investments in innovation to not only position Kenya as a global innovation hub, but also support startup businesses and empower the youth.

He said the goal is to create sustainable enterprises that will generate job opportunities.



President William Ruto

STORY ON PAGE 9



CHAI NI KETEPA

A Great Milestone As Tharaka Nithi County Launches One Health Strategic Plan

Governor Muthomi Njuki Scores Another First In The Mountain Region, Barely Days After Being Named The Best Performing County Boss In The Area

By: Mwenda Njeru
@themkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

The launched One Health model also offers a timely, integrated solution to address the county's health challenges, improving human and animal health while enhancing environmental sustainability which result in a boost even in the economy.

Speaking during the launch at Chuka University, County's Health Executive, Dr Gichuyia Nthuraku said the document was developed by the county's departments of Health; Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries; and Environment in partnership with Kenya Red Cross, FAO, Chuka University, Chuka University, Civil Societies Organisation, Finance Alliance for Health and Village Hopecore International among others.



Tharaka Nithi County's Health Executive, Dr Gichuyia Nthuraku explaining a point during the launching exercise.



Tharaka Nithi County's Health Executive, Dr Gichuyia Nthuraku with other stakeholders during the launch.

Tharaka Nithi County has achieved a great milestone in dealing with health challenges by launching its One Health Strategic Plan 2025-2029, becoming the third county in the country after Turkana and Isiolo.

The One Health model is an integrated, collaborative approach to addressing health issues that recognizes the interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health.

The main idea is that the health of humans, animals, and ecosystems is closely linked, and addressing health challenges in one area requires considering the other two.

This integrated approach is especially crucial in addressing emerging infectious diseases, the impacts of climate change, and health risks tied to the residents of Tharaka Nithi County where zoonotic diseases such as anthrax, kala-azar, rabies and brucellosis have been reported posing significant threats to human and animal health.

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which result in a boost even in the economy.

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Kala-azar reemergence

Dr Nthuraku commended the proactive approach noting that it is crucial in mitigating the impact of the zoonotic diseases which have emerged and others like kala-azar reemerged straining the public health systems.

"The One Health Strategy is vital in mitigating the impact of zoonotic diseases like kala-azar which have been reported in the last few years in Tharaka North Sub-County. The reemergence of these diseases could be as a result of global climate change and change in the way of living," said Dr Nthuraku.

He said the past outbreaks led to not

only economic losses but also deaths of people but with enhanced surveillance, the county is better positioned to detect potential outbreaks early.

Kenya Red Cross official, Nomi Nguluya, insisted on the need to build the capacity of community members in order to achieve the targets in the document.

She noted that unless cascaded to the local person in the village the good document will only remain in the offices and will make no impact.

"Tharaka Nithi County is among the six devolved units which Kenya Red Cross is supporting to develop this document and I can confidently report that it is the best," said Ms Nguluya.

Great milestone

Mathew Mutiria from the Ministry of Health zoonotic disease department also lauded Tharaka Nithi County for a great milestone in the health sector noting that the improvement is notable nationally.

He said the Ministry of Health will continue partnering with counties to ensure that Kenyans are safe from emerging and

reemerging diseases by coming up with the right strategies such as One Health.

"If implemented to the latter, this document will greatly help solve the zoonotic disease problems," said Mr Mutiria.

Chuka University Vice-Chancellor, Prof Henry Mutembei said the One Health strategy demonstrates the power of cross-sector collaboration in building resilience, improving food security, and creating sustainable health systems.

He said the zoonotic diseases have re-emerged in areas that were set out as quarantine areas many years ago including Karandini in Chuka Sub-County, the name which was coined by the locals from 'quarantine'.

The professor lauded the warm working relationship between the institution and Tharaka Nithi County Government noting that the universities are supposed to help the government in research.

"We are working with Tharaka Nithi County and we look forward to doing more to help our people through research," said Prof Mutembei.

Editor's Desk

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NEWS IN BRIEF



Nyeri County Deputy Governor David Kinaniri Warui yesterday officially opened a sensitization workshop for the County Program Implementation Unit (CPIU) under the Second Kenya Devolution Support Program (KDSP II). Its implementation in the county has been ongoing since March 2024 and is spearheaded by dedicated officers drawn from county departments, tasked to oversee its execution and serve in different committees. It is intended to strengthen county performance in the financing, management, coordination, and accountability of resources. There are 2 committees and one unit that are mandated to ensure that KDSP II will be a resounding success. The two committees are the County Program Steering Committee (CPSC) chaired by the Governor Dr Mutahi Kahiga and the County Program Technical Committee (CPTC) chaired by the County Secretary Benjamin Gachichio. We also have the County Program Implementation Unit (CPIU) chaired by the Program Coordinator.



Deputy President Prof Kithure Kindiki yesterday at his official residence in Karen met with the Kakamega County representatives in the Senate and the National Assembly: Dr. Bonny Khalwale (Senator), Emanuel Wangwe (Navakholo), Bernard Shinali (Ikolomani), Nabii Nabwera (Lugari), Malulu Injendi (Malava), Christopher Aseka (Khwisero), Peter Nabalindo (Matungu), Tindi Mwale (Butere), Fred Ikana (Shinyalu) and Innocent Mugabe (Likuyani) where they discussed and engage on expedition of ongoing government projects and enhanced the interface with political leaders for the good of the entire nation. The DP noted that to realise the economic transformation agenda for our citizens, leaders must forge nationhood, focus on what unites kenyans and enhance the balance between the sub-national and the national agenda.



The Training of Trainers (TOTs) on the coffee value chain under the National Agriculture Value Chain Development Project (NAVCDP) is on its second day both at Food Crop Research Centre – Embu and Agricultural Training Center – Kisii. The week-long training is conducted by research scientists from KALRO's Coffee Research Institute from Sunday to Saturday. Coffee being one of the value chains under the NAVCDP project, will cover 34 counties under coffee with activities including, setting up of On-Farm demonstration of mother trial sites. Baby trial sites from mother trials will be set on farmer's farms who will consent by signing an agreement. The five-year project will include one field day annually. The training methods include presentations and practical sessions to demonstrate coffee management practices from land preparation to coffee processing. These are organized to help achieve the project's general goal of increasing market participation and value addition for value addition for targeted farmers in selected value chains in project areas.



The Government appreciates the representative, legislative and oversight role of Parliament in the implementation of the Bottom Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA) and accelerating completion of development programmes and establishment of new ones. At Harambee House Annex, Nairobi, Deputy President Prof Kithure Kindiki held discussions with parliamentarians from different parts of the country on priority development needs of the people they represent in the August House and encouraged them to rally their constituents in the path of national unity. In attendance were MPs; Rashid Bedzimba (Kisauni), Dorice Donya Aburi (Woman Representative, Kisii), Joshua Oron (Kisumu Central), Mary Maingi (Mwea), Sarah Korere (Laikipia North), Abdurahman Mohamed (Lafey), Julius Rutto (Kesses), Lilian Siyoi (Woman Representative, Transzoia), Maisori Kitayama (Kuria East), Sulekha Harun (Nominated), Nimrod Mbai (Kitui East), Abdikadir Mohamed (Lagdera) and Joseph Tonui (Kuresoi South).



Inclusive prosperity for all the people of Kenya requires the commitment, dedication and participation of all role players, among them political leaders. Continuous and deliberate consultations with MPs as the people's representatives will result in timely, orderly and effective implementation of development programmes across the Country. At Harambee House Annex, Nairobi yesterday, Deputy President Prof Kithure Kindiki held several consultations with MPs representing different parts of the Country on areas of partnership between the Government and the people's representatives in the implementation of the elaborate development agenda initiated by the Kenya Kwanza Administration. Present in this meeting were MPs; John Makali (Kanduyi), Fabian Muli (Kangundo), Adams Korir (Keiyo North), Ann Muratha (Woman Representative, Kiambu County), Kakuta Maimai (Kajiado East), Beatrice Kemei (Woman Representative, Kericho County), Mwengi Mutuse (Kibwezi West), John Paul Mwirigi (Igembe South), George Sunkuiya (Kajiado West), Did Didmus Barasa (Kimilili), Kwenya Thuku (Kinangop), Julius Sunkuli (Kilgoris), Joseph Chererot (Kiplelion East), John Namoit (Turkana South) and John Waluke (Sirisia).



Principal Secretary for the State Department for Irrigation, CPA Ephantus Kimotho yesterday hosted a courtesy visit from a delegation of Nexus Green, led by John Thuo, the Country Representative. During the meeting, they discussed opportunities for technology and knowledge sharing in Kenya, particularly in the areas of irrigation and food security. The PS emphasized the significance of leveraging regional experience and the Tana River schemes as a platform to enhance food production. He reiterated his commitment to collaborating with industry leaders and experts to build capacity and achieve the government's vision of food sufficiency and national food security. Nexus Green, an international company specializing in affordable solar-powered solutions and cleaner energy technologies, aims to support sustainable development while reducing carbon emissions. Their expertise aligns with the government's efforts to integrate innovative and environmentally friendly solutions in irrigation systems.

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Kenya Host Her Debut Mining Conference To Spur Investments

By: Wagemu Mwangi
@themkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- During his official address, the CS reiterated his belief that the mining sector is the next economic frontier in Kenya which was rapidly awakening through strategic policy interventions, forging of partnerships and incentivizing investors to set up multi-billion shilling investments in Kenya for accelerated economic growth.
- He called upon mining investments in Kenya to prioritize the establishment of enduring legacies that impacted positively on communities and the citizenry rather than focusing entirely on profit-making without the social component.

The mining sector has registered a historic milestone after Kenya hosted her debut Mining Investment Conference and Exhibition for 2024 as part of implementing a long-term plan for enhancing the sector's visibility and positioning the country as the ideal mining investments' destination in the region.

The two-day event that ran between yesterday and today in Nairobi saw the convergence of key stakeholders including policy makers, small and large-scale investors, artisanal miners, dealers, traders, equipment dealers and actors from Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and Community-Based Organizations (CBO) with interest in the sector.

The conference was officially opened by the Mining, Blue Economy and Maritime Affairs Hassan Ali Joho who termed it as a monumental leap towards solidifying the enormous gains achieved in the sector.

He predicted that the upward trajectory the sector had taken was poised to increase significantly to the Kenya's GDP.

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He called upon mining investments in Kenya to prioritize the establishment of enduring legacies that impacted positively on communities and the citizenry rather than focusing entirely on profit-making without the social component.

"We are proud to grow together but the challenge I pose to you is on having legacies that speak to the benefits the communities get from your opera-



tions. Minerals get depleted and they should mean something to communities. It should not just be about profits for investors," he said.

The CS noted that envisaged growth in the sector should be cascaded to the communities through timely remittance of the royalty share intended for counties and communities as per the royalty-sharing formula in the Mining Act.

He disclosed that the Ministry was in the process of pushing for a proposal for counties and communities to be paid their mining royalty dues as soon as the investor paid up. This way, he argued, the counties and communities would feel the immediate value of minerals while eliminating the uncertainty of waiting indefinitely for money from the national treasury.

