The War Of Definitions: How America, China, And Russia Compete To Shape The Global Order

The post-Cold War world promised a unipolar moment where liberal democracy, human rights, and free-market capitalism - largely defined and championed by the United States - would become the global norm. Yet, three decades later, the international order is not only contested but fractured.

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The
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Ruto Vows To Defend KDF 'By All Means Necessary'

President William Ruto has vowed to defend the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) "by all means necessary," cautioning against attempts to malign the military after a section of opposition leaders questioned findings of an investigation into a helicopter crash that killed General Francis Ogolla. Ruto urged Kenyans to treat national security matters with utmost responsibility.

President William Ruto at the Cadet Commissioning Parade at the Kenya Military Academy in Lanet, Nakuru County / PCS

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President Ruto: Children Must Be Protected From Harmful Influences

By: MKT Reporter
@themtkenyatimes

President William Ruto has called on teachers and parents to protect school children from predators who seek to corrupt them with toxic ethnicity and divisive politics.

The President said he will stand firm and ensure that children are not exploited by individuals who wish to destroy the country.

He noted that Kenya has more to celebrate than the negativity that some people wish to promote.

"I will not allow this nation to go down the drain with the people who are pursuing selfish and narrow interests," he said.

He spoke at State House, Nakuru during the performance by best groups during this years Kenya Drama and Music Festivals.

Some Of The Moments As Captured In Pictures























Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Principal Secretary for Public Health and Professional Standards, Mary Muthoni yesterday met with a delegation from the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to discuss cross-border collaboration in strengthening health emergency preparedness and response for Mpox. The meeting highlighted the importance of advancing a multi-sectoral One Health approach that integrates human, animal, and environmental health systems to effectively address emerging health threats. The PS reaffirmed Kenya's commitment to operationalizing the One Health framework as a key strategy for enhancing both national and regional health security. The IGAD delegation was led by Mr. Mubarak Mabuyu, Director for Health and Social Development, and Dr. Fatuma Adan, IGAD Head of Mission to Kenya.

Ministry of Environment, Climate Change & Forestry, Cabinet Secretary Dr. Deborah Barasa visited Chebara Agricultural Training Centre in Elgeyo Marakwet County for the launch of Restoration and Sustainable Management of Cherangany Forest Ecosystems for Climate Change Resilience and Improved Livelihoods Project. The CS who was accompanied by among others, Principal Secretaries Dr Eng Festus Ng'eno (Environment and Climate Change) and Harsama Kello (ASALs and Regional Development) was joined by Governors Wisley Kipyegon (Elgeyo Marakwet) and Simon Kachapin (West Pokot) and other area leaders. The 3-years project which is funded by the government of Italy through the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) aims to restore and sustainably manage the Cherangany forest ecosystems for climate resilience and improved livelihoods of local communities.

The nominees for Principal Secretary (PS) positions will be sworn in today following their approval by Parliament. The swearing-in ceremony will take place at State House, Nairobi, starting at 8:30AM. "As a prerequisite to assuming office of a Principal Secretary, you are obligated to subscribe to the solemn oath or affirmation of office as set out under Article 74 of the Constitution. This presidential action follows the recommendations of the Public Service Commission, as required by Article 155 (3)(a) of the Constitution," reads a notification to the nominees from Head of Public Service Felix Koskei.

Students from Mount Kenya University (MKU) showing off some of the trophies that they won during the recently concluded Kenya National Drama Festival 2025. The Thika based private institution was declared best overall winning University and Most prolific University at the event that took place in Nakuru County. MKU won the prestigious overall and most prolific University awards for a second year in a row after managing the same fate in 2024 Drama festivals. The university management has always maintained that it is most committed in naturing and exposing this many great talents, which was well demonstrated when the University Vice-Chancellor- Prof. Deogratius Janganyi led a delegation of university management to watch and provide advice to university drama team items at the pre festival gala performances. Over 20 universities participated. Some of these are; Kenyatta, Nairobi, Embu, Meru, Zetech, Kabarak and Jomo Kenyatta.

Two suspects have been charged at Kahawa Law Courts after they were found running fictitious Social Media accounts purporting to be the official accounts of high-ranking government officials, with intent to defraud Kenyans. University student Tony Blair Okello and his accomplice Tyson Odhiambo Otieno were arrested at Tuuti and Namachanja areas of Bungoma county respectively. By opening fictitious accounts through which unsuspecting victims were defrauded, investigators found the two in contravention of Section 28 of the Computer Misuse Act (offense of cyber squatting), and Section 393 of the penal code (conspiracy to commit a felony). Investigation established that Tyson, a tech savvy, has been opening such numerous accounts, which he then sells to other persons after training them on how to run the scamming venture. In the case presented in court, Tony Blair is one such student of Tyson, who has been personating the PS Interior, Dr. Raymond Omollo.


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National Assembly Passes Anti-Money Laundering And Combating Of Terrorism Financing Laws

By: PSCU

> Worth Noting:
>
> - "One of the amendments I'll be proposing is to include virtual assets and cryptocurrencies under anti-terrorism scrutiny," he added, citing the rise of unregulated digital assets and financial services like betting and saccos.
> - Kenya had been placed on the FATF's "grey list" due to its non-compliance with international standards. This new legislation seeks to align the country's laws with these global benchmarks on anti-money laundering, counter-terrorism financing, and proliferation financing.

The National Assembly has passed the Anti-Money Laundering and Combating of Terrorism Financing Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2025 with amendments.

The Bill sponsored by the Leader of the Majority Party, Kimani Ichung'wah underwent its first reading in the House on March 4th, 2025, seeks to address technical shortcomings in Kenya's legal framework.

Speaking during the debate, Finance and Planning Committee Chair, Kuria Kimani, emphasized the urgency of passing the Bill to avoid economic isolation.

"We are debating this Bill today because Kenya is currently on the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) grey list. Unless we act with urgency, the consequences could be severe and long-lasting," said Kuria.

"One of the amendments I'll be proposing is to include virtual assets and cryptocurrencies under anti-terrorism scrutiny," he added, citing the rise of unregulated digital assets and financial services like betting and saccos.

Kenya had been placed on the FATF's "grey list" due to its non-compliance with international standards. This new legislation seeks to align the country's laws with these global benchmarks on anti-money laundering, counter-terrorism financing, and proliferation financing.

The Bill has amendments to ten (10) existing Acts of Parliament relating to anti-money laundering, combating of financing of terrorism and proliferation acts.

The Proceeds of Crime and Anti-Money Laundering Act (Cap. 59A): This amendment seeks to appoint a Director General as the head of the Asset Recovery Agency, aligning it with

other investigative bodies. It also aims to define dealers in precious metals or stones as designated non-financial businesses, placing them under the regulatory and supervisory purview of the Financial Reporting Centre.

The Prevention of Terrorism Act (Cap. 59B): This amendment defines "terrorism financing," explicitly including the collection or provision of funds, property, and services for terrorist acts, as well as the financing of travel for terrorism purposes as offenses.

The Betting, Lotteries and Gaming Act (Cap. 131): The Bill seeks to empower the Betting Control and Licensing Board to regulate and supervise entities within its jurisdiction for anti-money laundering, counter-terrorism financing, and counter-proliferation financing.

The Retirement Benefits Act (Cap. 197): Amendments aim to strengthen the mandate of the Retirement Benefit Authority to regulate, supervise, and enforce compliance among entities under its watch in the fight against money laundering, terrorism financing, and proliferation financing.

The Mining Act (Cap. 306): The Director of Mining will be empowered to regulate, supervise, and enforce compliance with anti-money laundering, counter-terrorism financing, and counter-proliferation financing measures within the mining sector.

Other Acts that the Bill is proposing amendments to are, the Sacco Societies Act (Cap. 490B) by empowering the Sacco Societies Regulatory Authority, the Accountants Act (Cap. 531) by empowering the Institute of Accountants, the Estate Agents Act (Cap. 533) empowering the Estate Agents Registration Board, the Institute of Certified Public Secretaries Act, the Certified Public Secretaries of Kenya Act (Cap. 534), and the Public Benefits Organizations Act (No. 18 of 2013) by empowering the Public Benefits Regulatory Authority to oversee and monitor public benefit organizations that are at risk of terrorism financing in Kenya.

If the amendments are adopted, Kenya will move a step closer to being removed from the FATF grey list, a designation that currently affects the country's international financial reputation and investor confidence.

Government Unveils Stakeholder Forum For MSME Act Review

By: Joan Ogolla and Muhati Venesa
@themtkenyatimes

The government, through the State Department for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Development, has launched public participation and stakeholder engagement forum aimed at validating the draft MSME Policy and MSE Act 2025 with a focus on improving access to finance, easing regulatory burdens, expanding market access, and upgrading infrastructure to shape an inclusive and dynamic MSME ecosystem.

Speaking during the validation, Principal Secretary, state department for MSMEs, Susan Mang'eni, stated that the exercise will provide a platform for refining the policy and proposing amendments to the Act.

According to Mang'eni, the policy includes strengthening the institutional and regulatory framework, creating an enabling environment, promoting capacity building and innovation, enhancing market linkages, and fostering equity and inclusivity.

In order to actualize the policy goals, Mang'eni noted that a comprehensive legal framework will be required to address gaps in the current MSE Act 2012 and also strengthen the institutional frameworks.

"Our vision is to build a highly productive, diversified and competitive MSME sector that drives economic transformation and social empowerment," remarked Mang'eni.

In her remarks, she added that with the successful implementation of the policy, the MSMEs Policy 2025 will serve as a roadmap for achieving this vision.

"MSMEs play a pivotal role in the economy," Mang'eni stated, announcing that over 90 percent of the total enterprises in Kenya contribute to approximately 30 percent of the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP), employing over 15 million people.

"These businesses are not just economic drivers, they are lifelines for countless families and a bedrock of innovation, resilience, and entrepreneurship in our nation," she said.

Mang'eni, noted that MSMEs continue to face significant challenges, including access to affordable credit, limited market linkages, and capacity gaps that hinder their competitiveness.

PS Susan Mang'eni

"With developed proposed amendments to the MSE Act of 2012, the government priorities include value chain approach and cluster development, devolved governance structure, inclusion of medium enterprise and to address persistent MSME challenges and emerging issues." she highlighted.

Additionally, she said that Kenyans' participation will be a testament to the shared commitment to the advancement of MSMEs in Kenya.

"Let us work together to ensure that this policy reflects the aspirations and needs of all players in the sector," emphasized Mang'eni.

Mang'eni also reaffirmed commitment to the successful implementation of the policy through a coordinated approach, leveraging the strengths of various stakeholders.

Coffee Nets KSh521.5 M As Weekly Auction Witness Reduced Volume

By: Bernard Munyao
@themtkenyatimes

Auction at Nairobi Coffee Exchange (NCE) on Tuesday witnessed reduced volume as harvest season comes to an end in some parts of coffee growing zones.

A total of 10,190 bags weighing 630,686 kilograms were traded at the auction at an average price of KSh41,391 per 50-kilo bag.

