



**Behind The Story Of Coffee: African Countries Enhance Positions In Global Coffee Industry**  
 African coffee-producing countries are fostering South-South cooperation to enhance their positions in the global coffee industry by expanding their sales networks through trade fairs and e-commerce platforms, targeting emerging markets such as Egypt, Nigeria and China.

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**Daily ePAPER**

Thursday, May 29, 2025

No. 01311 [www.mountkenyentimes.co.ke](http://www.mountkenyentimes.co.ke)

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**News>> Former Freedom Fighters To Present Petition On Finance Bill During Parliamentary Committee Session In Kitale**

P. 13. Former freedom fighters and their descendants will be presenting a petition on next financial year's Finance Bill next week.



**News>> DCI Probes Fake Kidnap Plot As MP's Close Allies Arrested In Juja**

P. 12. In a developing turn of events surrounding the purported kidnapping of Juja MP George Koimburi, The Inspector General of Police Douglas Kanja, and the DCI boss Amin Mohammed have provided fresh details confirming that significant strides have been made since the initial incident

# Ngugi Wa Thiong'o Dies At 87

Kenyan literary giant Ngugi wa Thiong'o is dead. Ngugi died at the age of 87 on Wednesday, his daughter announced on Facebook.

"It is with a heavy heart that we announce the passing of our dad, Ngugi wa Thiong'o this Wednesday morning," wrote Wanjiku Wa Ngugi. "He lived a full life, fought a good fight."

Widely regarded as east Africa's most influential writer, Ngugi sought to forge a body of literature reflecting the land and people from which he came, and not follow in the footsteps of Western tradition.



Kenyan author Ngugi wa Thiong'o, a professor at the University of California, Irvine who is often tipped for the Nobel Prize in Literature, has issued a new collection of short stories

STORY ON PAGE 9



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 Noo Wanguku  
 Noo Wanguku

# President Ruto Leads In Observing The 22nd National Breakfast Prayer Day

By: MKT Reporter  
@themtkenyatices

*Some Of The Moments As Captured In Pictures*

President William Ruto led other leaders in attending the 22nd National Breakfast Prayer at Safari Park Hotel in Nairobi. The prayers were officiated by former NFL star Rickey Bolden who urged leaders to apologise to Gen Z over the June 2024 protests, rebuild trust, says youth are 'dying for love, respect, and a seat at the table.'



Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times



The Mt Kenya Times is a Kenyan Newspaper that provides a unified view of Kenyan news, entrepreneurship, events, opinions, analysis, and a historical background to current affairs in a way that is both creative and innovative. It is published by Exponential International Limited, a Private Limited Liability company incorporated in Kenya to provide Communications and Media services.

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# HAPPY MADARAKA DAY



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## NEWS IN BRIEF



Principal Secretary Jonathan Mueke yesterday led a delegation from the State Department for Livestock to brief the Deputy President Kithure Kindiki on progress in the livestock sector. The PS reaffirmed the Department's commitment to commercialising livestock in order to boost household incomes through beef, dairy, leather, and other value chains. During the meeting, he highlighted key updates, including the national vaccination programme, the Kenya Leather Industrial Park (KLIP), and enhancements in the dairy sector. Notably, he noted that earnings from milk and dairy products had risen from KSh 4.9 billion in 2022 to KSh 9.5 billion in 2024 as he emphasized that the focus remains on scaling these gains to ensure better incomes for livestock keepers nationwide.



Zetech University was yesterday officially awarded a Platinum trophy for Good Finance Grant Practice (GFGP) certification by the African Academy of Sciences (AAS) for excellence in finance management systems. This makes the private university to be the first institution of higher learning in Kenya to achieve Platinum certification and the second institution overall, as recognised by the sponsor APHRC. The fete came as the university launched its 7th Research and Innovation Week at its Mangu campus.



At the Institution of Surveyors of Kenya Conference, Deputy Data Commissioner in charge of Compliance John Walubengo encouraged adoption of 360 data protection compliance model which begins with registration as data controllers and data processors. This, he said will not only build trust among organisations but also reduce liability in the event of data breach and minimizes the risk of legal complications such as penalties or other legal actions. The event brought together professionals in the Valuation, Estate Agency, Property Management, Land Surveying, Building Surveying, Land Administration Management, Engineering Surveying and Geospatial Information Management Systems.



The Ministry of Health has intensified efforts to uphold the integrity of the health sector by weeding out unqualified practitioners. Medical Services Principal Secretary, Dr Ouma Oluga, says the Ministry has begun digitising health workers to ensure that only qualified professionals attend to patients in all public and private health facilities. Speaking during the 110th anniversary of Kijabe Hospital in Kiambu County, Dr Oluga emphasised that this move is part of wider reforms aimed at streamlining service delivery and protecting patient safety. He also noted that the Ministry is investing in capacity building to align the health workforce with emerging medical expertise. Dr Oluga applauded the contribution of private health facilities in advancing Universal Health Coverage and encouraged Kenyans to register for the Social Health Authority (SHA) medical scheme by dialling \*147#.