Currently, the National Government owes the counties over Sh2.9 billion in cumulated unpaid mineral royalties. According to the County Government Additional Allocation Act 2024,

Kwale County is set to receive the highest share at Sh1.1 billion. Kilifi and Kajiado counties will also receive Sh950 million and Sh660 million respectively. Kirinyaga County is set to receive the lowest amount at one hundred shillings from mining activities.

While pledging his desire to see the sector transform through engaging stakeholders and other actors, the CS stated Kenya was ready to fully exploit the potential in the 14-strategic minerals through the National Mining Corporation to propel the country into the transition and adoption of green-energy.

Hassan Joho was accompanied by the Principal Secretary in the State Department for Mining Elijah Mwangi and other senior department officials. Joseph Lagat, the National Mining Corporation and Sophie Kutiti, the chair for the Mineral Rights Board were also present.

The 2024 mining conference comes at a time Kenya's mining sector has re-

ported significant milestones especially in support towards artisanal miners and mining communities.

In recognition of the centrality of artisanal miners in Kenya's mining ecosystem, the cabinet in 2023 decriminalized their operations thereby paving way for their formalization through organized marketing cooperatives.

To date, over 200 cooperatives have been registered and their officials trained on management, marketing and growth strategy. Additionally, the government has gazetted over 27 County Artisanal Mining Committee to facilitate the issuance of mining permits to artisanal miners in the county.

Other achievements include completion of the National Aerial Geo-Physical Survey (NAGS) that led to the discovery of 970 mineral occurrences in Kenya.

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Cultural Beliefs And Views Contributor To SGBV In The Country

By: Felix Njenga
@themkenyatimes

Cultural beliefs have contributed to sexual and gender-based violence within the country as it has placed one gender to be superior to the other. This is according to Kiambu sub county Deputy County Commander Titus Macharia speaking during the flagging off of a walk meant to mark the beginning of 16 days of activism against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Kiambu town saying that some of the views and cultural practices has set the stage to where the vice is.

“Just because someone has paid dowry does not mean you own that person to an extent of violating their rights. Your wife is not a property. We must look into this under the bill of rights so as to know that all of us have equal rights,” Macharia said.

He said in the recent past there were many reported cases of men being cut off their private parts which have now gone down but still being reported.

“Sexual and gender-based violence is not only for the women only, men are also victims and are beaten,” he said.

He said that those men whose rights



Activists of the sexual and gender based violence march in Kiambu town streets in a campaign to speak out to end the vice during the next 16 days.

are being violated should not feel shy but report to the police urging the police to help out the men as their rights with women are equal.

“Men should not feel shy to report to the police, you will not be laughed at but police understand and know rights of women and men are equal and they will be helped out,” he said.

He added that men who have separated with their wives and have children together are obliged by the children Act to take care of their children.

“The children act states that parental responsibility is 50:50 of both parents even if you are not staying together,” he said.

He said that there is a challenge of the women who sire kids but deny the

men access to the child which leads to fighting and in many leading to deaths.

He said that there is no single institution both government and community is capable of fighting the vice alone but through collaboration the fight against SGBV can be won.

Venazio Olympia Director State department for Gender and Affirmative Action Kiambu county said that there is high rise of suicide in young men because of lack of sharing out their problems which involves of their rights being violate.

“Men do not talk and we need to encourage them to air out their mind to someone and also encourage the fathers to hold their sons’ hands

and a neighbours son’s hands and be talking to them so as to protect them,” she said.

She said that the survivors of SGBV need legal aid, psychological counselling, medical care in order to heal and rebuild their lives.

She said that social services should ensure that those who inflict violence are held accountable and the social services systems protect the most vulnerable.

“Everyday should be a step to end SGBV and should not stop. Every voice raised must contribute to the powerful movement for justice and equality.

Evelyn Onunga from the office of the director public prosecution said

that in order to collect evidence that will bring perpetrators of SGBV one should ensure that they identify the small things in the scene of crime such that when the matter is coming up in court the evidence is there.

“Whenever you go to a scene of crime the victim has evidence, the scene there is evidence and even the object there is evidence. Let us be keen to collect our evidence by looking around,” she said.

Pacifica Ongancha nominated member of the assembly said that despite the men being violated it is not in the same measure that women have been violated recently and everyone should unite to end SGBV.



President Ruto: Kenya To Align Foreign Policy With Global Realities

By: Presidential Communication Service



President William Ruto (Centre).

Worth Noting:

- The President made the remarks during the launch of the 4th Kenya Innovation Week in Nairobi.
- He directed that the Kenya National Innovation Agency be moved from the Ministry of Youth Affairs, Creative Economy and Sports to the Office of the President.
- President Ruto noted that placing the agency at a central place will ensure effective leverage across the government.
- The President also announced the establishment of a KSh1 billion Start Up Fund and pledged to propose to Parliament an allocation of KSh500 million for the Kenya National Innovation Agency.
- He explained that more funding for the agency will provide the necessary resources to de-risk venture capital coming to Kenya, enabling more ideas to get commercialised.

The government is using technology and innovation to create jobs and tackle the unemployment challenge in the country, President William Ruto has said.

The President said Kenya is scaling up investments in innovation to not only position Kenya as a global innovation hub, but also support startup businesses and empower the youth.

He said the goal is to create sustainable enterprises that will generate job opportunities.

“Kenya is now a leading destination for global venture capital. It is important that we harness opportunities as part of our plan of making sure that we create adequate high-quality jobs for the young people of our nation,” he said.

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He explained that more funding for the agency will provide the necessary resources to de-risk venture capital coming to Kenya, enabling more ideas to get commercialised.

“At the moment, we are unable to move many ideas into commercialisation because of the limited resources available,” he said.

The President emphasised the need to actualise ideas into practical solutions, and thus address challenges in key sectors such as health, agriculture and security.

He noted the government’s commitment to supporting the Kenya National Innovation Agency.

“When I came into office in 2022, the Kenya National Agency had an annual budget of KSh18 million. In our second year, we moved it to KSh120 million. This year, the government has supported the agency

with KSh200 million,” he said.

The President pointed out that in the past year, Kenya has made remarkable progress in implementing the 10-Year Innovation Masterplan.

He said initiatives like the Research-to-Commercialisation Accelerator have supported 18 enterprises and raised over KSh100 million, while the Kenya Network of Entrepreneurial Institutions has empowered university leaders to drive entrepreneurial transformation.

“These are remarkable milestones which highlight the strength of our innovation ecosystem in delivering tangible results,” he said.

President Ruto expressed Kenya’s commitment to pan-African and international collaboration through initiatives like the Kenya-India Innovation Nexus and the Africa Innovation Agencies Network, aimed at unlocking markets and deploying transformative African solutions.

The President called on all stakeholders – government, the private sector, higher education and development partners – to remain steadfast in collaboration and intensify efforts to promote innovation.

“Together, we can build an innovation ecosystem that positions Kenya as a leader in job creation, investment attraction and sustainable growth,” he said.

Nairobi Governor Johnson Sakaja, Sports Cabinet Secretary Kipchumba Murkomen and Kenya National Innovation Agency CEO Tonny Omwansa were present.

Mr Murkomen challenged the youth to take advantage of online opportunities to uplift their lives instead of using social media to spread hate.

Governor Sakaja called on the country’s innovators and other stakeholders to focus on turning ideas into practical solutions by experimenting and refining them until they succeed.

“We must move these ideas into production and fix the wings as we fly,” he said.

Mr Omwansa said the Kenya National Innovation Agency is keen on addressing the mismatch of skills among the youth who find it difficult to access jobs.

He cited this as an opportunity to equip the youth with the relevant skills to make them market-ready.

Raila's Door-To-Door Campaign In West Africa Is Bearing Fruits

By: Joseph Mutua Ndonga
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.....
currently doing a door-to-door campaign in West Africa.

He has met a number of the country's heads of state and shared with each his vision and agenda for Africa continent.

As a result, he has managed to convince them to support his candidature.

He had earlier made similar forays to some other regions of Africa and received similar backing.

As we know, Raila hails from East Africa, a bloc which is composed of eight countries. Except Somalia, the rest seven member states are supporting his candidature. The seven heads of state endorsed him during a meeting chaired by President William Ruto at State House Nairobi.

Of the four candidates eyeing the AU seat, I'm persuaded to believe that Raila Odinga has the best credentials and qualifications when it comes to the needs and aspirations of the black African people.

The latest media reports indicate that the candidate of Mauritius has stepped aside and thrown his weight

behind Raila.

This comes at a time when an opinion poll conducted by AU Think- Tank showed that Raila was ahead of his perceived close rival, Djibouti candidate.

It is worth to recall Raila curved a niche of being a leading light in African when he served as African High Representative for Infrastructure Development.

Apart from initiating mega projects, he espoused the ideals of being a true pan-Africanist. He has since been championing the course of a United State of Africa under the slogan of One Africa One People.

While articulating the virtues of democracy, good governance and development in Africa, Raila has been mincing no word in reiterating that Africa is the richest continent because of its vast resources.

Africa, however, lags behind because of lack of unity.

If I win, I will strive to ensure that Africa speaks in one voice.

The second reason why Raila is poised to win is because President William Ruto is spearheading his campaign.

When he hosted East Africa Community (EAC) heads of state and govern-

ment, President Ruto minced no word showcasing Raila's credentials and presenting him as the best candidate.

In response, each of the leader stated. Former Prime Minister Raila Odinga is now our candidate for AU commission chairmanship. President Ruto has requested us to mobilize support for him from other heads of state and government from Africa. We want assure you and honorable Raila that we will do this.

Since then, President Ruto has been seizing every opportunity to drum support for Raila.

He did this during China-Africa summit held in Beijing China and also during a similar gathering of African leaders in Germany and USA.

For President Ruto, the main purpose of these visits has always been to represent and articulate the interests of Kenyan people. He therefore met these leaders on the sidelines of the summits.

The President always returned back with bagful of goodies.

Besides East Africa leaders, Dr Ruto has reached out to other heads of State in Africa and convinced them to vote for Raila during the election slated for February next year.

In his latest trip to Addis Ababa Ethi-



.....
Former Prime Minister Raila Odinga

opia, he managed to persuade and rally more leaders to support Kenyan candidate.

Raila, who accompanied him in this trip, took this opportunity to showcase his credentials.

He once again made a very powerful presentation and many leaders were

convinced that he is most suitable leader to represent Africa.

.....
Joseph Mutua Ndonga Is A Writer And Social Commentator

Helping Pre-Teens And Teens Manage Insecurities During The Holiday



By: Ezekiel Mureithi
@themkenyatimes

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Holidays are a perfect opportunity for parents and guardians to reconnect with pre-teens and teens and provide guidance in areas they find challenging. Our modern lifestyle seems to accelerate the growth of children into pre-teens, or teens at an early age. As they navigate the physical and mental changes associated with this stage, parents and guardians should intentionally and actively play a role

in helping them manage their insecurities.

A child's teenage years are a period of significant changes. These changes can lead to feelings of insecurity and anxiety as they navigate their world as developing young adults. Pre-teens experience various physical, emotional, mental and social changes.

As parents, it is essential to acknowledge that each child's experience is unique and that this journey will be a learning process for both parties.

Insecurities in pre-teens and teens often result from comparing themselves with their peers. Indifference in some cases may be perceived negatively. Some common red flags include unhealthy competition within social circles. Each child is gifted differently, and trying to match up to each other's standards and accomplishments can be challenging.