According to the NCE report, the highest price recorded was KSh61,114 per 50kg bag for grade AA coffee from Kamo-ini Factory which is part of Othaya Farmers' Co-operative Society in Nyeri County.

Premium coffee grades of AA and AB performed well, with about 3.7 per cent of bags fetching prices above KSh51,901.5 per bag.

The auction of 27 of the current coffee year featured a diverse range of coffee grades with varying volumes.

Grade MH (Medium Hard) was the most traded grade, representing approximately 30 percent of the total volume, followed by grades ML (Medium Light), AB, and AA, which collectively represented significant portions of the trading volume.

Lower grades such as T (Triage), UG1, UG2, and C were also traded in notable quantities.

According to NCE Chief Executive Officer Lisper Ndung'u, the distribution of coffee grades showed a typical pattern for Kenyan coffee auctions, with processing characteristics and bean size being key determinants of grade and subsequent pricing.

In the category of brokers, Alliance Berries Limited was the most active broker with 3,894 bags traded at an average price of KSh37,888 per bag, followed by KCCE Marketing Agency Limited with 2,004 bags.

Other significant market participants included Minnesota Coffee Marketers Limited with 952 bags, Kirinyaga Slopes Coffee Brokerage which traded 803 bags, New Kenya Planters Co-operative Union (KPCU) auctioned 1,706 bags and Kipkelion Broker Company Limited sold 547 bags.

Each broker represented different producers and coffee estates, contributing to the diversity of coffee profiles available at the auction.

In the sale, 18 international and local buyers participated with Ibero Kenya Ltd purchasing the highest volume of 4,620 bags. Louis Drefus Company bought 1,770 while Kenyacof Limited, 1,144 and C.Dormain Limited trading 1, 010 bags.

Some coffee growing regions are expected to start harvesting cherry from the end of this month with high expectations of increased volumes in the auction.


Coffee.

Ruto Vows To Defend KDF 'By All Means Necessary' Amid Crash Queries

By: Correspondent

Military chief the late General Francis Ogolla died in a helicopter crash on April 18, 2024. .

Worth Noting:

- "The government will defend the military by all means possible," President Ruto said. "They are the guarantors of our stability and development."
- He underscored the importance of collective responsibility in safeguarding Kenya's security, stressing that no military force, however advanced, can single-handedly secure a nation without the cooperation of its people.
- "True security is a shared duty, and every citizen is a stakeholder," he said, calling on leaders, politicians, the media, and the public to exercise sensitivity when engaging in discussions about the armed forces.
- The President revealed ongoing reforms to modernise the KDF, including aligning its training and strategy to address emerging security threats such as digital warfare, transnational crime, and unconventional combat.

President William Ruto has vowed to defend the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) "by all means necessary," cautioning against attempts to malign the military after a section of opposition leaders questioned findings of an investigation into a helicopter crash that killed General Francis Ogolla.

Ruto urged Kenyans to treat national security matters with utmost responsibility.

Speaking during the Cadet Commissioning Parade at the Kenya Military Academy in Lanet, Nakuru County, the President declared that the government would protect the dignity and integrity of the military, which he described as the cornerstone of the country's peace, stability, and development.

"The government will defend the military by all means possible," President Ruto said. "They are the guarantors of our stability and development."

He underscored the importance of collective responsibility in safeguarding Kenya's security, stressing that no military force, however advanced, can single-handedly secure a nation without the cooperation of its people.

"True security is a shared duty, and every citizen is a stakeholder," he said, calling on leaders, politicians, the media, and the public to exercise sensitivity when engaging in discussions about the armed forces.

The President revealed ongoing reforms to modernise the KDF, including aligning its training and strategy to address emerging security threats such as digital warfare, transnational crime, and unconventional combat.

"In response, we must modernise our forces, tailor our training, and innovate and update our doctrine," he said.

"Through these efforts, KDF remains a bulwark of peace and stability not only in Kenya, but also in the region and across Africa."

NDU graduate cadets

The event also marked a historic milestone, with the commissioning of the first cohort of officer cadets graduating with a Bachelor's Degree in Defence and Security Studies from the National Defence University–Kenya.

"This is a major milestone in our continued journey to align military training with modern academic rigour and strategic development goals," he said.

The graduating class included officers from Burkina Faso, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, and Uganda—a move the President hailed as a testament to the growing regional cooperation in defence.

"This is not just a testament to the excellence of the Kenya Military Academy, but also a symbol of our shared destiny and growing regional solidarity," Ruto added.

Earlier, the President commissioned the Lanet Regional Hospital, a 150-bed facility that will offer specialised medical services including intensive care, renal dialysis, and advanced surgical procedures.

The facility will be staffed by both military and civilian health professionals.

President Ruto also launched the Ulinzi Prime Health Services Fund, a new financial framework under the Ministry of Defence that will allow civilians to access KDF health facilities.

The fund was approved by Cabinet on October 3, 2023, and by the National Assembly on December 6, 2023, under the Public Finance Management Act, 2012.

"These facilities will allow members of the defence community to access military referral hospitals through insurance schemes, including the Social Health Insurance Fund and the Emergency, Chronic and Critical Illness Fund," the President explained.

Ruto emphasized that a secure nation is the foundation for attracting investment, promoting prosperity, and strengthening both domestic and international confidence.

"National prosperity rests upon the firm foundation of peace, good governance, and inclusive development. Our defence forces play a vital role in this," he said.

DP Official Raises Concern On The Current Political Climate In The Country

By: MKT Correspondent
@themtkenyatimes

Businessman Wambugu Nyamu has called for a consultative Constitutional Conference to avoid a looming uprising in the Nation.

Nyamu who is the National Deputy Secretary General of the Democratic Party of Kenya (DP) raised concern on the adverse political climate currently being witnessed across the country.

In his statement, Mr Nyamu noted that the anger levels in the country are on a level high and the government needs to mitigate the temperatures.

He urged the President William Ruto to urgently call for a National Constitutional Conference involving stakeholders from different spheres to discuss the country's future and prosperity, in sight of the current political mood and warned that failure to do so would lead to chaos in the country.

Speaking in Othaya town, Nyeri County, Nyamu alluded to last year's demonstrations by the GenZ and the promises made by the government to cater to their demands against Corruption, Misuse of public resources, arrogance by the leaders and oppression by the government.

He said that the government did step down and promised Kenyans that these issues would be rectified, but unfortunately, things have only gotten worse.

Mr. Nyamu, further spoke to the recent utterances by former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua and former CS Justine Muturi on the president's capability to lead the nation and went on to claim that the current broad-based government has 3 facets (3 wings); One that is ODM whose loyalty is to Raila Odinga, another that was brought in by Uhuru Kenyatta and the Jubilee Party, besides the Ruto wing, which means the country has a divided government instead of one government and an Opposition on the other side.

Mr Wambugu Nyamu while briefing media yesterday.

He stated that arrogance from some government officials is still rampant, going by remarks from the president himself including his attitude towards the recent "Must Go" chants and also remarks from his close allies like Cabinet Secretary Kipchumba Murkomen and Kapseret MP Oscar Sudi.

This, according to Mr Nyamu is continually agitating the masses warning that if does not change the whole country is going to blow up and an uprising will be inevitable.

National Polytechnic To Retrain Driving Instructors From Nakuru VTCs

By: Anne Mwale
@themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- She spoke at RVNP during deliberations between a delegation of the devolved unit's education experts and a team from the National polytechnic headed by the Chief Principal Mr Sammy Chemoiwa on the roll out of the driving instructor training program.
- While noting that only skilled and knowledgeable instructors can provide better learning experiences for new drivers, leading to increased confidence and competence behind the wheel, Ms Ngugi added that such qualified tutors can also create customized learning plans based on individual needs and skill levels, helping learners progress at their own pace.
- She stated that the County VTCs needed qualified instructors who have in-depth knowledge of road safety, traffic laws, and road conditions, ensuring learners are well-prepared for various driving situations.

The Rift Valley National Polytechnic (RVNP) will retool 46 driving instructors drawn from various Vocational Training Centers (VTCs) operated by the County Government of Nakuru as part of a broader effort to improve the quality of driving instruction and enhance road safety in the country.

The initiative whose primary focus is enhanced competence and improved ethical conduct of driving instructors that is in turn expected to yield more skilled and responsible drivers, resulting in fewer accidents and fatalities has received support from Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICAN).

County Executive Committee Member (CECM) for Education, ICT and e-Government Ms Zipporah Ngugi said the up-skilling will be of great impact to the county as it will build the capacity of VTC instructors in delivering quality and relevant training to the young people in the Vocational Training Centres.

Ms Ngugi indicated the collaborative initiative between RVNP, the County Government and CICAN will ensure that all the devolved unit's 11 sub-counties have access to trained instructors, thereby increasing the availability of driving courses and fostering self-reliance, strengthening vocational education in the VTCs.

She spoke at RVNP during deliberations between a delegation of the devolved unit's education experts and a team from the National polytechnic headed by the Chief Principal Mr Sammy Chemoiwa on the roll out of the driving instructor training program.

While noting that only skilled and knowledgeable instructors can provide better learning experiences for new drivers, leading to increased confidence and competence behind the wheel, Ms Ngugi added that such qualified tutors can also create customized learning plans based on individual needs and skill levels, helping learners progress at their own pace.

She stated that the County VTCs needed qualified instructors who have in-depth knowledge of road safety, traffic laws, and road conditions, ensuring learners are well-prepared for various driving situations.

"Well trained driving instructors in our VTCs will also help learners understand what to expect during the road test and provide specific guidance to increase their chances of qualifying. They will be able to effectively teach essential driving techniques and safe driving practices, reducing the risk of accidents and promoting responsible driving," noted the CECM

Ms Ngugi noted that the quality of training provided at driving schools has a direct impact on road safety, and that the role and quality of driving instructors play in shaping driving habits should not be underestimated.

Poorly trained instructors she observed in turn produce incompetent and irresponsible drivers, which poses a serious threat to every road user.

Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICAN) is a national, voluntary membership organization representing publicly supported colleges, institutes and polytechnics in Canada and internationally.

Known previously as the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC), CICAN champions innovations, applied research, international development, and the employment or entrepreneurial opportunities that are created by its member institutions and partners all over the world.

By ensuring that driving instructors meet the National Transport Safety Authority (NTSA) requirements and adhere to NTSA regulations, Ms Ngugi said the initiative aims to improve the safety and quality of driving education, ultimately leading to safer roads and more skilled drivers.

She also noted that over the years Kenyan roads have been upgraded citing bypass interchanges, road links and expressways roads that didn't exist several years ago adding that there was urgent need for instructors even those who been in the profession for the last 10 to 20 years, to go for refresher training, because the highway code has significantly changed.

Ms Ngugi said the county government is working with NTSA to ensure that driving instructors at its VTCs are accredited and receive comprehensive training in areas like defensive driving techniques, adhering to traffic rules, recognizing road hazards, and cultivating a safety culture.