The Principal Secretary for Water and Sanitation Julius Korir chaired a high-level meeting with members of the Development Partners Group, including representatives from DANIDA, the World Bank, African Development Bank, Sanitation and Hygiene Fund, Netherlands, GGGI and UNICEF. The focus of the discussion was the development of a sustainable financing strategy for the water and sanitation sector a critical step toward achieving universal access to clean water and adequate sanitation for all. The meeting highlighted the importance of coordinated efforts, innovative financing models, and long-term investment planning to ensure that no one is left behind. The PS thanked the development partners for their continued support and commitment to transforming lives through improved water and sanitation services.



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# Holiday Blues: The Economic Ripple Effect Of School Closures On Surrounding Businesses

By: Dorcas Njoki and Alex Njeru  
@themkenyentimes

Have you ever wondered what happens to the small businesses that spring up around schools and other institutions when students break for long holidays?

If your guess is that they shut down, you're not entirely wrong—but the full story is far more complex.

For many businesses operating near institutions such as Chuka University, school holidays bring an inevitable slump in activity.

Located near Chuka town, Chuka University is a hub of academic life in Tharaka Nithi County, and with it comes a thriving micro-economy of salons, eateries, boutiques, cyber cafés, and other small enterprises.

These businesses largely depend on the student population for survival.

“When students leave for the long holidays, things slow down significantly,” says Kanyeri, a student and salon owner operating near the university.

“During a normal semester, I pay Sh20,000 in rent for my space—it's large enough for me to run my salon and live in.

But when the holidays begin, I either pay a discounted rate of Sh15,000 if I choose to stay or a monthly storage fee of Sh1,000 if I leave.”

Kanyeri's experience reflects a broader challenge: even when businesses scale down or temporarily shut their doors, rent obligations don't disappear.

Landlords, aware of the seasonal nature of these businesses, often impose storage or retention fees during the off-peak period.

Still, not every business closes its doors. Some remain operational, catering to the steady—albeit reduced—



demand from residents and employees of other institutions in the area.

Chuka town, after all, is more than just a university town; it is a municipality with government offices, hospitals, and permanent residents.

“People often assume business stops completely, but that's not accurate,” says John Mwenda, a local shopkeeper who has operated near the university for over five years.

“The demand drops, yes, but it doesn't disappear. Government workers, families, and a few students who don't travel home still need services.”

What does change significantly is the scale of operations. When foot traffic

declines, business owners are forced to adjust accordingly.

Perishable goods like fruits and snacks are ordered in smaller quantities to avoid spoilage.

Prices are sometimes lowered in an attempt to attract the remaining customers, which can lead to thinner profit margins.

“It's a delicate balance,” Mwenda adds. “If you keep your prices too high, the few customers around will walk away. But if you reduce them too much, you barely make enough to cover your expenses.”

The seasonal nature of school-related economies brings into focus the vul-

nerabilities of businesses dependent on a single demographic.

For these entrepreneurs, diversification—whether through offering services that appeal to non-student populations or branching into online sales—might offer a lifeline.

As long as the academic calendar dictates the ebb and flow of towns like Chuka, businesses will continue to adapt to the rhythms of student life.

For now, the long holiday remains both a pause and a test of endurance for those working hard to keep their doors open.

## Worth Noting:

- These businesses largely depend on the student population for survival.

- “When students leave for the long holidays, things slow down significantly,” says Kanyeri, a student and salon owner operating near the university.

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# Danish Government Donates KSh907.9 M To Combat Climate Change

By: Muturi Mwangi and Stella Wandururi  
 @themtkenyatimes

With unprecedented adverse effects of climate change, the Danish government has donated a Sh907.9 million grant to boost the efforts of Northern Kenya and coastal region communities in addressing the menace.

The grant will be utilized in a four-year project implemented by the Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT) in providing nature-based solutions including forest restorations, coastal mangroves and at the same time encourage the use of renewable energy.

The latest grant through the Danish Development Agency (DANIDA) has now seen total allocation to the resilience to climate change project rise to Sh4 billion in the last 13 years.

One of the projects that are being implemented through Nature based solution projects is the restoration of the 22 hectares of Ngare Ndare forest in Meru County with indigenous trees and improvement of the water catchment areas.

“We grow both exotic and indigenous seedlings, the latter is for plant-



ing in the forest since our forest is natural forest while exotic ones are for planting in farms neighbouring the forest. “We encourage the villages surrounding the forest to own tree planting farms to reduce pressure in the forest on firewood needs,” says David Kinyua, Ngare Ndare Forest Trust chairman.

The chairman reveals that they have introduced a one for one initiative where a resident gets an extra tree seedling after purchasing one in their tree nursery in Ngare Ndare where

they produce over 100,000 per season. The initiative aimed at ensuring the community embrace tree planting. He said through the trust, they have issued over 10 million tree seedlings since 2010.