This can result in an inferiority complex for those who do not measure up to their friends.

Striving for unrealistic perfection in

their physical appearance due to their exposure to the internet and media creates a challenge for pre-teens. The desire for perfection can lead to exhaustion and mental fatigue, taking a toll on a teen's mental health. Most desire perfection so much that failure and low self-esteem become a fear. Most children push themselves excessively to excel in certain areas to divert attention from their underlying insecurities.

In some cases, a once confident child may suddenly seek validation from others.

In the long run, they express less self-confidence and require external approval. This can lead to decision-making and behavioural changes aimed at pleasing others, even against their wishes. Subconsciously they end up struggling with their conscience and the need for external validation.

Some teens may take criticism to heart, they become defensive when criticized by others to shield themselves from perceived negative feed-

back.

This heightened sensitivity can make them vulnerable and could lead to social withdrawal.

During this period, there is a possibility of a parent's special close bond with a child being pushed away. At the same time, they will come back for reassurance when needed.

It is all about knowing when to step in and help, and when to let the situation run its course.

It is important to encourage open and honest conversations about their feelings and experiences. Create a safe space where they feel comfortable sharing their concerns without fear of judgment, or criticism.

This way they know they are welcome to share any time.

It is equally vital to help them understand that everyone is unique and that differences are natural and valuable.

Reinforce the idea that they do not need to conform to societal standards, or peer pressures to be accepted and loved. Rejection should be present-

ed as part of socialising; it however should not brand an individual as unwanted.

Coping mechanisms such as journaling, and engaging in hobbies or activities should be introduced to help manage stress and insecurity.

Guide them to develop coping, problem-solving and interpersonal skills relevant to the respective situations experienced.

Constant monitoring of their online activities should go without saying to help them navigate safely and critically evaluate the content they encounter. Discuss the impact of social media on self-esteem and encourage them to limit their exposure to unrealistic portrayals of their physical appearance and success.

.....
Ezekiel Mureithi Is The Head of Marketing and Communications, Crawford International School

NCPWD Celebrates 20th Anniversary In Kiambu County

By: John Kariba
@themkenyatimes

The National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD) in Kiambu celebrated its 20th anniversary under the theme ‘celebrating 20 Years of Diversity and Inclusion in Kenya: Stories of Triumphs and Overcoming Barriers’.

The forum was held at the Kiambu National Polytechnic (KNAP) to review key disability milestones achieved over the 20 years in the county with a view to enhance disability inclusion initiatives.

Speaking during the event, Senior Kiambu Deputy County Commissioner, Titus Macharia, said the National Government, in collaboration with the County Government, has introduced provisions to ensure that persons with disabilities are included in all programs and initiatives taking place within the county.

“The government has prioritized the inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (PWD) in all spheres of life through the enactment of various laws and

provisions aimed at protecting them from discrimination and stigmatization. These measures are designed to ensure that PWDs enjoy equal opportunities and quality life, just like any other citizen in the county,” said the DCC.

Macharia noted that the government is achieving this through the National Fund for the Disabled, which provides PWDs with access to assistive devices including wheelchairs. Additionally, the government is advocating for the consideration of PWDs during construction works to ensure they have access to public spaces and facilities.

The DCC further said that through empowerment, the government is funding PWDs to fully achieve their potential in their talents and interests by providing them with tools of trade. For example, they are assisting them with car washing machines, as well as shaving and hairdressing equipment for barbershops and saloons.

“I want to urge the County Government to ensure that the recently enacted Disability Act has been fully implemented and that persons with disabilities are included in appointive and nominative positions without

discrimination.

Kiambu Disability Services Officer (DSO) Josphat Mokuit, highlighted the key roles and achievements of the NCPWD since its establishment 20 years ago which included the registration of all persons with disabilities, providing them with assistive devices to improve their quality of life to help them perform daily routines, as well as implementing various interventions in business matters to support their economic empowerment.

He encouraged those who are not registered with the council to come forward and register so as to acquire certificates in order to access the full range of benefits and support that the council provides in their programmes noting that so far over 50 percent of people with disabilities are working in various administrative positions.

The County Coordinator for Social Protection and Children’s Services officer Beatrice Gitaru said they normally refer and fund various departments and special groups especially the PWDs to access government funds such as Uwezo.

The County is also enhancing their financial capacities through training and offering vocational training and



rehabilitation services to persons with disabilities with the Kiambu County Government having set aside approximately 30 percent of its procurement opportunities for PWDs

The Thika Children’s Officer Lina Mwangi underscored the key role of the County Government in ensuring that children with disabilities in the county are guaranteed access to education opportunities.

“We encourage learners with disabilities in the county to apply for the presidential bursary, as a portion of it is set aside specifically for them, with proof of vulnerability,” she stated, stressing that the presidential bursary is only offered to children whose par-

ents are residents of Kiambu County, and not to those who come to study in the county.

The national event is being held at KICD and will provide a comprehensive platform for Persons with Disabilities, policymakers, government officials, innovators, and stakeholders to engage in meaningful discussions, exchange knowledge, and envision the future of persons with disability inclusion in governmental and private opportunities.

Plantain Banana Farming Gaining Popularity In Murang’a County

By: Florence Kinyua
@themkenyatimes

A section of farmers in Maragua constituency Murang’a County are steadily embracing plantain banana farming and ditching the age-old common bananas.

According to Fredrick Kinyanjui who has ditched the normal banana farming in favour of plantain, the normal bananas have continued to fetch less profits for the farmer over the years.

He says he diversified to plantains after registering losses for years despite the tedious work he put in the farm.

The prices challenge is attributed to the presence of middlemen in the value chain as significant amount ends with them, making them a great disadvantage to the farmers.

Consequently, most farmers have now explored plantain banana farming which fetch more money in the market devoid of middlemen. They are doing away with commercial tra-

ditional banana farming only growing them for home consumption.

“Nurturing a banana stem to maturity takes close to a year and ends up fetching sh.10 or less per kilogram and that is why I uprooted my bananas and opted for the plantain variety that fetches up to five times in the market compared to the normal bananas,” observed Kinyanjui at his farm on Tuesday while tending to his clearly healthy plantain banana suckers.

“In my two-acre piece of land here in Kamahuha I have over 250 stems of plantain bananas which I began with only 84 mother plants in October 2020,” he said.

“I initially had planted other varieties which did not do well and I uprooted them only remaining with a few stems for home consumption,” he adds

Kinyanjui observes that when thoroughly irrigated, especially during the dry months, the bananas are ready to harvest in between 9 to 12 months.

“Prepare your planting hole at 30cm by 30 cm by 30cm while observing a spacing of 8 to 10 feet and mix the top soil with manure thoroughly be-



fore placing your sucker in the planting hole and covering it with half of the soil that was dug out of the hole,” he says.

He notes that plantain bananas do well in acidic soil with a Ph. of 5.5 and are usually larger and tougher than bananas as they come with a much thicker skin and are easier to manage but give a higher return on investment.

“For more productivity, considering plantains are not susceptible to any pests and diseases, ensure you adequately water your plants, mulch and regularly add compost manure and or urea fertilizer to promote green leafy

growth,” he notes.

Apart from selling mature plantains at Sh60 per kilo at farm gate price, the retired truck driver also sells the suckers at Sh300 per sucker while also offering agronomic support to farmers eager to venture into plantain farming, earning a hefty sum.

Notably, the current farm gate price for an average kawaida 60kg bunch of bananas is Sh. 200 whereas the retail price ranges between Sh400 to Sh450 in the same area.

Outside the county, the same bunch of bananas will fetch up to Sh800.

The price for a kilo of plantain bananas ranges between Sh300 to

Sh450

A bunch can carry up to 8 banana pieces or less.

Plantain lovers attest to the fruits’ ability to lower blood pressure by promoting cardiovascular health, improving digestive system and weight management owing to their fiber richness, high antioxidants, potassium and vitamin c presence.

Kinyanjui advises farmers who do not have the means to venture into plantain farming to consider banana value chain addition as it will help them sell their produce for better prices while ensuring that the fruits last longer than their normal shelf life.

We Are Not Fighting Women, Kiambu Elected MCAs Say Over Delegation Voting System In The Assembly

By: MKT Reporter
@themtkenyatimes

The Kiambu County Assembly elected members have laid blame on the county executive for orchestrating a fight between them with nominated members by spreading rumours that they are fighting women due to a pending motion that seeks to have the assembly vote through a delegation system.

A motion which has been given notice to be tabled by Hezron Njoroge MCA Riabai ward that was seeking to have the 85 MCAs be voting in a delegation system was stopped through a court order after a communication was done by Speaker Charles Thiong'o when the motion was about to be tabled.

"The motion has been blown out of proportion that we are fighting against women leaders who are mainly the ones nominated. The motion does not prohibit the nominated leaders to vote but they would vote through a delegation system just like the senate where the assemblies borrow a leaf from," Njoroge said.

He alleged that the Executive Communication team has used his past photos while addressing a church congregation that he attended in company of governor Kimani Wamatangi in his ward and attached provoking words against women so that they can injure his image and construe the information as his own words which was false.

"I have been portrayed in a bad image through the social media through photos and wordings done though the governor's communication team which is unfortunate because the executive does not support the motion," he said.

He said that the aim for the motion was to have equal voting rights of members in all sub counties since some sub counties are over represented.

"Some sub counties are disadvantaged in representation like Kiambu and Lari subcounties since it is only elected members who are there to vote for bills and motions. In Thika subcounty with five wards there are an additional seven nominated members," he said.

He said that all counties have a discretion of amending their standing orders to fit inclusivity and has been done before.

To halt the motion from being tabled, nominated county assembly members Rahab Mwaura, Alice Kamau and Tabitha Wangui moved to Kiambu high court and applied for a constitutional petition where Justice Abigail Mshila gave conservatory orders to suspend the debating and passing of the motion.



Nominate MCAs celebrating outside the Kiambu County Assembly after the court issued conservatory orders to suspend the debating and passing of a motion that seeks to amend standing orders to allow voting through a delegation system..

Worth Noting:

- "I have been portrayed in a bad image through the social media through photos and wordings done though the governor's communication team which is unfortunate because the executive does not support the motion," he said.
- He said that the aim for the motion was to have equal voting rights of members in all sub counties since some sub counties are over represented.
- "Some sub counties are disadvantaged in representation like Kiambu and Lari subcounties since it is only elected members who are there to vote for bills and motions. In Thika subcounty with five wards there are an additional seven nominated members," he said.

"Pending hearing and determination of application by the court suspends the debating and passing of a motion dated November 11, 2024 intended to insert an amendment on standing order 275 of the Kiambu County Assembly standing orders which has the effect of restraining and preventing the assembly on any question affecting wards and money bills proposed by county assembly," read part of the orders.

The court further issued orders that the county assembly of Kiambu be prohibited from discussing, debating and or in any way dealing with the motion intended to insert an amendment of the standing order.

The court fixed the mention of the matter on February 13 next year.

The elected members called on the Judicial service Commission (JSC) to investigate the conduct of the high court of Kiambu in interfering with county assembly legislation yet it is an independent institution.