"Road safety is a pressing concern for all Kenyans. It is a shared responsibility, and driving schools play a significant role in shaping the attitudes and skills of aspiring drivers. While practical experience is undoubtedly crucial, it is essential that driving schools also instill a deep sense of consciousness about road safety. After all, driving skills alone are not enough if they are not accompanied by a commitment to following traffic rules and regulations," added the CECM

NTSA, which is responsible for accrediting driving schools, has taken steps to address the issue of unqualified instructors by implementing stricter licensing requirements and conducting regular inspections of driving schools.

Accreditation ensures that the driving school meets the required standards and follows the guidelines set by the regulatory authority

RVNP is accredited by the NTSA to train driving instructors utilizing a revised syllabus.

Mr Chemoiwo said the National polytechnic offers both full-time and part-time courses, including certificate and diploma programs, for driving instructors.

The Chief Principal indicated that NTSA has developed a curriculum for training and testing of driving instructors, and all driving instruction must adhere to the approved curriculum.

He added that the NTSA also requires instructors to attend refresher courses and continuous

The training is intended to enhance the quality of driving instruction

While stating that a comprehensive curriculum is essential for developing well-rounded drivers Mr Chemoiwo explained that NTSA accreditation ensures that driving schools follow a curriculum that covers theory, practical skills, road safety, and traffic rules and regulations.

The programs focus on both theoretical and practical aspects of driving instruction, covering topics like the NTSA curriculum, first aid, fire safety, and defensive driving.

Mathira Politicians In Strategic Meeting, What Is Cooking?

By: MKT Correspondents
@themtkenyatimes

Former Nyeri Senator Eng. Ephraim Maina with Mathira MP Eric Wamumbi on Monday evening.

Dominic Muraya alias Mathira Finest.

Pauline Wanjira Wamabati

Solomon Maina alias Solo.

A meeting of politicians is never ever, neither coincidental nor in vain; always strategic.

It is in this context that a meeting between Mathira Member of Parliament, Eric Wamumbi and one of his predecessors Eng. Ephraim Maina Mwangi in the latter's Nairobi office is being viewed.

The two politicians met on Monday raised eyebrows accross Nyeri County as the host represented the county in the senate between 2017 and 2022 but failed in his bid to become the governor in the last General Elections, losing miserably to incumbent Dr Mutahi Kahiga who garnered 213,000 votes with him coming a distant third after getting 26,000 while industrialist Dr Thuo Mathenge got in between with 81, 000 votes.

At the constituency level. Maina ousted the late Nderitu Gachagua in 2007 after garnering 35,000 against the latter's 28,000.

Of note is that the late Gachagua was brother to former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua who also served as MP in the 12th Parliament and the two have never been on the same political wavelength.

In the last General Elections, the former Senate stood on the then ruling party Jubilee's ticket as Rigathi fought foot and nail to secure the Second-In-Command seat on UDA.

After losing the gubernatorial contest Maina retreated to his businesses with his resurfacing on Monday raising eyebrows as Wamumbi has become one of the system's blue eyed boy and an avowed bitter criticism of his mentor, Rigathi.

At the constituency level, the legislator's popularity has nosedived to worrying levels after he took a front row in crucifying his constituent, Riggy G and would do anything and everything to restore it and perhaps recapture the seat in 2027.

After the the meeting, the UDA meeting posted on his Facebook page, 'I have this evening met with my long time friend, Eng. Senator Ephraim Maina, former Nyeri Senator and former Mathira Constituency MP in his Nairobi office for a conversation about Mathira, Nyeri and Mt. Kenya region. Sen. Ephraim Maina is a resourceful elder who boosts of knowledge in both leadership and business world. Sen. Maina commands respects from the old and young people due to his huge contributions in the community when he was Mathira MP and Nyeri Senator. We are making Mathira great, mbele iko sawa."

So far, about half a dozen aspirants have vowed to kick him out come the next general elections with most aligning with the former Deputy President.

Peter Githinji Njuki who was prevailed upon by Gachagua to step down in favour of Wamumbi in the last general elections has vowed to capture what he believes was rightly his.

Njuki hails from Kirimukuyu ward which has the second largest number of registered voters after Karatina which is two thirds urban. The ward has never produced any serious contender since independence and the residents believe that this could be their chance.

Njuki is in coffee marketing business and improved prices may be a feather on his cap.

Almost all the residents are in the coffee farming activity.

Solomon Maina from Ruguru ward has been traversing the constituency making huge donations in harambees for the pat one year or so.

He is said to have contributed immensely towards the presidential campaigns in the last general election with sources intimating that he gave upwards of KSh70m.

In return he had been promised a state appointment, a promise that was honoured as he bagged the chairmanship of KTDA Management Services which he holds todate.

Murmurs abound in the constituency in view of the fact that unlike other appointees recommended by Riggy G who have been hounded out, he remains comfortably in office.

Residents also wonder how he could be the incumbents challenger yet he-the latter- is not campaigning to have him ousted as he has done to appoitees with lesser or no challenge at all.

Another contender who has been traversing the populous constituency is Dominic Muraya. The youthful upcoming politician is commonly known as Mathira Finest and is seen as a daring of voters in all spectrum.

Former area MP Peter Weru Kinyua who was ousted by Rigathi has also declared his intention to recapture the seat.

Consequently, he was kicked out the chairmanship of Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Orgsnisation (KALRO) and the seat given to Thuo Mathenge who lost in the gubernatorial race in the last elections.

Former Magutu ward MCA Pauline Wanjira Wamabati has also declared her interest in the seat just like her

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Campaign Against GBV And For Justice Access Launched In Isiolo County

By: NGEC Team

The National Gender and Equality Commission on Tuesday kicked off a high-impact campaign in Isiolo County under the theme "Eliminating Gender-Based Violence and Enhancing Access to Justice" — with a strong focus on stakeholder dialogue, de-normalizing domestic violence, and promoting equality and non-discrimination among special interest groups.

The programme began with a courtesy call to the Isiolo County Commissioner, Mr. Geoffrey Omoding, led by NGEC Chairperson Rehema Jaldesa, accompanied by Commissioners Thomas Okoth (Vice Chairperson), Dr. Margaret Karungaru, Caroline Lentupuru, and Mbithuka Nzomo.

The County Commissioner commended the initiative and pledged national government support in raising awareness on GBV, highlighting the deeply entrenched culture of silence that continues to undermine efforts to curb the vice in Isiolo and similar counties.

This was followed by a courtesy call to the Office of the Governor where the Commission was received by the Deputy Governor Dr. James Lowasa.

In his remarks, Dr. Lowasa acknowledged the commendable progress made by Governor Abdi Ibrahim Guyo's administration in advancing gender and social inclusion.

He highlighted key milestones such as the formulation of critical policies including the Child Protection Policy, Social Protection Policy, and the Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Policy.

He further noted the county's continued collaboration with development partners to empower women and youth through skills development programs at vocational training centres. Dr. Lowasa appealed to NGEC to support the establishment of a Safe House in Isiolo to shelter and rehabilitate survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

He also emphasized the need to recognize the link between climate change and increased incidences of GBV—especially among pastoralist communities facing resource-related vulnerabilities.

Ms Jaldesa officially opened a Stakeholders Forum convened by NGEC and attended by county stakeholders and members of the Equality and Inclusion Technical Working Group.

National Gender and Equality Commission officials alongside Isiolo County leadership on Tuesday. Photo/Courtesy..

The chairperson called for a multi-sectoral approach in strengthening GBV prevention and response mechanisms and reaffirmed NGEC's commitment to partner with Isiolo County leadership in promoting the rights and dignity of women, children, and all special interest groups.

Also in attendance was Dr. Purity Ngina, Chief Executive Officer of NGEC, among other representatives from the County Government and several community based organizations based in the region.

This campaign marks the beginning of a broader national dialogue that centers the voices of the vulnerable while pushing for sustainable, rights-based solutions to eliminate GBV in Kenya.

Mathira Politicians In Strategic Meeting, What Is Cooking?

Contd from page 20

former colleague Muriithi Ndagita who is serving a second term representing Kirimukuyu.

Second runner-up in the last general election Daniel Kiige has vowed to improve on his 9000 votes and capture the seat .

Though Maina may have been off the scene for quite a while, his influence may not be totally written of particularly in Magutu which has produced 3 of the eight legislators that have represented the constituency since independence.

As the electioneering period nears, only time will tell what is cooking.

Peter Weru.

Daniel Kiige

To Love If You Ask Me

Poets : Sheikh Al Dirani and Collins Munyanda
(Zimbabwe)

I don't want to love,
Love is always angry
When not miserable
Winners have ruses
Victims have bruises
Their hearts nurse lesions
In place of blessings.

Love is the domain of abuse
A game whose super stars
Are folks who love to be lied to.
When Love is not live
It thrives on nutritious lies.

In love none is king
All are slaves in unbreaking chains
Bound to lie restless in graves
The brave ones survive as rebels.

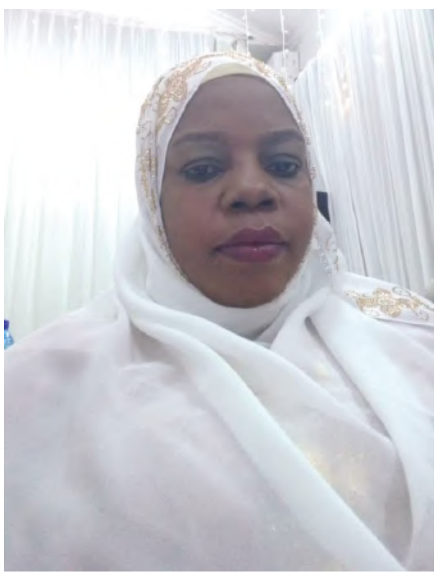
Love is a legion of evil spirits
Th' unlucky ones possessed of it
Are condemned to float in streets
Bloated on pain like half drowned corpses.

2
Love is a stealth spy
Treading disguised through carnal lands
Love is the agony on pulsating hearts
Love is a throbbing head ache
Love is a Zhurong rover with flaming eyes
Exploring a Bordeaux Mars planet
Love is damn right when its left,
Wrong but passionate
Love is a bored cricket ballad
In the middle of a forsaken hot summer night…
Love is a long winding dusty Savannah road
Hazy and misty with mirages of confusion
From nowhere coming, leading to nowhere…

Love is a demented poli-tickcian
Pleased with the noise of its own voice
Love is a nocturnal witch
Smoking blue tailed spiralling weed…
Caught in the cobwebs of self-inflicted
hallucination.

Love is rude, crude, sweet, erect,
Moist, dead, alive…
Love is the roaring beast
Whimpering with self-pity
Between silky scarlet swoo-shing sheets.