According to NRT, Nature Based Project Director Dida Fayo, extreme climate conditions had necessitated livelihood sustainability and nature restoration in the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands of Northern Kenya and Coastal areas communities where they bear the brunt of climate change.



On his part, Laikipia County Commissioner Onesmus Kyatha says that the County was semi-arid resulting in resource-based conflicts hence the grant would go a long way in addressing the conflicts among the local communities.

NRT Chief Partnership and growth officer Tom Lalampaa reiterates that the grant will boost access to water, green energy, agroforestry, sustainable agriculture, mangrove restoration and rangeland management.

Nancy Njenga, Head of Climate Re-

silience at the Royal Danish Embassy reveals that their commitment is seeing communities in both Northern and Coastal Kenya benefitting from improved livelihood through conservation.

Njenga adds that in the past, their support through NRT had been channelled to local communities aimed to enhance access to water, better healthcare and education.

# Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Urged To Partner With The State Department For MSMEs To Empower Women Economically

By: MKT Correspondent  
 @themtkenyatimes

Principal Secretary for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Susan Mang’eni has urged Maendeleo Ya Wanawake to work with the government to enhance the economic empowerment of women at the grassroots level.

She expressed her State Department’s aspiration to work with the women organisation in informing grassroots women of the various economic opportunities available and organise empowerment forums across the country.

The Principal Secretary outlined key priority value chains that women can take advantage of, including

Leather, Dairy, Tea, Livestock, Edible Oil, construction, blue economy, and rice. She further urged the women to take advantage of preferential opportunities to supply the Government (AGPO) and enjoy the various funding opportunities, including the Hustler fund.

She was speaking during the Maendeleo Ya Wanawake National Executive Council Retreat, held in Sagana, to review their 2025 -2029 strategic plan.

The organisation boasts of a membership of about 4 million women organised in over 25,000 groups across the country.

Rahab Mwikali Muiu, the organisation chairperson outlined the organisation’s plans to advance the economic empowerment of its members at the grassroots level, includ-

ing Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Mbao Sacco, which was founded in 2022 as part of its 70th anniversary commemoration.

Mwanaisha Chidzuga, the Deputy Government Spokesperson, urged the Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Movement to utilise its network to register grassroots women with the Social Health Authority (SHA), and ensure every woman in Kenya benefits from ongoing Government initiatives.

The State Department of MSMEs is committed to helping women grow their businesses, but also to empowering them to bring others along, mentor, employ, and amplify their impact. This perfectly aligns with Maendeleo ya Wanawake’s first mandate of social and economic empowerment.



PS Susan Mang’eni (centre), Mwanaisha Chidzuga (left) and Rahab Mwikali (right) during the press briefing at Sagana yesterday.

# Giant Of Kenyan Literature Ngugi Wa Thiong'o Dead At 87

By: AFP

Kenyan literary giant Ngugi wa Thiong'o is dead. Ngugi died at the age of 87 on Wednesday, his daughter announced on Facebook.

"It is with a heavy heart that we announce the passing of our dad, Ngugi wa Thiong'o this Wednesday morning," wrote Wanjiku Wa Ngugi. "He lived a full life, fought a good fight."

Widely regarded as east Africa's most influential writer, Ngugi sought to forge a body of literature reflecting the land and people from which he came, and not follow in the footsteps of Western tradition.

"I believe so much in equality of languages. I am completely horrified by the hierarchy of languages," he told AFP in an interview in 2022 from California, where he lived in self-imposed exile.

His decision in the 1970s to abandon English in favour of his native Kikuyu, as well as Kenya's national language Swahili, was met with widespread incomprehension at first.

"We all thought he was mad... and brave at the same time," said Kenyan writer David Maillu. "We asked ourselves who would buy the books."

Yet the bold choice built his reputation and turned him into an African literary landmark.

The softly-spoken writer also lived a life as dramatic as his novels.

His criticism of post-colonial Kenya — describing the violence of the political class and the newly rich as "the death of hopes, the death of dreams and the death of beauty" — brought him into frequent conflict with the authorities.