"The Kiambu executive is using the Kiambu high court to intimidate the role of legislation of the assembly. We have received a record 8 court orders barring the assembly not to legislate on matters that the executive does not want," Macharia Wambui Limuru east MCA said.

Joachim Njama Ngoliba ward MCA said that the elected MCAs are not fighting the governor but they want accountability of the money meant for development.

"We are not prohibiting any nominated MCA from voting, we are simply saying that as Thika subcounty leaders we have a common vote and not disadvantage other sub counties which do not have much nominated members representation. We want the

Governor to be accountable for the development within the county," he said.

He said that the courts should not be used to stop the process of the assembly as the assembly enjoys autonomy. "By stopping a legislative process before it is tabled by the high court is unacceptable, those aggrieved should have waited for the motion to be tabled and challenge it in court. We will move to court also to petition the autonomy of the assembly," he said.

The members gave instances where the executive has allegedly used the nominated members to pass bills in their favour.

"We passed Sh 600 million for roads rehabilitation and construction but the governor went in Lari subcounty and gave out gumboots hence money being redirected yet the nominated mcas are there clapping for the governor. The nominated members were also used to passing a bill where level 2 and 3 hospitals are charging residents for services and medication where we had passed a bill which

was enacted to exempt residents from paying," they said.

The elected members noted that some nominated members of the assembly do not hail from the county and were brought in by the ruling party United Democratic Alliance (UDA) party.

"Some nominated leaders were nominated into the Kiambu assembly yet they did not even vote in the county. they may not hold the wishes of kiambu residents and that is why a delegation system of voting is worthwhile. We urge political parties to be nominating wisely," they said.

The Kiambu County assembly has 60 elected members with 25 nominated members. 11 nominated members are not indigenous kiambu county residents.

In the current assembly standing orders all members are eligible to vote where a simple majority of 28 members can approve or pass bills and motions.



Hezron Njoroge, Riabai ward MCA in Kiambu County speaking outside the Kiambu County Assembly defending his motion that it is not meant to fight women leaders who are nominate but seeks equal representation.

Black Founders Fund Releases Impact Business Report

By: Michael Omondi
@themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- This annual event, held at iHub in Nairobi, brought together 45-50 alumni from across the continent including Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, to celebrate their achievements and discuss the future of Africa's digital economy, with a spotlight on the role of these startups in driving innovation, job creation, and scalable business growth.
- Through non-dilutive funding, mentorship, and networking, the Black Founders Fund has empowered entrepreneurs to overcome barriers, scale their businesses, and contribute to Africa's digital transformation.
- The report also demonstrates the pivotal role of the program in strengthening the continent's startup ecosystem, enabling businesses to compete globally and attract significant investment.



The Black Founders Fund Alumni Summit, has showcased the unveiling of the BFF Impact Report, highlighting the significant progress and success of Black-led startups across Africa.

The Report offers a comprehensive look at the remarkable impact that targeted support for black entrepreneurs has had on the African tech ecosystem.

According to a press statement, the report reveals that BFF-supported startups have collectively raised USD 379 million, created more than 6,000 jobs, and experienced 61 percent faster growth than their peers, underscoring the importance of strategic investment in fostering sustainable innovation.

Additional key highlights of the report show that 50.4 percent of leadership roles in African BFF companies are held by women, with 68 percent of startups being women-led or having a female co-founder.

Further, Kenya leads in follow-on funding with 26 BFF-supported startups cumulatively raising nearly 100 million, employing 1,073 people.

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The report also demonstrates the pivotal role of the program in strengthening the continent's startup ecosystem, enabling businesses to compete globally and attract significant investment.

According to, Country Director, East Africa, Google for Startups Agnes Gathaiya, the Black Founders Fund is not just about financial support, it is about creating an ecosystem of innovation, job creation, and opportunity.

Gathaiya affirmed that the BFF Impact Report reflects the incredible progress black entrepreneurs have made, and how the right resources can empower them to lead Africa's digital future.

"The impact we are seeing today will set the stage for an even more vibrant African tech landscape tomorrow," she noted.

However, despite Africa's growing recognition as a hub for innovation, black entrepreneurs continue to face substantial barriers, with access to capital remaining a key challenge.

For instance, African startups raise

less than 1 percent of global venture capital, and women-led and marginalised entrepreneurs are particularly underrepresented.

Further, limited access to mentorship, networks, and markets exacerbates these difficulties, often hindering talented entrepreneurs from scaling their businesses.

Nevertheless, initiatives like the Black Founders Fund are driving systemic change and through non-dilutive funding, mentorship, and an expansive network, the BFF has empowered over 220 startups, enabling them to scale faster and break down these barriers.

Black Founders Fund Manager Europe, Google for Startups Mariama Boumanjal, said, "The BFF Impact Report proves that with the right support, Black founders can not only overcome these challenges—they can lead the way in innovation, job creation, and economic development."

The BFF Impact Report also highlights the diverse industries where BFF startups are making significant contributions, including Fintech, Healthtech, Agritech, and AI, therefore, by providing entrepreneurs with the resources and connections they need, the Black Founders Fund is helping to nurture the next generation of tech leaders who are shaping Africa's digital future.

"This report is a celebration of the

incredible work being done by Black founders across Africa. The BFF Impact Report proves that, when we invest in these entrepreneurs, we're not only helping individual startups, but we're driving systemic change within the broader African tech ecosystem," Head of Startup Ecosystem for Africa at Google stated Folarin Aiyegbusi.

Meanwhile, the Black Founders Fund Alumni Summit also featured discussions with key industry leaders, investors, and policymakers about the ongoing opportunities and challenges facing African tech startups.

The event at the same time provided valuable networking and collaboration opportunities for attendees, helping to further build the connections that will drive future growth in the ecosystem.

The summit also included a gala dinner, highlighting the achievements of BFF alumni, and further strengthening the connections between investors, startups, and key ecosystem players.

14 POEMS

Botswana HIV Journey In The Lens Of Dr. Paula O.M. Otukile



By: Paula Otukile
Gaborone, Botswana

Dr. Paula O.M. Otukile.
Author & human rights activist
Gaborone, Botswana.

This shall be the 37th commemoration
of WORLD AIDS DAY!

The theme is Take the right path:
My health my right, the world can
end AIDS- if everyone's rights are
protected.

The wheel of thought take one to the
early 1990's when AIDS was unknown
and not understood by many, a lot of
stereotypes were hanging in the air, so
much stigma and discrimination.

What Happened ?

* It was an era of lack of resources
in many households, the time when a
teacher was an elite, respected, a young
banker was a queen and they usually
oozed with real beauty, it was more to
do with luck than qualifications to land a
bank job then. A teller brought a much
excitement to the eye.

I remember my earlier memories of a
stiletto were the excellent high heel
steps belonged to a nurse! "O ne a gata
a kwanya tota jaaka nnesel!" Referring
to a damsel who went on a voyage or
some job hunt in the city and returned
having a pair of high heels the praise
always included the comparison of her
new gracious waltz with nurse steps.
The illusion brought so much to the elite
groups, which are the normal working
class such as nurses, teachers, soldiers
and police officers.

A child could pass grade 7 and the four
years go to a teacher training college,
a child could pass form three and then
years later go to nursing school, but as
years went by a BGSCE was needed to
a point that now most universities has
cut off points shows the advancement
of time and years.

Not many young man got the chance to
go work nor the young women, women
seldom worked, the got married and
raised children. But there were lucky
ones who went to tertiary and then
went to work.

Condom

Families had bonds, relatives were family
and the neighbors were family and the
child belonged to the community. When
adolescence kicked, people met at the
river when the girl went fetch water,
no child could take a walk as a young

girl, waltz around the village, monitored
steps were insured as a girl meant a
future bride and more cows to the
family. A woman was well protected.
Teens were the same as teens of
today, there were teenage pregnancies
a lot of them since the sex education
was a taboo, and condom were not
much available.

**DISEASES AND SEXUALLY
TRANSMITTED DISEASES**

A traditional doctor was important
in the traditional set up. Promiscuity
was there, " Nyatsi!" Was a word
used to refer to a concubine or side
chick, a married man could date but he
protected himself, in terms of not doing
it in the open, he took herbs and did
not change multiple women like today's
generation.

The Sexually transmitted diseases were
there but rare as promiscuous behavior
was rare and seldom happened.

REVOLUTION

Depending on the father who worked at
the mine's changed, more people began
to work and went to cities and colleges
and got jobs. Some Girls could now go to
camps to live and visit their boyfriends.

A few who worked became village
champions. Some used it brightly others
if not some had lots of girlfriends
and boyfriends and the lack of morals
grew and more alcohol abuse grew and
financial freedom increased amongst
youth

It was nice to live alone, sans parents
and strong set ups of curfews and
google eyes. Too much of anything is bad,
the groups that had life in the fast lane
had a span of five to eight years and,
they began to get similitude symptoms.

-Skinny body.

-Stomach ache or diarrhea.

-Relaxed hair or smooth fluffy hair as
compared to hard kinky African hair.

-Constant headaches.

-Wounds[skin wounds were diverse
on others was a kind of a burn wound,
which in native was rendered this name'
molelo wa badimo!"]

Not all patients but it was one of Major
symptoms of the scourge.

Victims

-Became discriminated and gossiped
about this resulting in stress.

Late self judgement at the realisation
of having contracted the disease.

-Some committed suicide.

-Some neglected medical care in shame
of being judged.

**PRESIDENT MOGAE FOUGHT THE
STIGMA & REVERSAL OF DARE
CONSEQUENCES OF HIV**

-Fought Against AIDS

-Implemented National coordinating Aids

Agency.

* Rapid HIV testing

-implementation of compulsory PMTC

-Provision Of ARV's.

Deaths Reduction & Means more skilled
ma force retained.

* Lots of people enrolled for ARV
therapy.

Stigma was left but far better as
compared to high mortality rate.

* More stigma fight activists made
sure things got better.

**FLIP OF THE COIN- DEATH OF THE
STIGMA**

* Two decades passed now there is less
stigma and one can openly text as am
doing without a judgement, or care to
be judged.

-Confession and disclosing is more easier.
* People seldom hide drinking their
medication.

"So normal to hear a child in
Mahalapye,Phikwe " Mama e chaille[
mom it's time up, or time to drink
ARV'S]

* There is still a few who are ashamed
of the disease, but it is not a major
percentage.

**Why Do People Still Die If You Say
Victory is certain?**

-Some relapse on medication.

* Some test and shy away from taking
medication and being consistent on
check ups and eating well and avoid
stress and alcoholic tendencies that
make things worse.

What happened To Those Who adhere?