Ichunge Dhamana Yako



Dhamana uliyobeba, ichunge ewe swahibu
Usipandishe jaziba, wenzako kuwaadhibu
Dharau pia ujuba, huo si ustarabu
Ichunge dhamana yako, chombo kisende mrama

Itekeleze kwa huba, kwa wa mbali na karibu
Usifuate kitiba, kutoka kwa mashaibu
Kiendeshe kwa mahaba, ili lengolo lisibu
Ichunge dhamana yako, chombo kisende mrama

Sikumbatie nasaba, wa mbali ikawa gubu
Ukajenga usuhuba, wengine ukaghilibu
Pakazuka ukuruba, watu wakataajabu
Ichunge dhamana yako, chombo kisende mrama

Uenende kwa katiba, mamboyo ukiratibu
Yatimie matilaba, yaondoke masaibu
Upatapo japo haba, gawa kwa zote janibu
Ichunge dhamana yako, chombo kisende mrama

Usitende kwa ghiliba, acha huo uraibu
Kila sekta kukaba, utakuwa u harabu
Usikhini mkataba, cheo utakiharibu
Ichunge dhamana yako, chombo kisende mrama

Mtunzi: Fatma Ali Mohamed
Lakabu: Mpemba Orijinali
Wete-Pemba

The Importance Of ICT Skills for Foreign Language Teachers

Dildora Bakhriddinova Oktamovna
Senior English teacher, Acting Assosiate Professor,
Jizzakh State Pedagogical University
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Abstract: This article examines the significance of ICT skills for foreign language teachers in the digital age. It investigates how key technological tools such as multimedia resources, learning management systems, and online collaboration platforms improve language instruction. Furthermore, the paper examines the challenges of incorporating ICT into teaching and proposes solutions to improve educators' digital competencies.

Key words: ICT in education, foreign language teaching, digital literacy, online learning tools, interactive teaching methods, teacher training, educational technology.

In the twenty-first century, using new ways to teach foreign languages has emerged as one of the most critical educational goals. With the fast advancement of digital technology, including information and communication technologies (ICT) into foreign language instruction has become critical. The 21st century, sometimes known as the "Epoch of Technology," requires educators to develop and efficiently apply technology abilities in their professional activity. This study examines the importance of ICT skills for foreign language instructors, emphasising their role in improving language instruction, increasing student engagement, and solving current educational difficulties.

The Role of ICT in Foreign Language Teaching
ICT technologies have transformed foreign language teaching and learning by providing teachers with creative resources for designing interactive, student-centered sessions. ICT has made significant contributions to language teaching, including:

1. Enhancing Language Skills Through Multimedia
- ICT enables teachers to use videos, audio recordings, podcasts, and interactive activities in their courses, making learning more dynamic and engaging.
- YouTube, TED Talks, and language-learning apps (such as Duolingo) give real language exposure, helping students improve their listening and comprehension abilities.

2. Improving Classroom Engagement and Motivation.
- Gamification applications like as Kahoot!, Quizlet, and Socrative promote student involvement by making learning more dynamic and competitive.
- Virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technology immerse students in realistic language experiences, making learning more effective and fun.

3. Facilitating Communication and Collaboration
- Students may use ICT to interact with native speakers and classmates all across the world using platforms like Zoom, Skype, and online discussion forums.
- Teachers and students can use digital collaboration platforms such as Google Classroom and Padlet to exchange information, offer comments, and work on group projects.

Essential ICT Skills for Foreign Language Teachers
To successfully incorporate technology, foreign language instructors must possess the following important ICT skills:

1. Digital Literacy and Online Resource Utilisation
- Teachers must be skilled at finding, assessing, and using credible digital materials to support language education.
- Open-access educational sites like as Coursera, the British Council, and Cambridge English offer useful teaching tools.

2. Proficiency in Learning Management Systems (LMS)
- Platforms such as Moodle, Blackboard, and Google Classroom make it easier to organise online courses, assess students, and engage them.
- Teachers should be able to construct interactive assignments, assess progress, and offer feedback utilising these platforms.

3. Content Creation and Multimedia Integration
- Teachers who are familiar with video editing, podcasting and presentation tools may create compelling instructional materials.
- Using interactive whiteboards and smart classroom equipment improves lecture delivery and visualisation.

4. Use Digital applications for Assessment and Feedback
- Online applications such as Google Forms, Socrative, and Edpuzzle may help teachers quickly analyse student performance.
- AI-powered tools like Grammarly and Turnitin help students improve their writing abilities and eliminate plagiarism.

Challenges and Solutions for ICT Implementation:
Foreign language teachers generally struggle to integrate digital technology, despite their enormous benefits. Some of the primary concerns and potential solutions are:
1. Lack of training and digital competency
Solution: Educators should have access to regular professional development programs and ICT training courses.
2. Limited Access to Technology and Resources.
Solution: Schools and educational institutions should invest in digital infrastructure and provide fair access to technology tools.
3.Resistance to change and traditional teaching preferences.
Solution: Encouraging instructors to progressively incorporate ICT into their instruction through blended learning techniques can help smooth the transition.

Conclusion
ICT skills have become an essential component of modern foreign language instruction, allowing teachers to build interesting, interactive, and student-centered learning environments. Teachers may considerably improve language education by developing digital literacy, understanding learning management systems, and incorporating multimedia technologies. However, to fully realise the promise of ICT in education, continuing professional development and institutional support are required. As technology evolves, foreign language instructors must adapt and enhance their ICT abilities to meet the needs of modern education and assure their students' success in language acquisition.


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Volume 2
A reflection of the strength and positivity of African women and men
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WORLD ART

Merck Foundation Celebrates World Art Day 2025 By Empowering Creativity For Social Change Across Africa

By: **Elizabeth Angira**

> **Worth Noting:**
> - **Conceptualized, produced, directed, and co-hosted by Dr. Kelej herself, the show features African fashion designers, musicians, and subject matter experts to spotlight pressing societal issues through a culturally relevant lens. The program has captivated millions of viewers across the continent.**
> - **"Our Africa by Merck Foundation" and other initiatives work hand-in-hand to raise awareness around critical issues such as breaking infertility stigma, supporting girls' education, ending child marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM), combating gender-based violence, empowering women, and educating on health matters like diabetes and hypertension.**
> - **"Africa's creativity reflects its rich heritage—through art, fabrics, music, and storytelling which is passed on through generations," said Dr. Kelej.**

Merck Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Merck KGaA Germany, is marking 'World Art Day 2025' through its dynamic Pan-African Art and Fashion with Purpose Community, established by Senator Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO of Merck Foundation.

Through this vibrant platform, Senator Dr. Rasha Kelej continues to champion awareness on critical health and social issues, while empowering artists across Africa and beyond to harness their creativity as a powerful tool for advocacy, education, and fostering cultural transformation within their communities.

Senator Dr. Rasha Kelej recognized among the 100 Most Influential Africans for six consecutive years (2019 to 2024) emphasized the power of artistic expression in driving change:

"I am delighted to mark World Art Day 2025 as I strongly believe that art, fashion, and media hold immense power in raising awareness and addressing critical social and health issues ultimately creating a culture shift in communities. Art and fashion, to me, go far beyond aesthetics or entertainment; they serve as meaningful tools for education and advocacy."

Guided by this vision, the Foundation has launched several impactful initiatives, including its groundbreaking pan-African TV program Our Africa by Merck Foundation.

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"Our Africa by Merck Foundation" and other initiatives work hand-in-hand to raise awareness around critical issues such as breaking infertility stigma, supporting girls' education, ending child marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM), combating gender-based violence, empowering women, and educating on health matters like diabetes and hypertension.

"Africa's creativity reflects its rich heritage—through art, fabrics, music, and storytelling which is passed on through generations," said Dr. Kelej.

"That is why, together with my dear sisters, the First Ladies of Africa, who serve as Ambassadors of the Merck Foundation More Than a Mother campaign, we launch these awards annually. They are designed to inspire young Africans to use their talents to address important health and social challenges through their creative work."

As part of its Community Awareness Programs, Merck Foundation has also produced over 30 songs in English, French, Portuguese, and various African languages, in collaboration with artists from across the continent. These songs tackle topics such as infertility stigma, women's empowerment, girls' education, diabetes awareness, and healthy lifestyle promotion.

Additionally, in partnership with African First Ladies, Merck Foundation has released eight children's storybooks in English, French, and Portuguese. These storybooks have been further adapted into animated films to help convey crucial messages at the grassroots level, ensuring communities are reached in relatable and engaging ways.

As the world marks World Art Day 2025, Merck Foundation continues to demonstrate that art is not just for admiration it is a transformative force for advocacy, education, and lasting social impact across Africa.

Dubai Islamic Bank's Kenyan Arm Targets Growth With New South C Branch

By:Aoma Keziah
@themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- The South C branch will offer a full suite of personal and business banking services, all aligned with Islamic banking principles. The bank also emphasized that the expansion is aligned with its long-term vision to be a key player in Kenya's financial ecosystem.
- "These expansions are not just physical growth, but a clear demonstration of DIB Bank's commitment to becoming Kenya's most progressive Islamic financial institution. To the Board, Management, and entire team: Congratulations on this remarkable accomplishment. DIB Bank Kenya's ambitious expansion plan, which includes today's opening, perfectly aligns with its strategic vision to establish itself as Kenya's leading Shariah financial institution.

Ms. Mary Kanuku,acting CEO /Managing Director of DIB Bank Kenya, Mr. Ugas Sheikh Mohamed, chairman Capital Markets Authority, Mr Abdulla Abdulraheem, Commercial Attache at the UAE Nairobi Embassy DIB Bank Kenya Board Member Mr. Michael Murphy and other key partners cutting ribbon during the launch of the new DIB Bank South C branch.

DIB Bank Kenya (DIBBK), a fully owned subsidiary of Dubai Islamic Bank PJSC, the largest Islamic bank in the United Arab Emirates(UAE) has officially opened a new branch in South C, Nairobi, as part of the bank's continued efforts to strengthen its presence in the capital and provide more convenient access to Shariah compliant financial services.

"This branch opening showcases our Seven Years of Commitment and Seven branches of Growth. Since establishing our Kenyan presence in 2017, we have remained steadfast in addressing the evolving needs of our customers-both existing and prospective. Today's event is particularly significant as it marks the first of two new branches planned for this year, South C and Nyali official opening slated for next week while aligning perfectly with our strategic vision for Kenya. As a Sharia-compliant institution, our growth has always been guided by more than financial metrics. Every product we offer, and every service we deliver is built on the ethical foundations of Shariah banking," remarked Ms. Mary Kanuku,acting CEO /Managing Director of DIB Bank Kenya.

The South C branch will offer a full suite of personal and business banking services, all aligned with Islamic banking principles. The bank also emphasized that the expansion is aligned with its long-term vision to be a key player in Kenya's financial ecosystem.

"These expansions are not just physical growth, but a clear demonstration of DIB Bank's commitment to becoming Kenya's most progressive Islamic financial institution. To the Board, Management, and entire team: Congratulations on this remarkable accomplishment. DIB Bank Kenya's ambitious expansion plan, which includes today's opening, perfectly aligns with its strategic vision to establish itself as Kenya's leading Shariah financial institution. It is for this reason that DIB Bank Kenya has become the Bank of Choice, im a proud customer of this Bank and so, to the other millions of Kenyans in the two counties of Nairobi and Mombasa where you have got a presence and growing the network," said Mr. Ugas Sheikh Mohamed, chairman Capital Markets Authority.