## 'Decolonising the mind'

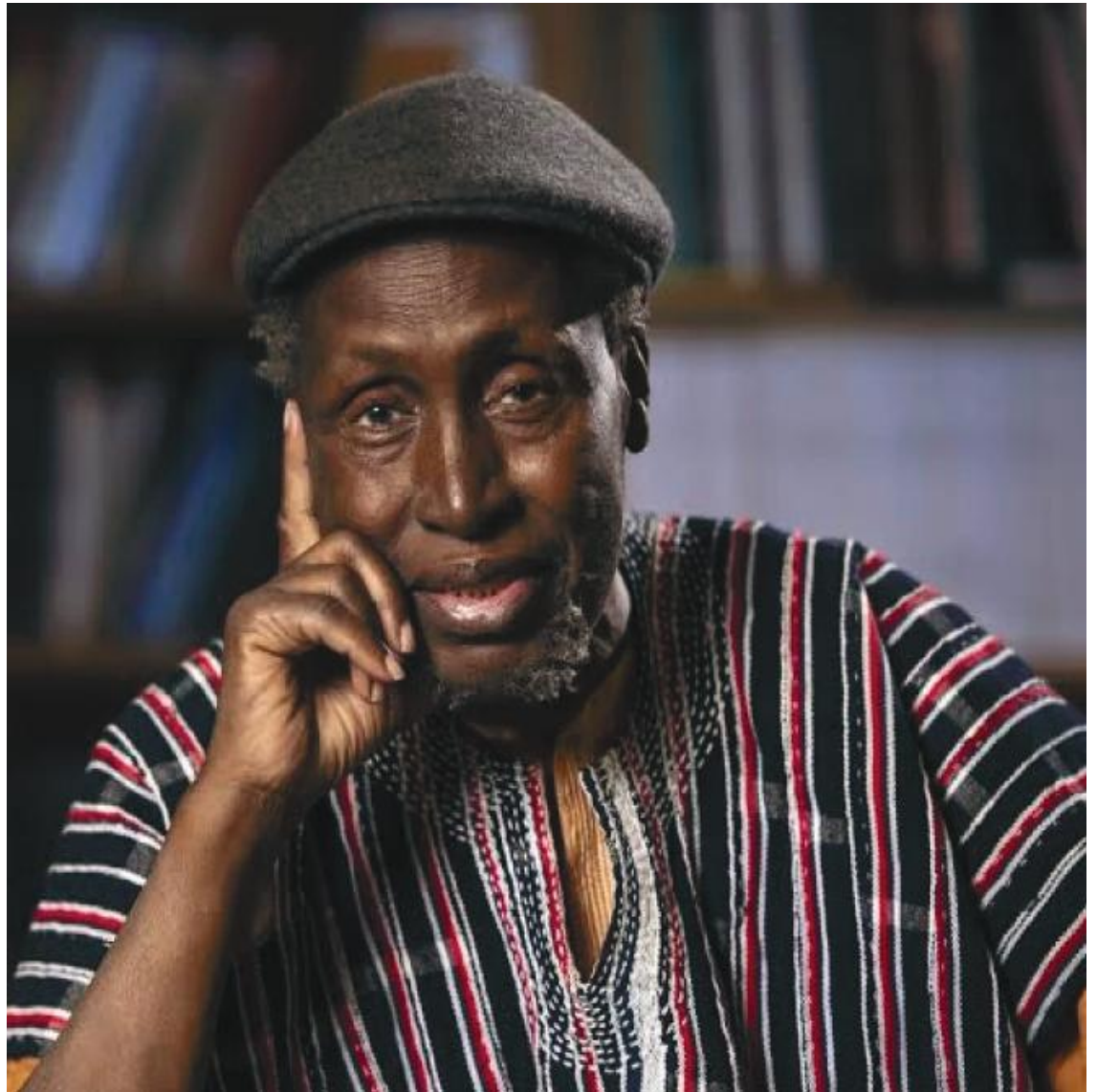
Born James Ngugi into a large peasant family in Kenya's central Limuru region on January 5, 1938, he spent the first 25 years of his life in what was then a British settler colony.

His early works were heavily influenced by his country's battle against colonial rule and the brutal Mau Mau war of 1952-1960.

In his first collection of essays, "Homecoming", he described himself as a "stranger in his home country".

But his anger would later extend to the inequalities of post-colonial Kenyan society, incurring the wrath of the government.

In 1977, Ngugi and fellow writer Ngugi wa Mirii were jailed without charge after the staging of their play "Ngaahika Ndeenda" ("I Will Marry



Kenyan author Ngugi wa Thiong'o, a professor at the University of California, Irvine who is often tipped for the Nobel Prize in Literature, has issued a new collection of short stories

When I Want").

It was then that he decided to write his first novel in Kikuyu, "Devil on the Cross", which was published in 1980.

He had already abandoned his "English" name to become Ngugi wa Thiong'o.

"I wrote it on the only paper available to me, which was toilet paper," he told US radio broadcaster NPR.

Amnesty International named him a prisoner of conscience, before a global campaign secured his release from Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in December 1978.

As early as 1965, Ngugi's novel "The River Between" embarked on a critical examination of the role of Christianity in an African setting.

"If the white man's religion made you abandon a custom and then did not give you something else of equal value, you became lost," he wrote.

He went into self-imposed exile in 1982 after a ban on theatre groups in Kenya, moving first to Britain then to the United States.

In 1986, he published one of his best-known works, "Decolonising the Mind", a collection of essays about the role of language in forging national culture, history and identity.

## 'A Kenyan Tolstoy'

When Ngugi returned home on a visit in 2004, he was mobbed by supporters at Nairobi's airport.

"I have come back with an open mind, an open heart and open arms," he declared.

Days later, he and his wife were attacked by armed men: she was raped and he was beaten up. It was not clear whether robbery was the sole motive or whether the assault was politically motivated.