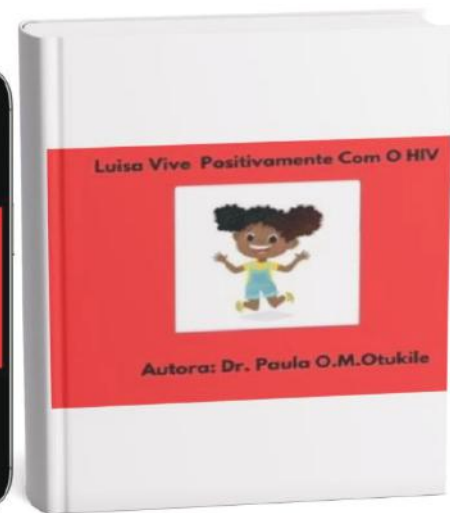
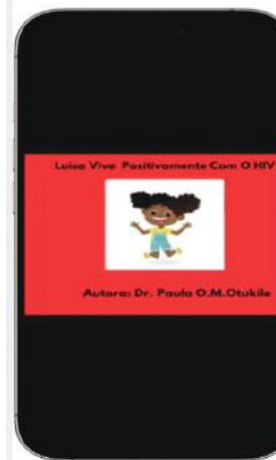
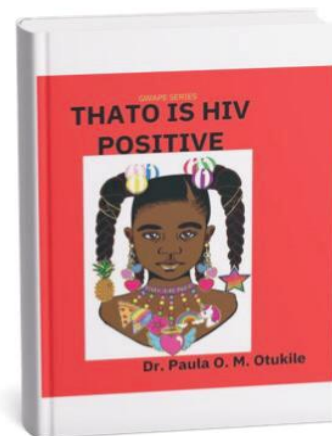
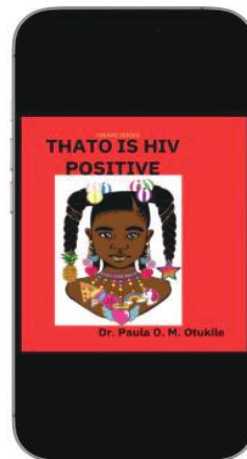
-Some people have lived 10-20 years or
more.

-Living without any diseases and
conditions.

-Empowerment

We are all affected even if not infected.
Take the right path to rest and be faith
if not condomise because re infection
exist and AIDS does not choose it is a
condition that can affect everyone.

"Tsala e mang le Aetsi Ntse Ke Tsala!"
A Friend with HIV is still a friend!



DO YOU WANT TO GET PUBLISHED?

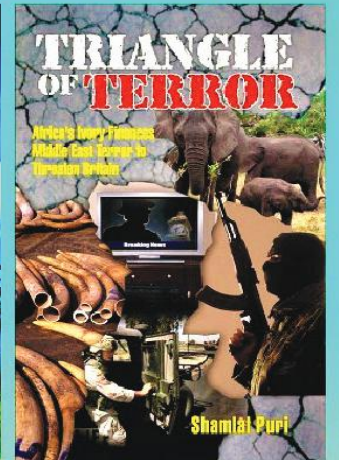
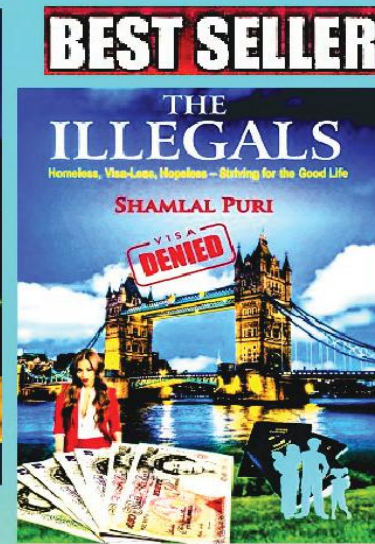
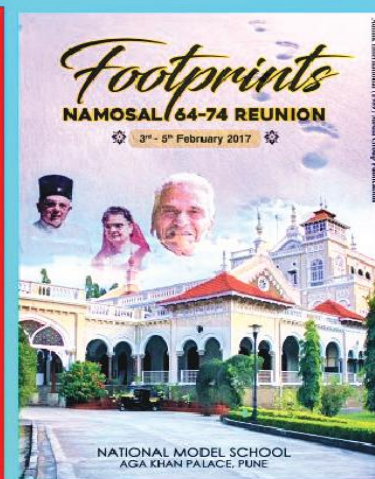
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Ministry Of Health Hold Drug And Substance Abuse Control Forum

By: Dickson Mwati
@themtkenyentimes

The Ministry of Health through the Department of Public Health and Professional Standards has launched a three-day sensitisation workshop on Drug and Substance Abuse Control including tobacco control enforcement.

By bringing together six counties including Kirinyaga, Embu, Tharaka Nithi, Meru, Isiolo and Marsabit, the Ministry aims at sensitising key stakeholders on drug and substance abuse issues, raising public awareness about the impacts of drug and substance abuse and building the capacity of healthcare workers, Community Health Promoters, and enforcement officers.

Speaking during the event, Tobacco Control Board Chairperson Ms Naomi Shaban said they want to raise people's awareness of laws regulating tobacco use as well as other drugs so they can help us fight it.

She said the idea to create awareness about tobacco use was born after several consultation forums when the board members and other stakeholders realised it is one of the substances that they need to fight.

"The law regulating tobacco use was formed in 2007 and 17 years later, many things have changed including devolution, as well as evolution in ways smoking is done. We therefore need to create awareness as part of the regulation with assistance from the county governments and also seek to ratify the act with the 2010 constitution for effectiveness," said Ms Shaban.

She added that the old act focussed so much on cigarettes which has since evolved targeting children after they are through with their secondary school education.

"They have added things that attract the young people including perfumes and sweeteners and the way they are packaged you can't think it's a cigarette," said Ms Shaban.

She said after they are through with sensitising people from the 10 clusters, they will get to the border points and sensitise those manning them on how to identify some of these items to eliminate the issue of smuggling them into the country.

"We are doing the second cluster in Meru and we have eight more to cover the entire country so that we don't leave anyone behind," said Ms Shaban.

Meru County Commissioner Jacob Ouma said he was happy to be involved in such a discussion considering that cigarettes have been a threat to the health of users and in some instances, non-users.

He said drug and substance abuse as



Tobacco Control Board Chairperson Ms Naomi Shaban briefing the media..

Worth Noting:

- "The law regulating tobacco use was formed in 2007 and 17 years later, many things have changed including devolution, as well as evolution in ways smoking is done. We therefore need to create awareness as part of the regulation with assistance from the county governments and also seek to ratify the act with the 2010 constitution for effectiveness," said Ms Shaban.
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well as smoking has also led to family breakups as well as young people becoming useless in society.

"It's important to collaborate with the county government to sensitise leaders and later talk to the people so we can stand and say no to smoking as well as other types of drug abuse," said Mr Ouma.

He said even though they have made some progress in fighting the drug abuse menace, this is not enough as they need to collaborate more to ensure they wipe out it in its entirety.

Head of Drug and Substance Abuse Control at the Ministry of Health Dr Andrew Toro said they decided to engage all stakeholders in the fight after realising that unless they have a multisectoral approach, they will not succeed.

During the first day, Dr Toro added, they were engaging key stakeholders who would later spread the message to other people, and on day two, they will be building capacity to health care workers to sensitise them on how to identify patients coming to hospitals who could be abusing these drugs.

"On the third day we will be partnering with the County government of Meru to have a public baraza where we will have a dialogue, and the people will tell us what is happening and we from the Ministry, the board and NACADA will take note, and also answer what we can because we want to unite with all Kenyans," said Mr Toro.

He said the youth have been targeted by drug merchants and if stakeholders don't take care, then they could

lose generations.

"So, we are here to emphasise especially among the youth that they beware they have been targeted and so that we can protect our future generations," said Dr Toro.

He said they were also collaborating with the Meru County Government to establish a treatment and rehabilitation centre for those addicted to these drugs.

He added: "We don't want to leave patients hanging but to make them be seen so that they can be counselled, investigated, and initiate the process of recovery to have them make an economic impact on their country,"

Dr Toro added that tobacco prevalence in the country has gone down from 20 per cent to about nine per cent following the board's interventions, but they are not celebrating because the merchants have changed tact and become more innovative in marketing including manufacturing of e-cigarettes.

"As a Ministry together with all stakeholders, we have a multi-agency enforcement team comprising Kenya Revenue Authority, Kenya Bureau of Standards, Pharmacy and Poisons Board, and the Ministry of Interior to ensure we have surveillance on our entry points so that we can bring down the prevalence," said Dr Toro.

Meru University of Science and Technology Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Simon Thurairia who represented Vice-Chancellor Professor Romanus Odhiambo said the university is happy to host the workshop considering they have about 13,000 students and some of them are vic-

tims of drugs.

"We are also happy that the Ministry of Health as well as the County government are talking a language that we understand."

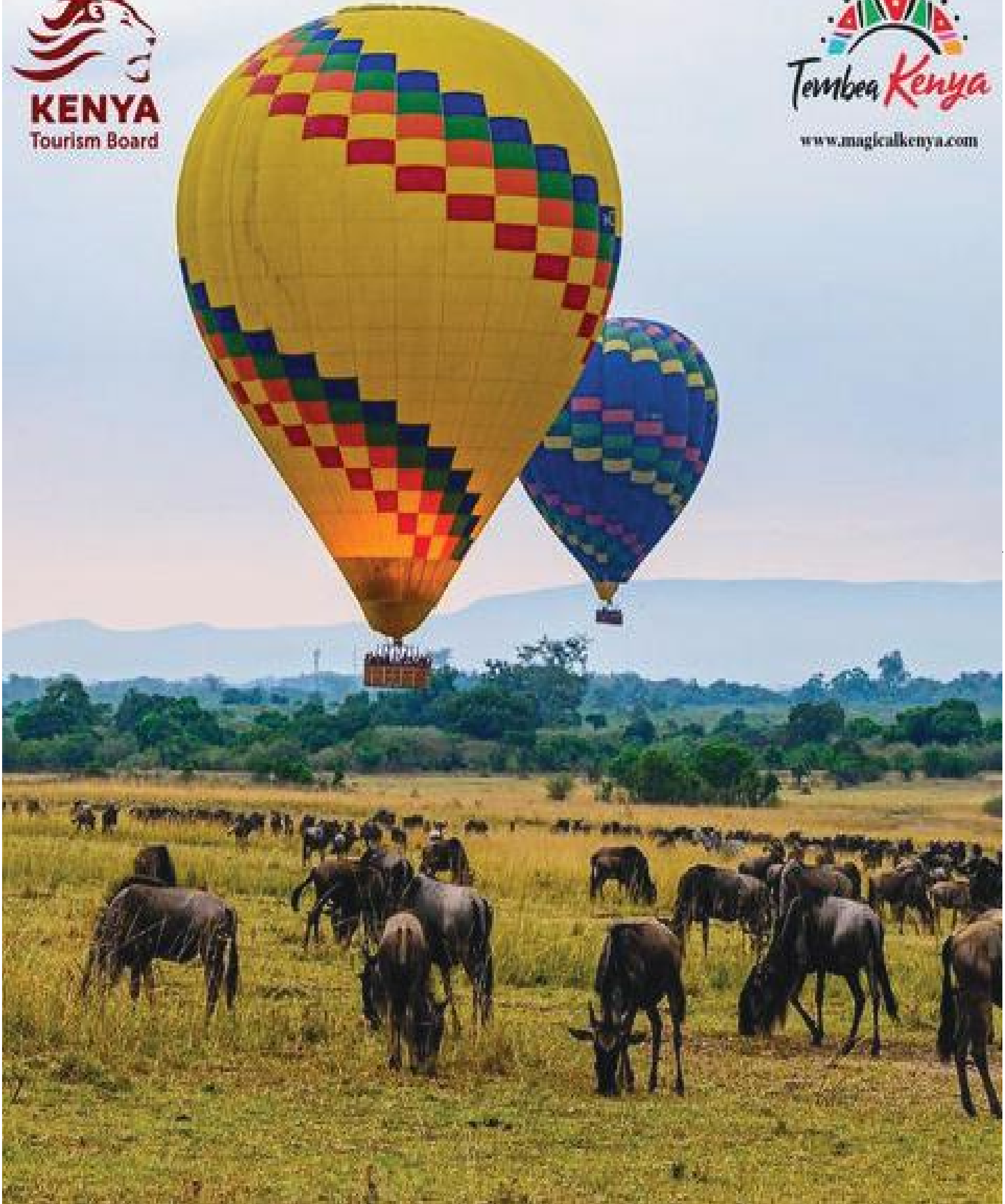
"As a university, we have three mandates; training, research and community service. Therefore, with the Ministry of Health and the County government, we will conduct research on drug abuse to come up with more innovative ways to combat the menace," said Professor Odhiambo.