DIBBK's parent company, Dubai Islamic Bank PJSC, brings decades of experience and global expertise in Islamic finance. The bank's expansion in Kenya highlights growing investor confidence and the increasing appetite for alternative banking models in the region.

Mr Abdulla Abdulraheem, Commercial Attache at the UAE Nairobi Embassy commented that the expansion plans by DIB Bank Kenya, go hand in hand with the economic ties between the two countries

"DIBBK expansion plans perfectly align with the growing economic ties between our two countries and today's launch is a testament to the resilience of the UAE-Kenya relations," he explained

This opening ceremony, was attended by bank executives, community leaders, and customers, who hailed the new branch as a positive step toward inclusive financial growth.

"During the planning of this branch, our team spent weeks walking these streets, talking to shop owners, meeting with community leaders. We heard stories of businesses that needed flexible financing to stock up and many more stories that shape who we are today. It is these real stories that shape everything about DIB, and indeed this branch. Our eyes are already on the horizon. Next week we officially open our Nyali branch extending this same thoughtful approach to Mombasa's dynamic coastal economy. Each new location we add is carefully chosen based on where we can make the most meaningful difference," highlighted DIB Bank Kenya Board Member Mr. Michael Murphy

The unveiling of DIB Bank South C branch, follows a series of strategic investments in technology, talent, and infrastructure, aimed at enhancing customer experience and delivering value to all stakeholders, as they look forward to unveiling another branch in Nyali Mombasa.

Reclaiming Public Participation, Calls For Meaningful Engagement

By: Dennis Wendo
Email:dambehi@gmail.com

> **Worth Noting:**
>
> - **Ideally, tools such as community barazas, public forums and stakeholder consultations would facilitate this engagement. However, what we continue to witness is a deliberate, disjointed and often tokenistic approach to involving the public.**
> - **A recent report by the Kenya Human Rights Commission, in collaboration with other civil society organizations (CSOs), paints a concerning picture of a country grappling with deep-rooted challenges, from deteriorating healthcare and education systems to rising political violence, gender-based violence, land injustices and public finance opacity. Citizens are struggling with economic strain, yet often find themselves excluded from decision-making processes.**

The recent civil society statement on the state of the nation calls attention to a critical truth. Public participation, though well anchored in law, often remains a simulated process, more symbolic than substantive.

Kenya boasts one of the most progressive legal frameworks for citizen engagement. The Constitution of Kenya 2010, along with supporting legislation such as the County Governments Act 2012, the Urban Areas and Cities Act 2011 and the Environmental Management and Coordination Act, mandates inclusive governance. These laws require state agencies to create platforms that allow citizens to influence decisions and policies that directly affect their lives.

In principle, public participation promotes transparency, accountability and equity. It is meant to give citizens a voice in governance, particularly within the devolved system, where counties are expected to implement bottom-up approaches in planning and development.

Ideally, tools such as community barazas, public forums and stakeholder consultations would facilitate this engagement. However, what we continue to witness is a deliberate, disjointed and often tokenistic approach to involving the public.

A recent report by the Kenya Human Rights Commission, in collaboration with other civil society organizations (CSOs), paints a concerning picture of a country grappling with deep-rooted challenges, from deteriorating healthcare and education systems to rising political violence, gender-based violence, land injustices and public finance opacity. Citizens are struggling with economic strain, yet often find themselves excluded from decision-making processes.

Importantly, the report doesn't just lament, it offers pragmatic recommendations. As it rightly calls out areas of concern, it is important to acknowledge that the Kenya Kwanza administration, now midway through its first term, has made some progress in key sectors including agriculture, health, education and energy. However, a core challenge lies in the government's dim communication of these gains. Citizens remain unaware or unconvinced, largely because they have not been brought along in the journey. This is where the opportunity lies.

The government should view civil society not as adversaries but as partners. Constructive criticism should not be mistaken for sabotage. Instead, these insights provide valuable feedback that can inform better governance. As we approach the 2027 general elections, this is a chance for the administration to self-assess, recalibrate, and respond meaningfully to the issues affecting ordinary Kenyans.

Citizens are not inherently opposed to development projects or policy reforms. Their frustration stems from poor rollout strategies, inadequate consultation, and lack of clarity. Policies such as the Social Health Insurance Fund, the Affordable Housing Program, and new education financing models have faced backlash, not necessarily due to their intent, but because of how they were introduced.

Public participation should not be a checkbox. It must be genuine, inclusive, and timely. Proper piloting of policies can help flag potential weaknesses early, enabling the government to make necessary adjustments before full implementation.

Globally, Kenya has made commitments to participatory governance. For instance, Principle 10 of the 1992 Rio Declaration emphasizes public access to information and meaningful involvement in environmental and developmental decisions. These principles must translate into local action.

Consider the Finance Bill 2024, while it included both progressive and controversial proposals, many Kenyans never had the chance to fully engage with its content. The lack of public awareness gave rise to misinformation and fueled protests, most notably the Gen-Z demonstrations that rocked the country between June and November 2024.

With the 2025/2026 budget-making process underway, and the Finance Bill 2025 on the horizon, the government must prioritize public engagement. This means diversifying information-sharing channels, from social media and community radio to vernacular broadcasts and town hall meetings. Transparent feedback mechanisms are critical to restoring public trust.

Several other important bills are in progress, including the Business Laws (Amendment), the Assemblies and Demonstration Bill, the Whistleblower Protection Bill, the Computer Misuse and Cybercrimes (Amendment), and the Public Participation Bill 2024. These must not be passed without thorough consultation with stakeholders and citizens.

Beyond the government, the public also has a role to play. Article 119 of the Constitution allows any Kenyan to petition Parliament. Citizens should seize this right, through petitions, memoranda, public hearings, and digital platforms. Our democracy thrives when voices from all corners of the country are heard and considered.

Finally, civil society must safeguard its space by ensuring its actions remain guided by truth and integrity. It should never allow infiltration or misuse for partisan agendas. When CSOs and the state collaborate in good faith, it creates a powerful framework for inclusive governance.

As Kenya continues its democratic journey, let us move beyond performative participation. Let us build a nation where every voice truly counts.

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Piaggio EV Three-Wheeler At The ESAK C&I Conference

By: Raphael Ndakala Atanda
@themtkenyatimes

Car & General displayed its Piaggio electric three-wheeler at the two-day conference and exhibition by the Electric Sector Association of Kenya (ESAK) held between April 16 and 17, 2025 at the Trademark Hotel, Nairobi. The event comes at a time when Kenya's Commercial and Industrial (C&I) sector is experiencing rapid transformation driven by the increasing demand for reliable, cost effective and environmental friendly energy solutions.

Car & General introduced the Piaggio Ape Electrik vehicles in the Kenyan market in February 2024. The vehicles offer optimum value for customers through better range, grade ability, load carrying capacity as well as providing a competitive total cost of ownership. Car & General pioneered the use of three-wheelers as taxis in East Africa in 2002.

The Piaggio electric range has superior driving range, 12" tyre size offering better ground clearance and improved grade ability. Available as a fixed battery solution, a swappable battery solution will be available in due course. The advanced battery performance results in a longer run, enhanced earnings and effective cost of ownership. The passenger version can go for 145 kilometers while the cargo one can do 115 kilometers per charge.

With low maintenance costs, one year warranty, advanced technology and long range, the Piaggio electric three-wheelers will definitely maximize the earnings of its customers. Advanced telematics give drivers better navigation and allows fleet owners to track and manage their fleet efficiently.

George Rubiri, the General Manager for Car & General (Trading) Limited said, "Car & General is committed to making our customers smile in every street, in every town with our quality products and after-sales services. Piaggio electric three-wheelers provides path-breaking last-mile transport solutions as we lead Kenya's three wheeler EV mission."

Erick Masabule (in red), a sales executive for Piaggio three-wheelers at Car & General, shows Annabal Kamondo of Belle Anka International how to operate the Piaggio Ape Electric tuk tuk during the Electric Sector Association of Kenya (ESAK) conference and exhibition held at the Trademark Hotel in Nairobi.

E-mobility and green energy solutions uptake will cut down emissions thus alleviating challenges of climate change.

Kinango Residents Cry For Water As Crisis Persists Despite Devolution

By: Athuman Said Mwamlisho
@themtkenyatimes

Thirteen years after the advent of devolution, residents of Kinango Sub-County in Kwale are still struggling to access one of life's most basic necessities—clean and safe water. Despite the county having a reliable water source at the Marere springs in Shimba Hills Forest, the majority of Kinango's population remains water-starved.

For the few villages near the Kibaoni water plant supply, water is available, but beyond Kinango town, the situation is dire. Many residents have been left with no choice but to rely on dams and seasonal water sources, which dry up quickly, especially during droughts. The lack of sustainable water supply puts thousands of people at risk of consuming contaminated water, exposing them to diseases such as cholera, dysentery, and typhoid.

The persistent water problem in Kinango is not due to a lack of resources but rather poor distribution and management. The Kwale Water and Sewerage Company, responsible for supplying water in the county, has been accused of prioritizing other regions, particularly Mombasa County, at the expense of Kinango residents. This has raised questions about the equity and fairness in the allocation of water resources.

Residents have time and again called on their leaders to intervene and address the crisis. However, despite their pleas, little has been done to alleviate their suffering. Many locals wonder why they continue to endure water shortages when their county harvests enough clean water from Marere springs.

Kwale Governor Fatuma Achani has been at the forefront in the fight to improve access to clean water and general infrastructure in the county. Her administration has been working with the national government to bring development to Kinango, including efforts to tarmac the crucial 30-kilometer Kwale-Kinango road.

Upon completion, this road will transform the sub-county, improving transport and economic activities. However, despite her efforts, residents feel that the water crisis should be given top priority, as it is a matter of survival. Many believe that unless water distribution is streamlined and access expanded, other developments may not have a meaningful impact on their lives.

Amidst growing frustrations, Kinango Member of Parliament Hon. Gonzi Rai has come under scrutiny for his silence on the issue. While water shortages continue to affect his constituents, the MP has not made significant efforts to engage the Kwale Water and Sewerage Company or seek alternative solutions for his people.

His lack of action has triggered mixed reactions among residents, some of whom feel abandoned. "We have waited for too long. We need our leaders to take action. It is unacceptable that we continue to suffer when we have a natural water source within our county," said one resident.

As the dry season continues to bite, the need for a lasting solution to Kinango's water crisis has never been more urgent. Residents are

calling on both county and national leaders to prioritize the expansion of water supply infrastructure to ensure that clean water reaches every village in Kinango.

Additionally, there is a need for increased transparency and accountability in water distribution. Many believe that political goodwill and proper management of existing resources can go a long way in resolving the crisis.

With devolution meant to bring services closer to the people, the continued suffering of Kinango residents raises questions about whether leaders are truly committed to fulfilling their mandate. The time for action is now—before the situation worsens and lives are put at further risk.