Margaretta wa Gacheru, a sociologist and former student of Ngugi, described him as a national icon.

"To me he's like a Kenyan Tolstoy, in the sense of being a storyteller, in the sense of his love of the language and panoramic view of society, his description of the landscape of social relations, of class and class

struggles," she said.

In addition to fiction, the father-of-three, who became a professor of comparative literature at the University of California Irvine, also published essays and three memoirs.

His most recent book was the genre-defying novel-in-verse "The Perfect Nine", which he translated into English in 2020.

It recounted the founding of the Kikuyu people, blending folklore and allegory.

From widening economic inequality to the lingering trauma of racism, the issues raised in the play still persist in Kenya and beyond, a fact not lost on its creator.

"I am an activist, I want to see change," Ngugi told AFP.

"I hope we can continue striving for that world. We cannot give up."

## Worth Noting:

- Born James Ngugi into a large peasant family in Kenya's central Limuru region on January 5, 1938, he spent the first 25 years of his life in what was then a British settler colony.
- His early works were heavily influenced by his country's battle against colonial rule and the brutal Mau Mau war of 1952-1960.
- In his first collection of essays, "Homecoming", he described himself as a "stranger in his home country".
- But his anger would later extend to the inequalities of post-colonial Kenyan society, incurring the wrath of the government.
- In 1977, Ngugi and fellow writer Ngugi wa Mirii were jailed without charge after the staging of their play "Ngaahika Ndeenda" ("I Will Marry When I Want").

# Presidential Taskforce Engages Public On Human Origins Museum

By: Peter Gitonga  
@themkenyatimes

The Presidential Taskforce on the proposed Human Origins Museum and Science Park held its fourth stakeholder consultation in Turkana, focusing on architectural designs, business and trade opportunities and environmental conservation.

The professionals were drawn from diverse sectors, including environmental conservation, women, youth and PWD-led groups, engineering, culture and heritage, tourism and hospitality, trade, and investment.

The latest consultation marked a shift from earlier engagements that primarily involved government officials and the general public.

Task force team leader Richard Barno emphasized the importance of inclusive participation during the planning and design phases of the project, which aims to position the Lake Turkana Basin as a global center

for paleoanthropological research and cultural tourism.

“We cannot design a world-class museum and science park without listening to diverse voices from different segments of the community,” said Barno after explaining that similar engagements had been conducted with government officials and the general public.

Participants underscored the need for strict adherence to formal land acquisition procedures, upgrading the local social infrastructure, integrating of smart building techniques, and using clean, renewable energy technologies.

Francis Emanikor, an environmentalist with the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), noted the possibility of ecological disruptions but expressed hope that proactive measures will be put on place as mitigation measures.

“The area earmarked for the proposed project lies within a fragile ecosystem. It is therefore imperative that the implementers conduct a comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and develop miti-



gation plans before any construction begins,” he advised.

Speaking on behalf of special groups, Priscilla Ekeno called for universal design principles to be incorporated into the architectural plans to ensure accessibility for all.

“There is a high likelihood that persons with disabilities, women, and children will regularly visit the museum. Their access needs must be factored in to ensure no one is excluded,” she said.

Ekeno also urged that local women be given priority in tourism-linked

value chains such as craft markets and hospitality services.

She further advocated for the project to build the capacity of youth in areas like tour guiding, cultural interpretation, museum curation, and technical operations.

In response, Barno assured stakeholders that their contributions would inform the project’s implementation plan, which is currently under development.

He reaffirmed the taskforce’s commitment to transparency, continuous public engagement, and collaborative

planning.

The Human Origins Museum and Science Park is part of a national initiative aimed at showcasing Kenya’s rich heritage and scientific assets on the global stage, while creating educational and economic opportunities for local communities.

The taskforce is expected to continue engaging more stakeholders in the coming days and will concurrently administer data collection tools to assess the feasibility of the project.

# Teen Girl Builds Free Library From Recycled Materials, Inspires A Community

By: Brenda Mwendu and Alex Njeru  
@themkenyatimes

While many teenagers are glued to their phones or caught up in school routines, 14-year-old Lucy Wanjiru is busy changing lives—one book at a time.

The Form Three student at Standard View Secondary School has turned a pile of discarded plastic bottles and old wooden pallets into a vibrant community library, providing free access to books for children and families in her neighborhood.

“I realized we could use these things to build something useful,” Lucy said, recalling the moment inspiration struck during a school clean-up activity.

Surprised by the amount of reusable waste being thrown away, she decided to turn trash into treasure—with a literary twist.

With help from classmates and donated books from teachers, Lucy constructed a modest but sturdy

structure near the local market, just a short distance from her school.

The library, made from recycled timber and plastic, is lined with shelves of scrap wood and now houses more than 300 books—from colorful children’s storybooks to essential high school textbooks.