In our discussion, he added, we also agreed that we would start short courses on drug abuse and also open up our health centre to the community.

He said they were also looking forward to upgrading the health centre to a level three hospital so that it can help the county government in serving people.

Meru County Executive Member in charge of Health Dr George Mungania said their government realised that whenever they have addiction patients in their hospitals including youths and their workers, they end up placing them in psychiatry wards since they don't have facilities for them and that is how the idea of coming up with a rehabilitation centre which is halfway complete at the moment.

"We are hoping that our collaboration with the Ministry of Health will continue so that we can help our future generation.



African Health Experts Advocate Harm Reduction In Tobacco Control Policies

By: Aoma Keziah
@themtkenyatimes

Stakeholders in the health policy sector have been urged to embrace science-driven regulation in policy-making to support harm reduction efforts across Africa and improve public health outcomes.

This call was made during the fourth edition of the Harm Reduction Exchange in Nairobi, Kenya, themed "Enabling Innovation in Harm Reduction through Science-Led Regulation and Policymaking." The event brought together high-level policymakers, public health experts, media stakeholders, and representatives from the Bar, Hotels, and Liquor Traders association (BAHLITA).

The initiative seeks to implement harm reduction practices, strengthen control policies, and enforce stringent trading laws to curb the proliferation of black-market products.

Dr. Vivian Manyeki, a public health specialist in Kenya, highlighted the importance of harm reduction saying that it involves and government must strengthen tobacco control laws.

"Harm reduction involves policies, programs, and practices aimed at minimizing the negative health, so-



From Left: Business man Linus Gitahi engages in a panel discussion with Emmanuel Mbenza Rocha from DRC, Dr Vivian Manyeki and Prof Issa Wone during the Harm Reduction Exchange in Nairobi, Kenya.

cial, and legal impacts of substances like tobacco, alcohol, and opioids. Governments must strengthen tobacco control laws while integrating harm reduction strategies. This includes directing taxes collected from tobacco products toward public health programs and increasing access to harm reduction tools." She explained.

Also speaking at the event, Wilson Box, Projects Executive Director for the Zimbabwe Civil Liberties and Drug Network, emphasized the varied regulatory landscapes across Africa.

"While some nations align their measures with the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control

(FCTC), others face resource constraints that limit effective regulation. High income countries often have sophisticated frameworks, while low- and middle-income countries struggle to regulate novel nicotine products." Said Box

Dr. Mohammed S. Eltaweel also shared Egypt's success in reducing harm from opioid misuse and tobacco through scientific, cost-effective interventions.

"The government has embraced harm reduction strategies, including making buprenorphine available to treat opioid addiction and supporting regulated alternatives to traditional cigarettes. These measures have reduced the public health burden



From Left: Dr Vivian Manyeki, public health specialist Kenya participates in a panel discussion with Prof Issa Wone, Dr. Mohammed S Eltaweel from Egypt, Samuel Hanu a harm reduction advocate..

and associated social issues." He remarked.

Dr. Michael Kariuki, a Kenyan expert, highlighted the benefits of Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) and education saying that NRT products deliver nicotine through patches, sprays, or lozenges, offering safer alternatives to smoking.

"They are safe, with no evidence linking them to lung, gastrointestinal, or oral cancer. He also noted the media's critical role in informing smokers about alternative, lower-risk products and fostering public dialogue around harm reduction strategies." Noted Dr. Kariuki

The event highlighted regional differences in tobacco regulation where

by Kenya has made strides with the Tobacco Control Act of 2007, distinguishing between combustible and noncombustible products, Nigeria lacks specific provisions for non-combustible products under its Tobacco Control Act, focusing primarily on general tobacco control and Ghana has taken a strong stance by prohibiting non-tobacco harm-reducing products like shisha through its food and Drugs Authority (FDA).

In conclusion, the 2024 Harm Reduction Exchange emphasized the value of evidence-based strategies in policymaking to save lives, reduce public health burdens, and regulate products differently for greater societal benefit.

Association Of Pentecostal And Evangelical Clergy Of Kenya Backs Self-Regulation For Religious Institutions

By: John Kariuki
@themtkenyatimes

Reverend Frederick Ngugi, the National Chairman of Association of Pentecostal and Evangelical Clergy of Kenya (APECK), has endorsed the concept of self-regulation among religious institutions, calling it a progressive move toward safeguarding the sanctity of worship.

Speaking on the matter, Rev. Ngugi emphasized the critical role self-regulation plays in upholding freedom of worship while ensuring accountability within faith communities.

"This is the way to go," he noted. "Self-regulation not only protects freedom of worship but also ensures that we, as spiritual leaders, remain accountable to our faith communities

and the broader society."

Rev. Ngugi's sentiments align with calls from other prominent clergy, including Bishop Thagana, who also serves as the General Secretary of the Evangelical and Indigenous Christian Churches of Kenya (EICCK). Together, they are championing a united front among religious leaders to create guidelines that balance ethical practices with respect for the autonomy of worship centers.

The push for self-regulation is seen as a way to address growing concerns about governance and ethical standards in some religious organizations, while also preserving the fundamental right to worship freely.

Religious leaders are now advocating for collaboration and dialogue to establish a framework that promotes trust, strengthens unity, and fosters accountability within Kenya's di-

verse faith community. This, they believe, is a vital step toward maintaining the integrity of worship and reinforcing the positive role of religion in society.

Reverend Fredrick Ngugi National Chairman APECK





LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Building Inclusive Prosperity: The Role Of Political Leadership In Kenya's Development Agenda

By: **James Kilonzo Bwire**

The consultations at Harambee House Annex underscore the Kenyan government's dedication to fostering inclusive prosperity through active collaboration with Members of Parliament (MPs). This approach is vital for the effective execution of the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), which seeks to rectify economic inequalities and stimulate development nationwide. The BETA framework, central to President William Ruto's administration, emphasizes five key pillars: agriculture, the micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSME) economy, affordable housing, universal healthcare, and the digital super-highway.

Significant progress has been made in these areas since the Kenya Kwanza government took office. Agricultural reforms have shifted focus from consumption subsidies to production sub-

sidies, enhancing productivity and reducing costs for farmers. The Fertilizer Subsidy Programme has been instrumental in this shift, increasing access to affordable inputs and improving yields. The government has distributed 556 metric tonnes of sunflower seeds across 34 counties and invested in various value chains, including leather and edible oils, thereby creating jobs and boosting local economies. Notably, smallholder tea farmers have seen earnings increase by 15.8% due to VAT removal on locally sourced tea.

Healthcare initiatives have also seen substantial advancements with the establishment of the Social Health Authority aimed at achieving universal healthcare coverage. This includes innovative funding mechanisms such as the Social Health Insurance Fund and Emergency Care coverage to ensure that all Kenyans have access to essential health services. The government is committed to providing 100% univer-

sal healthcare by creating new health facilities and engaging community health promoters, significantly increasing health service accessibility.

The digital sector has experienced remarkable growth, with the installation of digital hubs and a significant increase in digital job opportunities for youth. Investments in fiber optic infrastructure have improved connectivity, enhancing access to information and services across the country. The government has achieved a 111% increase in fiber optic cable installation, reaching over 18,000 kilometers nationwide. Moreover, the Hustler Fund has benefitted millions of individuals by providing affordable credit, disbursing Sh54.9 billion to 21.87 million beneficiaries and enabling them to save Sh3.1 billion.

These consultations reflect a broader commitment to engaging all stakeholders in the development process. By fostering dialogue between political lead-

ers and citizens, the government aims to ensure that development programs are not only timely but also aligned with local community needs. The diverse representation of MPs during these discussions emphasizes a unified approach to addressing Kenya's challenges.

As Kenya navigates global economic uncertainties and domestic pressures, the success of BETA hinges on continuous political engagement and collaboration. The government's ability to adapt its strategies in response to changing circumstances will be crucial in realizing its vision for an inclusive and prosperous nation. Ultimately, the commitment to grassroots empowerment through effective governance will determine whether Kenya can achieve sustainable economic growth that benefits all its citizens.

Moreover, the Kenya Kwanza administration has made strides in enhancing educational opportunities by hiring

30,000 instructors for public schools—the largest number ever—aiming to improve educational outcomes for children across the country. In addition, significant investments have been made in infrastructure projects that support economic growth and connectivity among regions.

In conclusion, the ongoing initiatives under BETA reflect a comprehensive strategy aimed at uplifting marginalized communities while fostering an environment where every Kenyan can thrive economically and socially. The collaborative efforts between political leadership and citizens are essential for sustaining this momentum toward inclusive prosperity in Kenya.

James Kilonzo Bwire is a Media and Communication Practitioner.

Court Orders State To Give Proof On Adani-JKIA Deal Cancellation

The High Court has ordered the state to produce evidence to substantiate claims that the Adani-JKIA deal has been cancelled.

Justice Bahati Mwamuye issued the directive after Advocate Ezra Makori representing Adani Group said they wish to be excused from the proceedings as the projects have since been cancelled. But in a brief rejoinder,

Tony Gachoka and Mt Kenya Jurists the petitioners in the case said there is no evidence that President Ruto's directive on cancellation of the contract has taken place.

Through Advocates Senior Counsel Kalonzo Musyoka, Kibe Mungai, Dan Maanzo and Eugene Wamalwa, the petitioners said there must be accountability on those who initiat-

ed the challenged project before the matter is wished away.

"Public interest litigation such as this has to proceed where controversy has arisen in relation to leasing assets belongs to Kenyans," they said.

Kibe emphasized that the matter should proceed to its logical conclusion as they were also challenging the constitutionality of the various

provisions in the PPP Act which the Adani-JKIA deal was founded on.

"We are talking about high-level corruption. We need to know what was actually cancelled," said Kalonzo.

Mwamuye while asking the state to produce evidence that the deal had so far been cancelled also issued an order blocking Adani and any other

entity from taking over JKIA pending the determination of the matter before the court.

*Nathan Mburu
Rongo University*

Kenya's Drought Crisis: A Looming Threat To Livelihoods And National Stability

As 2024 draws to a close, Kenya faces a significant challenge in combating one of the most severe droughts in recent history. The ongoing crisis, affecting millions across the arid and semi-arid regions, has left families struggling to access food, water, and other basic necessities. With climate change exacerbating the frequency and intensity of such events, the current situation raises critical questions about preparedness and long-term solutions.