The War Of Definitions: How America, China, And Russia Compete To Shape The Global Order

By: Silas Mwaudasheni Nande
@themtkenyatimes

Introduction

The post-Cold War world promised a unipolar moment where liberal democracy, human rights, and free-market capitalism - largely defined and championed by the United States - would become the global norm. Yet, three decades later, the international order is not only contested but fractured. The world is witnessing a profound "war of definitions," in which global norms, values, and institutions are being reinterpreted, challenged, and weaponized by the world's most powerful nations—America, China, and Russia.

Each of these powers is engaged in an ideological, geopolitical, and semantic battle to shape how the world understands governance, human rights, sovereignty, the rule of law, and global order. The stakes are immense, for the victor will not merely enjoy hegemonic dominance but will set the very terms by which nations relate to one another.

This article provides a comprehensive analysis of how the United States, China, and Russia are fighting to define the ideological and institutional pillars of the modern world, using facts, global case studies, and expert insight.

1. The United States: Champion of Liberal Hegemony

1.1 Historical Context

Since the end of World War II, the U.S. has assumed the role of global architect. It helped create the United Nations, NATO, the World Bank, the IMF, and promoted the spread of democratic capitalism. Its version of the rule of law and human rights became the template for global institutions.

1.2 Key Tenets of the American Model

Liberal Democracy: America promotes elections, free speech, and the separation of powers as universal political ideals.

Capitalist Economy: Free-market capitalism is presented as the path to prosperity.

Rule-Based International Order: The U.S. insists on rules-based order—but often interprets these rules selectively.

Human Rights and Interventions: Washington justifies its global interventions—military or economic—on the basis of protecting human rights.

1.3 Hypocrisy and Selectivity

However, critics point to America's inconsistent record:

Iraq War (2003): Launched without UN approval, undermining the very rules the U.S. claims to uphold.

Support for Dictatorships: From Saudi Arabia to Egypt, U.S. alliances contradict its democratic rhetoric.

Weaponization of Sanctions: America uses its financial dominance (via the dollar and SWIFT system) to punish adversaries under the guise of law and order.

1.4 Soft Power and Cultural Dominance

America's dominance also lies in Hollywood, Silicon Valley, and its control over global narratives through media giants like CNN, The New York Times, and social media platforms.

2. China: Redefining Modernity through Authoritarian Capitalism

2.1 The Rise of China

China's economic miracle, lifting over 800 million people out of poverty, has challenged the assumption that only liberal democracies can deliver prosperity. Its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and its technological leap in areas like AI and 5G represent new avenues of global influence.

2.2 Chinese Definitions of Global Norms

Sovereignty Over Intervention: China insists on non-interference, rejecting Western-led interventions in domestic affairs.

Economic Development as Human Rights: Beijing argues that development and stability are higher priorities than individual political freedoms.

Collective Stability Over Individual Liberty: Social harmony and economic growth are framed as societal rights.

2.3 Institutions and Alliances

China is building parallel institutions:

Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB): Alternative to the World Bank.

BRICS Alliance: Promotes multipolarity.

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO): A security and political alliance free from Western ideologies.

2.4 Technocratic Authoritarianism

China's model of governance emphasizes efficiency and meritocracy, using big data and AI for governance. The Social Credit System is controversial in the West but hailed internally as a means of social trust.

3. Russia: The Defender of Sovereignty and Tradition

3.1 Historical Grievances

Russia views the post-Soviet expansion of NATO as a betrayal. Its interventions in Georgia (2008), Crimea (2014), and Ukraine (2022) are framed as efforts to protect its sphere of influence.

3.2 Alternative Ideological Framework

Multipolar World: Russia pushes back against U.S. unipolarity.

Traditional Values: The Kremlin promotes nationalism, Orthodox Christianity, and anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric as counters to Western liberalism.

Information Sovereignty: Russia censors Western platforms, developing its own narrative tools like RT and Sputnik.

3.3 Redefining the Rule of Law

While the West sees international law as a fixed set of rules, Russia views it as a field of power negotiation. Putin has argued that the U.S. and allies have already undermined these laws through interventions.

4. The Battlefields of Definition

5.1 The United Nations

While the U.S. has long dominated the UN, China is increasingly influential, especially in agencies like WHO, FAO, and ITU. Russia uses its veto power in the Security Council to counter Western resolutions.

5.2 The Internet and Information War

China and Russia are pushing for a sovereign internet model, rejecting U.S. tech hegemony. The U.S., in contrast, defends an open but Western-controlled internet.

Competing Definitions: A Comparative Overview

Concept	U.S. Definition	China's Definition	Russia's Definition
Democracy	Electoral, multiparty, liberal freedoms	Meritocratic, one-party stability	Managed democracy, strong leadership
Human Rights	Individual freedoms and political rights	Development, stability, economic rights	Cultural/traditional rights, state sovereignty
Rule of Law	Law above all, often with interventionist policies	State-centric interpretation of law	Law as tool of sovereignty and national power
Sovereignty	Conditional (human rights override)	Absolute, sacred	Geopolitical sphere protected
Global Order	Rules-based under U.S. leadership	Multipolarity with Chinese respect for sovereignty	Restoration of great power status, balance of power

5.3 Africa and the Global South

Africa has become the arena of competing influences:

U.S. promotes governance and human rights.

China invests in infrastructure without political strings.

Russia provides military support and appeals to anti-colonial sentiments.

5.4 War and Conflict Zones

Ukraine War: A flashpoint where Russia challenges NATO's expansion, the U.S. supplies arms, and China calls for diplomatic neutrality.

South China Sea: U.S. Navy versus China's territorial assertions.

Middle East: Russia supports Syria's Assad; U.S. and allies support opposition groups.

6. The Role of Propaganda and Narrative Control

Each nation invests heavily in narrative construction:

U.S.: CNN, Voice of America, Hollywood.

China: CGTN, Xinhua, Confucius Institutes.

Russia: RT, Sputnik, Telegram networks.

The rise of AI-driven misinformation, deepfakes, and cyber warfare has made truth a weaponized commodity.

7. The Future of Global Norms: Integration or Fragmentation?

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Renew Our Power Gathering: A Call To Action For A Just And Sustainable Energy Future

By: Mary Blessing Ahairiirwe
@themtkenyatimes

At Women For Green Economy Movement (WoGEM)Uganda, we join over 200 activists from around the world at the Renew Our Power Gathering, held in Brazil from April 13th to 17th, 2025.

This gathering focuses on the adoption and advocacy of renewable energy, highlighting the negative impacts of fossil fuels on the environment and human well-being. We had the privilege of having our Executive Director Ms. Twongirwe Ireen as one of the Panelists in this gathering.

The EACOP project, which began in Uganda's Albertine region, exemplifies the devastating consequences of oil extraction. The project has displaced families, leaving children and marginalized women homeless. The search for oil has also led to increased school dropouts, contributing to teenage pregnancies and early marriages among young girls. These factors, along with other environmental damage, have resulted in higher mortality rates in the Albertine region.

We're ringing a continuous wake-up call to all governments and responsible authorities worldwide to prioritize people over profit and abandon fossil fuels. These fuels emit carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas that contributes to global warming and poses a significant threat to our planet.

A study by UCL estimates that 8 million deaths annually are linked to air pollution, with 61% of these deaths directly attributed to fossil fuels. This staggering statistic underscores the urgent need to transition away from fossil fuels and embrace clean energy alternatives.

Furthermore, fossil fuels are non-renewable resources, meaning they cannot be replenished. What happens to the communities that depend on these fuels when they are depleted? The extraction process itself often leads to fatal accidents, exposure to toxic chemicals, and the loss of lives. Families are devastated as they search for these fuels that are poisonous and dangerous to human health and the environment.

It is against this backdrop that we join millions of voices in advocating for sustainable, renewable, and clean energy alternatives. We believe in a future where energy is accessible to all and the planet is protected. This is why we join the Renew Our Power Gathering. We stand in solidarity with those who are fighting for a just and sustainable energy future.

Mary Blessing Ahairiirwe
Volunteer- Women for Green Economy Movement Uganda
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The War Of Definitions: How America, China, And Russia Compete To Shape The Global Order

Contd from page 20

We are moving toward a fragmented global order:

Digital Iron Curtains: Diverging tech ecosystems (TikTok bans, Huawei restrictions).

Economic Decoupling: U.S.-China trade wars, sanctions against Russia.

Ideological Blocs: Democratic vs Authoritarian alignments.

Yet, there are signs of potential convergence:

Climate Change: A shared existential threat.

Pandemic Response: Needs global coordination.

Trade and Development: Mutual interdependence.

Conclusion: Who Defines the Future?

The world is no longer merely shaped by bombs and ballots - it is shaped by definitions. America, China, and Russia are not just competing over territory or technology; they are fighting to define what justice, law, power, freedom, and order mean in the 21st century.

Africa and the Global South must navigate these contested meanings with wisdom. Rather than being pawns in a great power rivalry, emerging nations should assert their own definitions rooted in their histories, values, and aspirations.

The real question for the 21st century is not who has the biggest army or economy, but who has the most compelling story about how the world should work. In this war of definitions, neutrality is not an option. Clarity, courage, and cultural rootedness are essential.

China, America, And Russia

How Mt Kenya Region Wings To Fly Beneficiaries Met For Mentorship Program In Meru

By: Dennis Dibondo
@themtkenyatimes

Some of the students at Meru school yesterday. Photo/ Dennis Dibondo.

Equity bank Dr Silpha Owich briefing journalists yesterday.

Over 1,200 students from various secondary schools across Mount Kenya counties attended an education and leadership congress organised by Equity Bank in Meru County.

The 1,275 students are beneficiaries of Equity Bank Wings To Fly program.

The students are from Meru, Tharaka Nithi, Kirinyaga Embu, Nyeri, Laikipia and Muranga counties.

Similar congresses were held in different parts of the country.

Equity bank Wings To Fly Associate Director for Women and Youth banking retail and consumer Dr Silpha Owich who represented the Equity group boss Dr James Mwangi said they have 1275 scholars from the mountain region who they have been mentoring for the last three days under the theme, "The Innovation Generation. Igniting Ideas. Creating Impact."

"We are encouraging innovation and we are even training the youth and for the three days they have done 30 prototypes and Equity Afia which is very successful was done by young innovators," she said.

Equity Afia has over 60 branches countrywide.

She said students who get A plain and A- will be given an internship by the bank before they go to the university.

"We will also have a mentorship program for students before the go to the university so that they can be mentored to get scholarships from top global Universities like Yale University and Harvard University and many more," she said.

She said currently they have 980 students studying in universities outside the country doing finance and technology and are going big in whatever they are studying.

Equity Bank Central and Upper Eastern Region Manager Stephen Mwaniki said the 16th annual congress was also used for mentoring the youth to avoid drugs and early pregnancy and focus on their studies to have a bright future.

"We want the students to have to be able to be given experiences by several people to be able to deal with challenges not only in life but also in the future," Mwaniki said.

Equity bank Meru-Makutano branch Manager Nancy Gitonga said she was optimistic the students have been mentored to work hard in their studies to excel in the future.