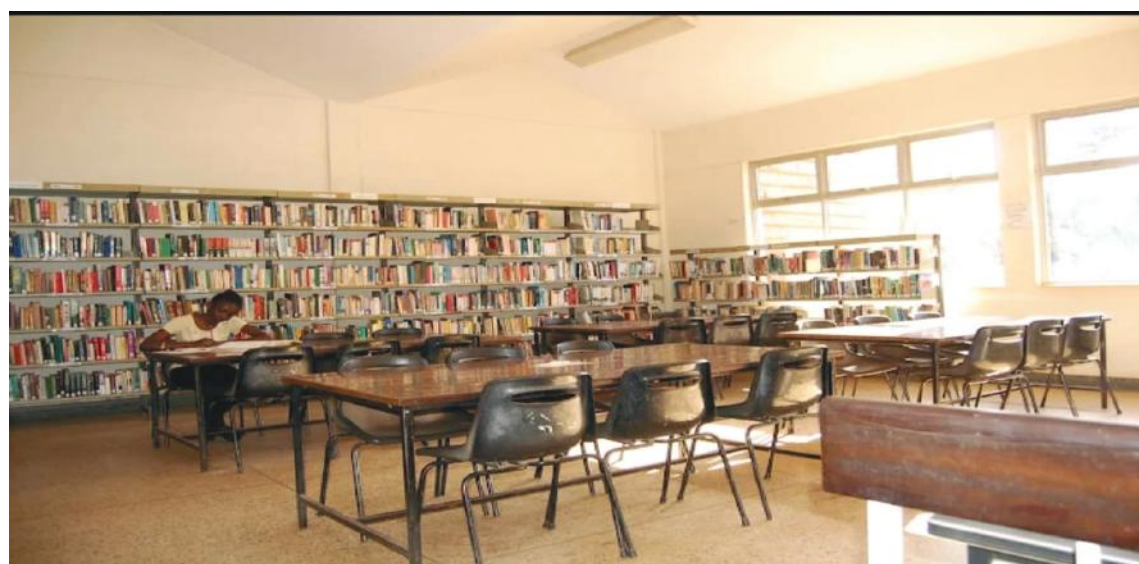
The mini-library runs on a simple but powerful concept: take a book, leave a book. And it’s already become a favorite spot for curious children and even some adults in the area.

“I come here every afternoon after school to borrow storybooks,” said nine-year-old Peter, a local pupil. “I never had so many books to read at home before.”

The community has warmly embraced the initiative, praising Lucy’s ingenuity and sense of purpose.

Nakuru County Education Officer Joseph Mwangi lauded the young changemaker for her hands-on approach to improving literacy and promoting sustainability.

“This is what we want to see from our youth—innovation, community



A section of a library.

spirit, and a passion for learning,” Mwangi said during a recent visit to the site.

With the library now thriving, Lucy has her eyes set on bigger goals. She hopes to replicate the model in nearby villages, giving even more

children access to books and a quiet space to explore their imaginations.

“I believe reading can change lives,” Lucy said with a smile. “If we can build more of these, we can build a smarter, kinder community.”

As word spreads, Lucy’s initiative

is drawing attention from well-wishers and organizations eager to support her dream.

What began as a school project has now become a beacon of hope—and a reminder that even the smallest hands can make a big impact.

# Kiambu Leaders Call On Gov't Over Continued Abduction Of Some Kenyans

By: Felix Njenga  
@themtkenyatimes

Leaders drawn from different political parties in Kiambu county have called on Cabinet secretary for Interior Kipchumba Murkomen and Inspector General Douglas Kanja to explain to the country, action being taken over continued abductions of Kenyans critical to the government.

Led by Human Rights activist, Mercy Nungari, the leaders said they fear for their lives since their main aim to speak out is to let government know how Kenyans feel and what should be done to better their lives.

They were reacting following the reported abduction of Juja MP George Koimburu who is recuperating at Karen Hospital in Nairobi after he was found abandoned in a coffee farm on Monday.

"The president had declared no more kidnappings and abduction and yet this is going on," said Nungari.

"If a leader with security can be abducted, what about ordinary Ken-

yans without security and they are many seeking for the government to hear them out. Where is our security Mr. CS Murkomen, our security is at risk" she said.

George Maara, Kiambu county Jubilee Party chairman said that it was shocking that abductions are continuing in the country with leaders being afraid who is next as some elected leaders security has been withdrawn due to their political positions.

"At this moment the Inspector General must be in a position to know who are orchestrating abductions in the country. We demand that the withdrawn security of leaders be returned to ensure their safety," Maara said.

He said that leaders should never be frightened through abduction so as to gag them as it is within their constitutional rights to do politics within the law.

He added that the CS in charge of security should come out and tell Kenyans what is going on and what measures he has put in place to end the abductions and what action will be taken against the perpetrators.

"Kenyans want to know is whether



there a special police unit put in place by the government or is it a private gang being used to abduct people haphazardly. The CS security and Inspector General should explain," he said.

Alice Wamuhu said that it is unfortunate that Kenyans are being harassed while there is a police force meant to protect its citizenry.