The drought has devastated livelihoods in counties like Turkana, Marsabit, Garissa, and Wajir, where over 5 million people are reported to face acute food insecurity. Livestock deaths have surged due to water scarcity, leaving pastoral communities without their primary source of income. The Ministry of Agriculture

recently reported that over 60% of livestock in affected areas have perished, pushing many families into extreme poverty.

Additionally, schools in drought-stricken regions are experiencing high dropout rates as children are forced to abandon education to help their families in the struggle for survival. Health crises, including malnutrition and outbreaks of waterborne diseases, are escalating.

The Kenyan government, through the National Drought Management Authority (NDMA), has allocated KSh 15 billion for emergency interventions, including water trucking, food distribution, and cash transfers to vulnerable households. However, critics argue that these measures are insufficient and lack the coordination necessary for long-term impact.

On the international front, organizations like the United Nations and Red Cross have stepped in with additional support. The UN recently announced a \$50 million fund to assist affected regions, focusing on nutrition and clean water access. Despite these efforts, the scale of need far outpaces the resources available.

The drought's impact extends beyond rural communities, threatening Kenya's broader economy. The agricultural sector, which contributes over 20% of GDP, has seen a sharp decline in production, driving up food prices nationally. Key crops like maize and beans are in short supply, pushing inflation higher and straining household budgets.

Moreover, the loss of livestock has reduced exports, diminishing foreign exchange earnings and putting addi-

tional pressure on the Kenyan shilling, which has struggled to stabilize against major currencies.

Experts emphasize that emergency relief is not enough to address the root causes of the drought crisis. Environmentalists and policymakers are calling for investments in sustainable water management systems, such as dams and boreholes, to mitigate future drought impacts. Reforestation and land restoration programs are also seen as critical steps in reversing desertification trends in the arid and semi-arid regions.

Climate adaptation strategies, such as drought-resistant crops and alternative livelihoods for pastoralists, have been proposed but require significant funding and political will. Activists are urging the government to collaborate more effectively with

international partners and prioritize climate resilience in national development plans.

Kenya's drought crisis is a stark reminder of the vulnerability of its population to climate extremes. As the country grapples with the immediate challenges of food insecurity and economic disruption, it must also lay the groundwork for a more resilient future. Without urgent and sustained action, the cycles of drought and hardship will only deepen, leaving millions at risk and undermining the nation's long-term stability.

*George Nafula Vanessa.
Rongo university.*

Power Is A Cunning Beast Silently Devouring Its Own Masters

Where men dream of peace, they sharpen swords in the shadows pretending it is for our protection yet plotting their rise



By: Midmark Onsongo
@themkenyatimes

Do you feel safe? Do you think those in power lose sleep worrying about your safety, or are they busy crafting the next brilliant lie? We are fed words like honey, promises laced with arsenic, yet we swallow them willingly, unaware—or perhaps unwilling to admit—that behind every smile lies the gnashing of teeth. Power has no friends, only pawns, and the chessboard is littered with the fallen who believed they could outplay the grandmasters. Those who rise often do so on the shoulders of the weak, only to find their footing slipping beneath the weight of their own ambition.

In the grand theater of global power, Sun Tzu's Art of War and Robert Greene's 48 Laws of Power serve not as ancient relics of strategy, but as living, breathing guides wielded by those who walk the corridors of influence. Politicians, CEOs, and kings of the digital world know these texts not as theory but as gospel. Every handshake conceals a dagger, every favor is a debt collecting interest, and every alliance is but a waiting betrayal. Consider the political machinations of modern leaders—those who dare not blink, for fear it will cost them their throne.

Look to the pages of history, where alliances have always been as thin as air. In 2020, when nations were ravaged by a pandemic, what did we witness? Cooperation? No. Competition. Countries scrambling for vaccines, hoarding supplies, each playing the role of the benevolent savior while bartering with the lives of the vulnerable. It wasn't just a crisis—it was a lesson in Sun Tzu's belief: "All warfare is based on deception." Those words ring true in the backrooms of power where deals are made not with handshakes but with threats and promises as fragile as glass.

Power is no respecter of morality, a cold-blooded force moving like a serpent, ready to strike when least expected. Remember the fall of Richard Nixon in 1974? Watergate wasn't merely a scandal—it was a power play gone wrong, a dance with deceit where Nixon overstepped the delicate balance, failing to remember Law 1 of Greene's 48 Laws of Power: Never outshine the master. He tried to manipulate the system, forgetting that power is a double-edged sword that turns on those who wield it without care. Fast forward to today, and the game



is the same—only the players have changed. Meg Whitman, once hailed as a tech giant and recently the U.S. Ambassador to Kenya, stepped down in 2024 amid whispers of unseen battles. She followed Law 22—Use the surrender tactic: transform weakness into power. She left not in disgrace but on her own terms, cloaked in the guise of diplomacy, yet anyone familiar with the rules of power knows a quiet retreat often masks a strategic withdrawal.

And what of Africa? A continent rich in resources but plundered by the insatiable greed of power-hungry global actors. Leaders rise and fall, but the game remains unchanged. Thomas Sankara of Burkina Faso, who dared to stand against the tide in the 1980s, found himself silenced by those who mastered the darker arts of Sun Tzu. He embodied Law 38: Think as you like, but behave like others. Yet in the end, he forgot the first part—to think was his downfall. He paid for it with his life in 1987, betrayed by those he once called allies.

Power seduces, it corrupts, and it destroys. But it also attracts those willing to embrace its ruthlessness. In 2024, as new leaders emerge, the lessons remain the same: control perception, master timing, and never, ever show all your cards. Xi

Jinping's rise in China echoes this perfectly—an embodiment of Law 15: Crush your enemy totally. Under his reign, dissent is not silenced—it is erased. This is not just strategy; it is survival, honed from millennia of understanding the brutal dance of authority.

Even in the West, the dance persists. Consider the saga of Donald Trump, who understood Law 6: Court attention at all costs. Love him or hate him, he thrived on the chaos he created. He mastered the art of provocation, ensuring his name never left the headlines, bending the world to his narrative. Yet he too is a paradox—proof that power is a fragile, unpredictable beast that devours even those who feed it.

The Art of War teaches us that the supreme art is to subdue the enemy without fighting. But what happens when the enemy is within? When those wielding power begin to eat their own? Look to the Democratic Republic of the Congo—a land stained by conflict, a tragic testament to what happens when power runs wild, when greed consumes reason. In 2024, the ghosts of the past wars still haunt the present, with leaders like Félix Tshisekedi balancing on a razor's edge, knowing one false move could be his last. But what is the cost of such pow-

er? Does it not drain the soul? Strip away the humanity? Perhaps it is best summed up in the paradox that power both elevates and annihilates. For those who dare to climb, the fall is always inevitable. Napoleon Bonaparte once remarked, "In war, the moral is to the physical as three is to one." Yet where is the morality now? Lost in the dust of conquest, traded for fleeting dominance.

And so, we return to the question: who truly wins in the game of power? The victors who sit upon crumbling thrones? Or the masses who whisper in the dark, knowing they were but pawns in a greater scheme? Sun Tzu and Greene may offer guidance, but they also offer a warning. Power is a weapon, and like any weapon, it is as dangerous to those who wield it as to those it targets.

In the end, power is not held—it is borrowed, and time always collects its debt. So, the next time you watch a leader rise, remember this: the higher they climb, the farther they will fall. And when they do, the world will watch, not with pity, but with the cold satisfaction of those who understand the cruel, eternal game of power.

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

Worth Noting:

- Power is no respecter of morality, a cold-blooded force moving like a serpent, ready to strike when least expected. Remember the fall of Richard Nixon in 1974? Watergate wasn't merely a scandal—it was a power play gone wrong, a dance with deceit where Nixon overstepped the delicate balance, failing to remember Law 1 of Greene's 48 Laws of Power: Never outshine the master.
- He tried to manipulate the system, forgetting that power is a double-edged sword that turns on those who wield it without care. Fast forward to today and the game is the same—only the players have changed.

President's Advisor On Women Rights On What Is Required To Address GBV Issues

By: MTK Correspondent
 @themtkenyatimes

President William Ruto's advisor on Women Rights Harriette Chiggai yesterday highlighted various interventions required to address the plight of women in the society.

In the wake of the ever increasing Sexual and Gender Based Violence, Ms Chiggai rallied Kenyans to support and come up with various initiatives that could reduce the rate of violations.

She spoke during a talk-show at Hot96 Breakfast show where alongside Uasin Gishu County Women Representative and Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly Gladys Boss Sholei, they were hosted by Jeff Koinange.

The advisor noted that global statistics indicate that one in three women experience violence in their lifetime, and one in four adolescent girls are abused by their partners.

In addition, she revealed, four out of five women are killed by their intimate partners, with most victims

falling under the bracket age of 15 to 45 years.

She said worldwide, hundreds of women were being abused and their rights violated, an issue that requires broad attention.

"These statistics highlight the urgent need to address Gender-Based Violence through a comprehensive approach that includes social/behavioral change, increased awareness and responsive support services," she noted, adding, "We all need to re-calibrate ourselves and address the issues affecting women and children, for a better tomorrow".

She that the 16-days activism whose them is "Safe Homes Safe Spaces" was meant to enlighten Kenyans on the need to respect and live harmoniously.

Both women leaders lauded President Ruto for supporting the initiative saying it was a serious dedication and clear indication that the government was out to see that the vice was eradicated.

"We must all come out, condemn the vice and seek clear ways of addressing this issue. The major leading factor is the fact that we have a broken



President's Advisor on Women Rights Ms Harriette Chiggai (left) with Uasin Gishu County Women Rep. Gladys Boss Shollei during the Hot96 Breakfast Show yesterday.

society which is primarily to blame but which at the same time but be addressed," Ms Chiggai said.

On her part, Ms Shollei called for establishment of teaching aids on the vices in schools and other forums like in religious organisations.

She also proposed that Gender Based

Centers be removed from Police stations and be based in hospitals.

This, she argued, will eliminate the issues of intimidation and bribery which have been associated with failure to deliver the required mandate.

The two also called for severe sexual harassment policy as a way of de-

terminating would be perpetrators, saying as it stands now, the problem is usually lack of proper policy.

They further observed that fighting GBV requires concerted efforts by government, Faith-Based Organizations, parents, teachers, Civil Society and all Citizens of goodwill.

Marc Dillard Takes Charge as Acting U.S. Ambassador to Kenya Amid Diplomatic Transition

By: James Kilonzo Bwire
 @themtkenyatimes

In a significant diplomatic transition, Marc Dillard has officially assumed the role of acting U.S. Ambassador to Kenya following the resignation of Meg Whitman. Dillard, who previously served as Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi, steps into this leadership position during a crucial period for U.S.-Kenya relations, characterized by both challenges and opportunities.

Dillard brings over 25 years of experience with the U.S. State Department, having held various significant roles across Africa, Europe, and Asia. His previous assignments include Deputy Chief of Mission in Budapest and Counselor for Political and Economic Affairs in Sofia, Bulgaria. His extensive knowledge of international relations is bolstered by a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Public Poli-

cy from the University of Southern California and a bachelor's degree in History from Duke University.