Fish Feed Factory To Boosts Aquaculture In Tharaka Nithi

By: Alex Njeru
@themtkenyatimes

An upcoming fish feed factory at Mutindwa wa Mbogori in Maara Constituency will bolster the region's aquaculture industry.

The project by Tharaka Nithi County Government is already producing affordable, high-quality fish feed and is set to be a game-changer for thousands of local farmers from across the three constituencies of Tharaka, Maara and Chuka/Igambang'ombe.

According to the Chief Officer for Fisheries, Mr. Antony Kiruya, the factory is expected to significantly reduce the cost of fish feed, which has long been a barrier for small-scale farmers.

He spoke during a meeting with representatives of farmers from across the sub counties.

"Currently, a 25kg bag of fish feed in the market goes for about Sh5,500. With the local production, prices are set to drop, making fish farming more profitable," he said.

Mr. Kiruya added that the factory's feed is not only cheaper but of superior quality, boosting fish growth and reducing mortality.

"We've seen a great improvement in fish farming across Tharaka Nithi. Previously, farmers relied on fingerlings from Sagana, but now we have five local hatcheries," he noted.

He said Governor Muthomi Njuki has championed the aquaculture sector, supporting farmers with fishing nets, cool boxes, freezers, and training.

He encouraged the cultivation of crops like sunflower, maize, cassava, and sorghum, which are key ingredients in fish feed production.

Chogoria Sub-County Administrator Boniface Kainga emphasized the economic significance of the new factory, noting that Tharaka Nithi has long depended on imported feed, even from outside the country.

"The market is ready, and with time, the feed will be devolved to sub-counties for easier access. We expect prices to fall and productivity to rise," he said.

The factory's success has also been attributed to local collaboration. The chairman of the fish farmers' group lauded the county for supplying essential machines, but emphasized the need for larger equipment to scale production to commercially viable levels.

Social Services Officer Jane Kawira urged locals to embrace the spirit of collective enterprise by forming and registering groups officially.

Tharaka Nithi County Fisheries Chief Officer Mr Antony Kiruya samples fish feed manufactured at a factory at Mutindwa wa Mbogori in Chogoria ward yesterday. Photo/Alex Njeru .

"Working in groups helps in accessing government support and enhances accountability," she said.

Fish farming has greatly strengthened food security and rural economies through initiatives like aquaculture.

Already, the economic impact is being felt. At the fish market and eatery in Chuka Town, at least 600 fish pieces are sold every Tuesday and Thursday. Mr. Kiruya announced plans to allocate eatery spaces in modern markets to registered fish farmer groups.

"We are creating an entire ecosystem — from feed production to fingerling supply, to market access. The future is bright for fish farmers in Tharaka Nithi."

Locals have been encouraged to join hands, form cooperatives, and take advantage of the factory and the growing demand for fish.

With continued government support and expanding market access, the fish feed factory at Mutindwa wa Mbogori is not just a building — it is a symbol of sustainable development and economic empowerment for the region.

Am I Raising An Entitled Child?

By: Ms Lucy Simiyu
@themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- **Some children tend to take their parents' or other people's efforts for granted, often showing lack of gratitude for the hard work behind a gift, a service, or a favour. Some of the people who find themselves on the receiving end of an entitled child include the child's teachers, support staff in a school setting, parents' employees including drivers and house managers.**
- **An entitled child might struggle with boundaries in the form of rules and limitations. There is the expectation to be exempted from them and may exhibit frustration (like in the case of Sabina) or defiance, hoping to have their way. They find it difficult to take "no" for an answer.**

While most parents want the best for their children, there is concern that in an increasingly consumer-driven society such as ours, many parents might be raising an entitled child.

The idea of entitlement in children has become a topic of concern for many, especially among educators who spend more time with the child than the parent. How would a parent know if their child is showing signs of entitlement, and what can a parent do to prevent it?

An entitled child strongly believes they deserve special treatment, privileges, or resources without putting in the effort ,or earning those privileges. These children may expect immediate gratification and have difficulty understanding the value of hard work, or delayed rewards.

There are different forms of entitlement in children. Most common are those who often are inconsiderate of others and will expect to get what they want when they want it, regardless of others' needs, or circumstances.

Some children tend to take their parents' or other people's efforts for granted, often showing lack of gratitude for the hard work behind a gift, a service, or a favour. Some of the people who find themselves on the receiving end of an entitled child include the child's teachers, support staff in a school setting, parents' employees including drivers and house managers.

An entitled child might struggle with boundaries in the form of rules and limitations. There is the expectation to be exempted from them and may exhibit frustration (like in the case of Sabina) or defiance, hoping to have their way. They find it difficult to take "no" for an answer.

There is the belief that they are more deserving than others thus develop a sense of superiority and an inflated sense of self-worth.

As a parent, it is important to be aware of the following signs of entitlement,if your child constantly expresses dissatisfaction, or frustration when they do not get what they want. This may be expressed through complaints and constant whining about things like not getting a specific snack, or not getting permission to attend a friend's birthday party.

If your child feels that their need should be met immediately, however unrealistic, then you might have an entitled child on your hands. If your child believes that rules do not apply to them, or expects privileges that other children do not get. For example, expecting to skip school at the slightest excuse, get more screen time, avoid chores, or take shortcuts without any consequences is a red flag.

If your child takes acts of service and kindness for granted, they will believe that these things are owed to them. If your child often feels that others should cater to their needs—whether it is sharing toys, taking turns, or helping them with tasks—this can be another indication of an entitled attitude. A child who does not consider the feelings, or needs of others might be overly focused on their own desires.

To prevent raising an entitled child set clear and consistent boundaries. These will help children learn and understand acceptable behaviour, including respect and consideration for others.

Teach them the value and discipline of hard work. If your child wants something special, work with them to create a plan for achieving it, teaching them that good things come to those who work for them.

Practice and model gratitude as a parent. This can instil a sense of appreciation in your child. Also, help your child to understand how their actions affect others. Teach them empathy through role-playing, storytelling and discussing real-life situations.

Encourage your child to wait for rewards. This will teach them patience and they will also develop a sense of fulfillment from earned rewards. Most important, be mindful of overindulgence as this can breed an entitled mindset. It is important to find a balance between showing love and providing for your child.

While raising children in today's world can be a daunting task, especially with societal pressures that sometimes encourage immediate gratification and a sense of entitlement, parents have the responsibility to provide the right guidance and boundaries for their children.

Entitled children also evolve into adults who expect success without the necessary effort, or persistence, as well as struggle to navigate challenges or handle disappointments in life. If you find yourself questioning whether you are raising an entitled child, it is important to take a step back, assess your parenting approach, and make necessary adjustments to ensure your child learns the important life lessons that will help them thrive.

Ms Lucy Simiyu is The School Psychologist at Crawford International School

Kirinyaga Coffee Farmers Toast To Huge Payout, Laud Government Efforts To Revitalise Sector

By: MKT Reporter
@themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- Governor Waiguru said her coffee sector revitalization initiative was paying off with farmers getting more money in their pockets.
- Waiguru termed the payouts as "impressive" adding that her administration will continue with its farmer centric and whole value chain driven interventions that will deliver quick and sustainable wins for the farmer.
- "Our coffee farmers are beginning to enjoy the fruits of their labour, with impressive cherry payouts this season. Our county-level interventions, from extension services to cooperative strengthening, together with national government support on coffee reforms and subsidized farm inputs, are delivering real impact. When we work together, the farmer wins," Waiguru said.

Coffee farmers in Kirinyaga have a reason to smile following the release of huge payout rates for the 2024/2025 season.

Already 27 out of the 75 wet Mills, which are commonly referred to as coffee factories, have announced a payout of between Ksh100 and Ksh145 per kilogramme for the cherry.

Gacami Coffee factory under the Baragwi Farmers Cooperative Society made the highest payout of Ksh145.10 per Kilogramme followed by Karumandi at Ksh144.30, Mukure (Ksh144.25), Mucagara (Ksh143.80), Kii (Ksh142.35), Guama (Ksh141.80), Karimikui (Ksh141.13), Kiang'ombe (Ksh141.05), Kiangoi (Ksh140.51) and Nyanja (Ksh140.50).

Officials of the cooperatives, farmers and leaders have attributed the huge payout to support from the government especially in provision of subsidized farm input, training and marketing of the produce.

The success has also been attributed to reforms in the coffee subsector that allowed the farmers to sell their coffee directly to buyers at the Nairobi Coffee auction.

The County Government has helped the 14 cooperative societies register the Kirinyaga Slopes Coffee Brokerage Company Limited, which has been licensed by Capital Markets Authority as a coffee broker thus eliminating middlemen.

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Joyce Wanjiku, chairperson of Rungeto Farmers Cooperative Society said application of best agricultural practices resulting from training and timely availability of farm inputs like the government's subsidized fertilizer had played a great role in the rise in prices of coffee.

Ms Joyce Wanjiku during the interview

"I am very pleased that farmers have received better payout, this is a clear indication that our hardworking farmers are finally being rewarded. The direct sale of coffee at the auction initiative spearheaded by Governor Anne Waiguru has given us a greater say in sale of our coffee," said Wanjiku.

Cyrus Chomba, Baragwi Farmers Cooperative Society manager said the quality of coffee delivered in all its 12 factories had also improved thus enabling it to fetch higher prices at the auction.

Chomba lauded farmers for their hardwork and applying agriculture best practices to deliver increased yield and quality bean to the factory.

"As a cooperative we have also been able to reduce on the cost of processing the bean having installed solar dryers that have also helped use in early delivery of the produce to the miller," he said.

He said the last mile subsidized fertilizer initiative by the County government is one of the factors that had helped farmers realize increased production.

Simon Muriithi, a Director at Gacami coffee factory said deployment of agronomists to train and support farmers, transportation of subsidized fertilizer to coffee factories by the county government had contributed to reduced cost of production thus earning farmers more money.

"The county government, through Baragwi Cooperative, has helped us in storing our produce, thus minimizing post-harvest losses. Additionally, they provided subsidized fertilizer in a timely manner, which was crucial," he added.

Stakeholders checking on drying coffee beans.

The County has been facilitating transportation of the subsidized fertilizers to 28 coffee factories selected from across the 14 registered coffee cooperative societies. Five of the societies have already announced their 2024/25 payout rates. The societies include; Baragwi, Kabare, Rung'eto, Mwirua and New Ngariama. The County produces an average of 40,000 tons of coffee annually earning farmers around Ksh. 2.8 billion.

Farmers have expressed excitement over the high payout saying there is hope that coffee farming could return to its profitability.

"I am extremely grateful this time because our cooperative, under Baragwi, has achieved an impressive payout of Ksh.145.10 per kilogram, one of the highest. We are hopeful this trend will continue," Josphat Gachoki, a farmer and member of Gacami Coffee Factory.

"We urge the county government to keep supporting us with essential inputs and resources. We also appreciate the continued knowledge we are receiving through county-appointed agronomists. Having access to this training is helping us adopt new techniques that make coffee farming more profitable," added Lydiah Wanjira, another farmer and member of Rung'eto Cooperative.