"The previous governments never used to abduct those who opposed them. We are simply saying kindly listen to Kenyans, we are not oppos-

ing the government for just the sake of it, we are not doing malicious politics, we are airing our views. Stop the abductions," she said.

Kamau wa Mbiyu a youth leaders called on content creators, musicians, religious leaders and other influencers to refrain from taking a political side which may lead in retaliations by their supporters or followers.

"We all have different affiliations and we saw the backlash meted on musicians who had paid deputy president Kindiki Kithure a visit, this is

a dangerous route that will ruin careers and lives due to affiliations. Let us stick to being partial and to our profession and not show our political affiliations," Mbiyu said.

Josphat Waite said that the government should take the opportunity of rebuilding confidence with the people and hear what they are saying and stop intimidating leaders and abduction.

# Juja Residents Plead For Inclusion In Government's BETA Empowerment Programme

By: John Kamau  
@themtkenyatimes

As the Kenya Kwanza administration intensifies grassroots empowerment under the Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), Juja constituency residents in Kiambu County have appealed for provision of the funds to expand businesses and enhance livelihoods.

The economic empowerment that's targeting small and medium enterprises (SMEs), youth and women groups seeks to provide funds for the groups to growth their businesses and boost their income.

The programme is being spearheaded by Kenya Kwanza leaders led by Deputy President Prof Kithure Kindiki who has been crisscrossing the country and especially the Mt Kenya region.

Juja residents who spoke to journalists on Tuesday raised concerns that they are yet to benefit from the programme, urging the State to meet them and provide with the crucial support for their businesses to thrive. The locals including boda boda op-

erators, small scale traders among others asserted that most businesses in the area have been crippled by the harsh economic climate in the country as well as the high cost of living.

They averred that most traders have been pushed out of business due to lack of finances to grow and sustain their income-generating ventures noting that the State funds will play a pivotal role in reviving the businesses and improving their livelihoods.

"The situation has been exacerbated by the unemployment crisis in the country which has left most people and especially the youth hopeless. These funds will go a long way in revitalizing this area's economy. We don't want to be left out in the economic empowerment programme," said Mary Wambui, a trader at Juja market.

Similar sentiments were echoed by residents Jane Njoki and Ephraim Mukuhu who termed the programme as a shot-in-the-arm for grassroots 'hustlers' adding that they are eagerly waiting for the funds to transform their lives.

So far, Deputy President Kindiki, in collaboration with several Kiambu MPs, has toured Gatundu North, Gatundu South, Lari, Limuru, Kabete,

and Kiambaa constituencies, where he has distributed millions of shillings to organized groups in support of their economic ventures.

However, Juja constituency, represented by MP George Koimburu who seems to be against the current administration— has yet to receive similar attention, a factor local feel should not hinder their inclusion in national development.

"Politics shouldn't be a barrier for residents to benefit from government programmes. We need our leaders to sit and listen to us and act upon our plight and especially on economic empowerment," Mukuhu said.

Under the bottom-up model, the government aims to uplift the economically disadvantaged by empowering grassroots entrepreneurs through grants, training, and access to resources.

Local leaders and community representatives now hope Prof Kindiki and the government will heed their call and bring the much-awaited support to the people of Juja.

Recently while defending the programme, DP Kindiki noted that the government has set aside Sh28 billion to boost small-scale businesses belonging to hustlers in each of the



1450 Wards across the country in a bid to raise income and improve their lives.

He assured that the government is keen to roll out the transformative National Youth Opportunities Towards Advancement (NYOTA) program to improve small-scale businesses run by thousands who need support to expand and enhance returns.

"We are in the business of transforming Kenya from the grassroots. It is not an easy thing to do but we are fully committed to doing so. It will take time but we are focused on it," said Prof Kindiki.

Prof Kindiki said the NYOTA pro-

gram is one of the transformative initiatives the Ruto administration is rolling out.

Under the program, 70 businesses in each Ward will receive Sh50, 000 in grants from the national government.

"The NYOTA program will transform the country significantly and for good. Many people think Sh50, 000 is not impactful enough but for someone who has stock of Sh10, 000 and benefits from this, it will greatly improve their business," DP added.

# DCI Probes Fake Kidnap Plot As MP's Close Allies Arrested In Juja



By: Aoma Keziah  
@themtkenyatimes

**Worth Noting:**

- “Cyrus Kieru, a supermarket operator and known ally of Koimburi, informed police that Kiratu had earlier requested to use his silver Subaru Forester (Reg. No. KDG 803B) to ferry security personnel for the MP ahead of the church event. Kieru complied. On the day of the incident, Kieru said he was directed to Kiratu’s homestead in Mugutha, where he encountered Gatana and three unidentified men.
- They initially scoped out the route to the church before returning. Later, under Kiratu’s instructions, Kieru drove two of the men back to the venue. Upon arrival, the men leapt from the car, and chaos ensued including shouting, as the MP was allegedly seized,” the Inspector General added.