The transition follows Meg Whitman's resignation announcement on November 13, 2024, after two years in office. Whitman's tenure was marked by efforts to strengthen ties between the U.S. and Kenya; however, it was also met with criticism regarding her responses to local issues such as human rights abuses and governance challenges. In her farewell remarks, Whitman expressed gratitude for the opportunity to serve and urged support for Dillard as he takes on his new responsibilities.

As Chargé d'Affaires, Dillard will lead the embassy until a permanent ambassador is appointed by the incoming administration under President Donald Trump. His familiarity with local dynamics and previous experience in Nairobi position him well to address ongoing diplomatic challenges. Dillard's leadership is expected to provide continuity at the

embassy, ensuring that U.S. interests in Kenya remain a priority amid evolving political circumstances.

Dillard's appointment comes at a time when U.S.-Kenya relations are under scrutiny due to recent electoral changes in the United States. With Trump's victory potentially shifting foreign policy priorities, Dillard will need to navigate these complexities while fostering collaboration between the two nations. His extensive African experience includes postings in Malawi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, further cementing his expertise in regional issues.

In addition to his diplomatic career, Dillard has received multiple State Department Superior and Meritorious Honor Awards for his exemplary service. He is married to Julia Dillard, also a Foreign Service Officer, and they have two children together.

In summary, Marc Dillard's ascension to acting ambassador marks a new chapter for the U.S. Embassy in Kenya. His extensive diplomat-



Marc Dillard Takes Charge as Acting U.S. Ambassador to Kenya

ic experience and commitment to strengthening bilateral relations will be crucial as he leads through this transitional period, ensuring that the U.S.-Kenya partnership continues to thrive amidst challenges ahead. As he embarks on this new role, both Kenyan officials and American diplomats

will be watching closely how Dillard addresses pressing issues while reinforcing the longstanding ties between the two nations.

James Kilonzo Bwire is a Media and Communication Practitioner.

SPORTS NEWS

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Sports >> *Gor Mahia Chairman Ambrose Rachier Wednesday revealed the club has received 33 applications from foreign coaches showing interest in taking over the vacant coaching role

Rachier Says Gor Won't Rush Search For New Head Coach As 33 Apply



Gor Mahia FC players, joined by Cabinet Secretary Eliud Owalo, FKF president Nick Mwendwa and Gor Chairman Ambrose Rachier celebrate after officially being crowned the FKF-PL champions for season 2024 at Machakos Stadium in Machakos County on June 23, 2024. Photo by Kelly Ayodi, Sportpicha.

Gor Mahia Chairman Ambrose Rachier Wednesday revealed the club has received 33 applications from foreign coaches showing interest in taking over the vacant coaching role, but insisted they won't rush the process of hiring a new tactician.

Rachier said the club intends to take its time in order to find the right person to lead the record FKF-Premier League winners for the remainder of the season and beyond.

"We have so far received 33 applications from foreign coaches. We are yet to respond to them since we will first sit down and determine what kind of coach can best suit the interests of the club," said Rachier.

The coaching role at Gor fell vacant following the firing of Brazilian tactician Leonardo Mar-

tins Neiva after a string of poor results in his four-month reign.

The club supremo also refuted reports linking former coach Dylan Kerr to his return to the club, saying the Maltese-born English football manager and another former coach Hassan Oktay just called to check on him but never requested to come back.

"Kerr just called me and greeted me in Swahili and Luo language but never expressed any interest in the vacant role."

Kerr first joined Gor in 2017 and won the league title on his debut and went ahead to retain the title in 2018.

According to Rachier, it is not clear whether Kerr was just sending a signal of his intent to have another stint, but he was clear the Englishman has not shown direct

intention.

The chairman has also admitted receiving a call from another former coach, who as well did not directly say he wanted to rejoin Gor Mahia.

The Turkish Cypriot coach Oktay was in charge of Gor in 2019 when Gor beat Zamalek of Egypt 4-2 at Kasarani in the CAF Champions League before the Egyptians returned with a 4-0 revenge in Alexandria a week later. "Hassan Oktay also called me after the departure of Neiva, but he, as well, never said he wanted to come back. That could be a signal, yes, but so far, we are still brainstorming," added Rachier.

In their first matches with Leonardo Neiva in charge, Gor only managed two wins, two draws and two losses which could have prompted the office to terminate

his contract.

Prior to his departure, Neiva had hinted at making an all youthful Gor team come next season. He had fired a warning to old players to prepare for an exit.

Gor is currently under the care of Zedekiah 'Zico' Otieno and Michael Nam on an interim basis as the hunt for a new coach is on.

The immediate former Gor Mahia coach prior to the arrival of Neiva Jonathan MC'Kinstry, departed for Gambia at the end of last season to handle the Gambian National team, which eventually failed to qualify for the upcoming AFCON after finishing third in Group A behind Comoros and Tunisia.

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Sports >>> *Ilkay Gundogan admits defeat at Premier League leaders Liverpool on Sunday could end Manchester City's Premier League title challenge as they scramble to end their poor run of form.

Defeat At Liverpool Could End Man City Title Hopes, Says Gundogan



FILE: Manchester City's German midfielder Ilkay Gundogan poses with the European Cup trophy as they celebrate winning the UEFA Champions League final football match between Inter Milan and Manchester City at the Ataturk Olympic Stadium in Istanbul, on June 10, 2023. Ilkay Gundogan said he had returned to the "best club in the world" after re-signing for Manchester City from Barcelona on August 23, 2024. The former German international won five Premier League titles and the Champions League among 12 major trophies during his first spell at City between 2016 and 2023. (Photo by Paul ELLIS / AFP)

By AFP

Ilkay Gundogan admits defeat at Premier League leaders Liverpool on Sunday could end Manchester City's Premier League title challenge as they scramble to end their poor run of form.

City squandered a 3-0 lead against Feyenoord in the Champions League on Tuesday -- following five consecutive defeats in all competitions.

For the first time in what was the 942nd game of his managerial career, manager Pep Guardiola saw his side fail to win a match after leading by three goals.

City have won the past four Premier League titles but are already

eight points behind Arne Slot's Liverpool following three straight defeats in the English top flight.

Guardiola conceded City's title defence would realistically be over should they lose at Anfield after last week's 4-0 humbling by Tottenham.

Germany international Gundogan agreed with his manager's assessment following the Feyenoord defeat.

"To stay in the title race, probably yes, (it's a game City can't afford to lose), because 11 points would be a huge gap," said the midfielder veteran.

"Anfield is always tough, no matter the situation. We've struggled in recent years going there and we

know Liverpool are a great team full of confidence right now.

"It's going to be as tough as it is possible to be but that sums up the situation right now. It seems we have to go through this season the toughest way possible."

City appeared to be back on track when leading 3-0 against Feyenoord, thanks to two goals from Erling Haaland either side of a deflected Gundogan effort.

But two errors from Josko Gvardiol late in the game allowed Feyenoord back into the game before an Ederson blunder led to a last-gasp David Hancko equaliser.

Gundogan, the 2022-23 treble-winning captain who rejoined the club in August after a short

spell at Barcelona, admitted the nature of the draw made it feel like a defeat.

The 34-year-old said: "The sensation right now is big disappointment but football is football and football sometimes creates incredible moments and difficult moments that you have to face."

SPORTS NEWS



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SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



Meet John Rukono, A Form Three Student With An Ambition Of Becoming A Swahili Writer



By: Wanjohi. P. Mugambi
@themkenyatimes

1. Briefly tell us who you are and more about you

My names is John Rukuno. I am a student at Giakanja Boys High School. Currently living with my lovely family at Thika and Nyeri. Am currently in form Two but God willing come next year i will be going to be a pre-candidate that is form Three(3).

In addition to that I am also an upcoming swahili poet and writer. I am also working on how to become the better version of me by working hard and smart no matter the situation that I am in. I have always been determined to make sure that my tomorrow is greater than today. I am dedicated to keep on writing and leave a legacy.

2. What motivated you to become who you are now.

What really motivated me of being a poet was my daddy(Wanjohi. P. Mugambi). My dream was always to just want to be like him. He was my good Swahili teacher. I would say this, he is a good teacher when it comes to teaching his favorite subject Swahili. The articulation of his Swahili will make you want to hear more from him. His books are just sweet as we usually say 'mwaah!'. More so his swahili 'shairi' mostly made me want to write more. When I reached to him after completing my primary school and told him i want to write my first poem, he really made sure i made ut through and even made it published in Kenyan Swahili Gazette Taifa Le. Untill now he will forever be my mentor, my role model, my teacher, my friend and not forgetting my lovely daddy. I will always thank him for making my dream come true of being a poet.

3. What does your ideal day look like.

My day begins with a morning prayer and looking at the sunrise. I then usually get very busy trying to create a better tomorrow. Being hard working has always been my core value. Putting laziness behind has kept myself busy in my books trying to get more into my mind. Swahili novels have now become my addiction. Like I have read more and more. I once read *NILITAMANI* by Phibbian Muthama in Mapambazuko ya Machweo. Truly I feel it is the Swahili for me. Having in mind that too much of something is poison i also take part in leisure activities. Playing badminton being part of it in the afternoon. Helping at home its what take much time. Despite having my day busy i don't leave behind school work. School work may be the morning duty or call.

4. What is the favorite aspect of your work

Its when am expressing my thoughts and emotions through my writings which makes me feel relaxed and relieved. It makes me feel like am in the right place to be. When I first wrote my first shairi 'MPENZI MAMA YANGU' I felt as i some rod had been removed for my back. I felt relaxed. I love my mum no matter what and writing my first poem for her was actually what I really wanted to make her feel that we are always grateful for what she does to us.

5. What is the hardest part of what you do.

Hardest part come in when one is confused of emotions or have different thoughts on the mind which may led to lack of good flow of the poem. Mostly this is brought by lack of enough words to say whats on your mind.

6. Have you ever incurred challenges in your work. Please tell us about it.

Yes. Challenges are always here

and there. Most challenges come when trying to be creative and you lack what to say. Other major challenge in poet is about discouragement received from social media when people say negative things on your achievements. Those kind of people make one lose the energy and power and even the momentum of writing more. Most are those that one ignores and not read.

7. How do you foster yourself to keep moving.

I aim higher than I am now. Never do I listen to what others are saying about me. I always have in mind that one day i will become what i always dream of and become the pillar of our family. Working together with a person of good help and of benefits ensures that one is on the right bath and never goes to waste.

8. Do you advertise your work. If yes. Tell us how it has helped you

Yes i do advertise. Advertising has really helped me keep my mind open And be able to set higher goals to be achieved. Which by doing this has made me be able to receive more motivation from different people across the country and abroad.

9. What advice would you like to give someone that wants to be you.

That when you want to get something or what to be something always go for it and never forget God in all your doings. Practice practice makes perfect. Keep tryung until you make iit through and never listen to what others are saying bad about you. Always take the bad things said as an encouragement.

10. Given a chance what impact would you bring to the world, nation and to yourself.

To the world and nation I would make or maintain that thee main languages in different places are well used and encourage people to ensure that they atleast know three different languages.

Mostly on those countries that are full of tribalism to ensure that all languages are respected and well used.



John Rukuno