David Nyaga another farmer from Rung'eto Cooperative expressed optimism that with the support from the government to lower cost of farm inputs, coffee prices will continue to rise.

"This year's payout has been very good, and we are hopeful that the prices will continue to rise. The cooperative's management, together with the county government, has been instrumental, particularly in the provision of inputs, which has led to better harvests," said Nyaga.

Harsh Economic Times, High Taxation Hurting Real Estate Sector – Stakeholders

By: John Kamau
@themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- "The economic environment in the country is harsher than before. Kenyans working within and outside the country continue to complain of hard economic times. Land investment transactions have declined over the past few months," Wangui who spoke during a tour of their Amara Gardens project in Matuu, Machakos County stated.
- Her sentiments were echoed by the firm CEO Tabitha Kanyingi, another developer who decried that a tough economic environment occasioned by job losses, higher taxes and higher interest rates have continued to stifle demand for land by the would-be land buyers.
- Kanyingi noted that during periods of economic uncertainty and slowed GDP growth, land buyers put off decisions to acquire land thereby reducing demand.

Kenya's real estate sector is grappling with significant challenges as a combination of economic pressures, regulatory hurdles and market oversupply that continues to dampen growth prospects.

Realtors raised concerns that the major contributor to the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) continues to experience a slowdown.

Led by Veronicah Wangui, the Sales Manager at Dafari Properties, the developers expressed concerns that despite serving as a cornerstone for economic growth and stability, challenges bedeviling the sector continues to inhibit creation of job opportunities, settlement of Kenyans and stimulation of related industries.

"The economic environment in the country is harsher than before. Kenyans working within and outside the country continue to complain of hard economic times. Land investment transactions have declined over the past few months," Wangui who spoke during a tour of their Amara Gardens project in Matuu, Machakos County stated.

Her sentiments were echoed by the firm CEO Tabitha Kanyingi, another developer who decried that a tough economic environment occasioned by job losses, higher taxes and higher interest rates have continued to stifle demand for land by the would-be land buyers.

Kanyingi noted that during periods of economic uncertainty and slowed GDP growth, land buyers put off decisions to acquire land thereby reducing demand.

She called on the government to consider reducing taxes imposed on land sellers saying that they contribute a lot to the economy by facilitating land ownership and use, supporting investment, and enabling various economic activities such as agriculture, urban development, and private sector growth.

Most Kenyans, according to the sector players, are unable to raise resources to purchase land or homes due to a raft of taxes introduced by the Kenya Kwanza administration, thereby increasing housing deficit in the country.

"We are major players in revenue generation for the government through property taxes. Given incentives and should the government reduce the various taxes imposed on us, we are likely to help in revitalizing the economy. We want to invest more, employ more youths for social-economic development," stated Kanyingi.

Kanyingi averred that the many taxes, including taxation on construction materials and deductions from pay slips have significantly reduced Kenyans' purchasing power and dealt a huge blow to investments.

Ms Tabitha Karanja.

She quipped that increased taxation in the sector has undermined investments in the country which has in turn caused ripple effects in the economy.

She singled out the recent increment of stamp duty in municipalities close to urban areas from 2 percent to 4 percent which has seen prices of land and houses in the urban setups skyrocket thereby making it difficult for ordinary Kenyans to own homes.

"The government should be considerate of the current economic situation in the country before introducing more taxes that will scare away investors who are pivotal in turning around the country's economy," she said.

James Kimani, a realtor, called on both the National and County Governments to focus on implementing infrastructure projects including roads, water and electricity installation even in remote parts of the country so as to open up regions for settlement and investments.

"Most Kenyans have bought property but they are yet to develop them or settle due to lack of requisite infrastructure. This is what the Government should focus on, to enable Kenyans to settle in their own homes. It will solve about 80 percent of the housing problems the country is facing," he noted.

While noting that the real estate sector is the backbone of the country's developments, Kimani called on the government to come up with laws and policies that will create an enabling environment for the sector.

Ms Veronica Wangui

He quipped that the sector contributes significantly to the country's economic basket as well as creating numerous job opportunities for Kenyans and especially the youth.

Despite the numerous challenges that inhibit growth of the sector, the stakeholders revealed that there are opportunities within the sector that investors can seize and run with for posterity.

They at the same time called on investors to continue doing due diligence by verifying the legitimacy, legality, and safety of a property before conducting any forms of transactions.

They stated that the move will help ensure that the property they seek to purchase is free from disputes, encumbrances, and other hidden issues, protecting them from potential fraud and costly mistakes.

Kanyingi averred that Kenyans have lost billions of shillings to unscrupulous individuals and land buying firms in fake land deals, adding that he was once a victim of the culprits.

"It is important to conduct background searches and do thorough investigations before investing your hard earned money. Innocent people, and especially those working abroad, have lost their money to corrupt firms," the CEO said.

She urged Kenyans not to be in a hurry but take time conducting searches, companies' profiles and track records before investing their resources.

Sports >> *Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti and midfielder Jude Bellingham both tried to build the momentum for a possible Champions League fightback against Arsenal

Ancelotti, Bellingham Look For Bernabeu Magic Against Arsenal

MADRID, (Xinhua) -- Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti and midfielder Jude Bellingham both tried to build the momentum for a possible Champions League fightback against Arsenal in the second leg of their quarter-final on Wednesday night.

Arsenal won the first leg 3-0 a week ago in London, but Real Madrid is pinning hopes on another epic fightback in front of home fans in the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium. “We have the quality to turn this tie around, along with the commitment, the experience and the fans,” insisted Ancelotti. “The Santiago Bernabeu has magic, and everyone knows it’s a special atmosphere,” added the coach, who considered that on Wednesday his side needs “a bit of everything - quality and a complete performance, both physically and collectively.” “It’s about trying your best at the beginning to have that control and when you have that, you can score any minute,” said Ancelotti. Bellingham also spoke about the reputation of the Bernabeu for Real Madrid fightbacks. “Hopefully we can add another special night,” he said. “It’s a night that’s made for Real Madrid. I’ve heard it a million times since last week, I’ve seen a million videos - it’s really motivating stuff,” commented the England midfielder.

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> * Serhou Guirassy scored a stunning hat-trick, but Borussia Dortmund was knocked out of the UEFA Champions League by Barcelona on Wednesday night, despite a spirited 3-1 win in the quarterfinal second leg.

Barcelona Through, Dortmund Falls Despite Guirassy Treble

BERLIN, (Xinhua) -- Serhou Guirassy scored a stunning hat-trick, but Borussia Dortmund was knocked out of the UEFA Champions League by Barcelona on Wednesday night, despite a spirited 3-1 win in the quarterfinal second leg.

Trailing 4-0 from the first leg, Dortmund came out with a clear sense of purpose. The breakthrough came early when Guirassy chipped in a Panenka penalty in the 11th minute after Pascal Gross was fouled by Barca goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny. It was the striker's 11th goal of the tournament, a new club record for a single Champions League season.Dortmund continued to press and Guirassy and Gross both went close before the break. The host's physical approach and high pressing made things uncomfortable for Barcelona, although clear-cut chances were few and far between, as the visitors slowed the tempo through possession.

The second half brought renewed drama. Guirassy headed in his second of the night from close range in the 49th minute to give the home side some hope. But the momentum was short-lived just five minutes later when Ramy Bensebaini inadvertently turned a low cross into his own net to halt the comeback.Nevertheless, Dortmund refused to give up. Substitute Julien Duranville set up Guirassy for his third of the night 20 minutes from time to bring the crowd back to life.A disallowed goal from Julian Brandt followed, and despite relentless attacking in the final minutes, Dortmund couldn't find the two goals they needed to force extra time."We believed from the first minute and you saw that today," said defender Niklas Sule. "I'm incredibly proud of the team."Barcelona thus advances to the semifinals with a 5-3 aggregate win, while Dortmund bows out to focus on the Bundesliga."Full credit to Dortmund, they played very well. A fantastic team, and to be honest, I had a feeling we might lose tonight. The atmosphere here is incredible, the fans really carry the team. Not much went our way today. So, congratulations to Dortmund for the win, but also to my team, we are through to the semifinals, and that's what counts," said Barcelona coach Hansi Flick.

The MT. KENYA TIMES

Victoria Ezeh Nneoma, A Writer, Illustrator And Graphic Designer

By: Paula Otukile
Gaborone, Botswana
Correspondence

1. Who are you?
I'm a writer, illustrator and graphic designer who's deeply drawn to creativity written and visual storytelling. I'm still growing in the field, but I genuinely love what I do and enjoy expressing ideas through design.

2. Where are you from?
I'm proudly from Nigeria, a country full of culture, color, and creativity.

3. What do you do?
I write books for authors, blogposts, create illustrations and graphic designs—mostly self-taught—and I'm constantly learning and experimenting. I put a lot of heart and intentionality into my work.

4. When did you begin graphic designing?
I started exploring graphic design around 2021. Back then, I would always leave my office to hang out with the design team—I was fascinated by the process and the beautiful work they created. That curiosity slowly grew into practice.

5. What inspired you?
To be honest, I can't pinpoint one exact moment or person. But I've always loved good designs. That feeling of wanting to create something beautiful pulled me in and hasn't let go since.

6. What's your highlight?
My biggest highlight is seeing my progress. Looking back at my earlier works and seeing how far I've come gives me a strong sense of purpose and motivation to keep going.

7. Any award yet?
Not yet. But I believe I'm still in my growth phase, and I know that with time, consistency, and effort, recognition will come.

8. What's your best book so far?
I've read books like Smart Woman, Rich Dad, Poor Dad, and Think and Grow Rich. All of them have added value to me in different ways, so I can't pick just one. They've helped me think differently and dream bigger.

9. Who is your role model?
I admire successful women in general—women who rise above challenges and make an impact. Like Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie she's A voice for African stories and gender equality. I really love her books.
Also Bonang Matheba is one woman I also admire. She's known for her fashion sense and luxury beverage brand "House of BNG". I love the fact that she's empowering women through her foundation and brand.
Of course I can't skip Yvonne Chaka Chaka. She's a woman that uses her voice to support education, health, and human rights in Africa.
One person who really helped shape my mindset is Joyce Meyer. Her teachings taught me that no matter what I've been through, I can still rise and become better.
Women who strive to make impact in our community regardless of their age and status are my role model.

10. What's the future of Arts and Culture in Africa?
The future is bright. African creatives are finding their voice and owning their stories more than ever before. With more platforms and global attention, I believe African art and culture will continue to rise and reshape global narratives.

11. Do you see youth reading?
Yes, but not as much as we'd like. The attention span is shifting, and social media is replacing books for many. But some youths are still reading, especially when content is made relatable and accessible.

Victoria Ezeh Nneoma

12. Do you think graphics can make a living in Africa?
Absolutely. It's not always easy, but graphic design is in demand. From businesses to brands and social platforms, everyone needs good visuals. With the right skills and exposure, you can definitely earn a living.

13. What can be improved?
I think mentorship and access to resources could really help young designers like me. If more experienced designers shared knowledge and if learning tools were more accessible, we'd have even more empowered creatives.

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