In a developing turn of events surrounding the purported kidnapping of Juja MP George Koimburi, The Inspector General of Police Douglas Kanja, and the DCI boss Amin Mohammed have provided fresh details confirming that significant strides have been made since the initial incident report.

In a press briefing at the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI) Headquarters the Inspector General noted that three individuals Peter Kiratu (Chairman of the Juja Constituency Development Fund), Cyrus Kieru Muhia, and Karanja Gatana, are now in custody and assisting with investigations. Their testimonies have reportedly led to the unearthing of key elements tied to the case.

“Kiratu, a close associate of the MP, told investigators that the incident unfolded shortly after a Sunday service on 25 May at Full Gospel Church in Mugutha. As the MP exited the venue, a silver Subaru Forester (registration KBP 096W) pulled up. Two robust men allegedly emerged and forced the legislator into the vehicle. Kiratu promptly filed a report at Mugutha Police Station,” Kanja explained.

He further added that the following day, Kiratu was contacted by the MP’s daughter, who said her father had been discovered at a coffee farm in Juja. The MP was then transported to Plainsview Hospital in Ruiru before being transferred to a facility in Karen for further care.

“Cyrus Kieru, a supermarket operator and known ally of Koimburi, informed police that Kiratu had earlier requested to use his silver Subaru Forester (Reg. No. KDG 803B) to ferry security personnel for the MP ahead of the church event. Kieru complied. On the day of the incident, Kieru said he was directed to Kiratu’s homestead in Mugutha, where he encountered Gatana and three unidentified men. They initially scoped out the route to the church before returning. Later, under Kiratu’s instructions, Kieru drove two of the men back to the venue. Upon arrival, the men leapt from the car, and chaos ensued including shouting, as the MP was allegedly seized,” the Inspector General added.

The authorities continued to report that Kieru said he drove the men and the MP to Jacaranda Coffee Research area via Kambogo Road, eventually linking up with the Honda CRV reportedly used by Gatana. He claimed the men cautioned him against discussing the episode with authorities.

“Police have since located the two vehicles linked to the operation a



The Inspector General of Police Douglas Kanja, addressing journalists alongside the DCI boss Amin Mohammed, Deputy Inspector General of police Gilbert Masengeli, Deputy Inspector General, Kenya Police Service Eliud Lagat and other authority members at the DCI Headquarters in Nairobi.

Honda CRV (KBP 096W) and the aforementioned Subaru. Furthermore, Gatana reportedly confessed that the MP spent the night of 25 May at a hotel, accompanied by two of the abductors. On the morning of 26 May, Gatana retrieved Koimburi using Kiratu’s vehicle and took him to a farm, where he claims they staged his reappearance by deliberately tattering the MP’s clothes to mimic signs of duress,” continued to say Kanja.

DCI boss Amin Mohammed reiterated that it’s quite, inconceivable for the member of parliament to go that extent of state managing his own abduction, creating a lot of tension and fear in the country.

“Fortunately, we were able to exploit the investigation and expose him to the public that the member of parliament was indeed not abducted, we were able to account for all his movements from the time he attended the church up to where he slept that night. We have even identified the hotel and the room number that he slept in but in order not to prejudice our investigations, we may not be able to share that information at this point in time, but definitely we are going to share that information with him,” he remarked.

He further stated that its unfortunate that the law maker being a victim that they believe he’s not, the investigating team were denied access to go and interview Koimburi, reading a political motive in the entire drama,

to cause fear and anxiety in the country,

“we believe that he did not suffer any injuries whatsoever and perhaps he could as well be staying at the current hospital enjoying his five course meal. In terms of the motive, we have two theories, the member of parliament was very privy to the fact that we were looking for him for two offenses, the matter of land fraud that we investigated and the file was forwarded to the DPP and the DPP had approved a sanction. He knew very well that he was to be arrested and

prosecuted,” added Mohammed.

Authorities emphasize that the matter remains under thorough investigation, calling on the public to assist with any further details that might shed light on the case.

“This investigation is ongoing and will be pursued to its logical conclusion. Information can be shared confidentially through emergency lines or the #FichuakwaDCI portal, we are committed to transparency and justice in handling this sensitive matter,” Kanja concluded.



DCI boss Amin Mohammed and the Inspector General of Police Douglas Kanja showing journalists the silver Subaru Forester (Reg. No. KDG 803B), in connection with the alleged abduction of the Juja MP at the DCI Headquarters.

# Former Freedom Fighters To Present Petition On Finance Bill During Parliamentary Committee Session In Kitale

By: MKT Correspondent

[@themtkenyatimes](#)

Former freedom fighters and their descendants will be presenting a petition on next financial year's Finance Bill next week.

The members of Mau Mau War Veterans Association (MMWVA) will be meeting in Kitale town, Trans Nzoia county, on Monday, where they will make their presentation.

Kitale is one of the ten towns where the Parliamentary Departmental Committee on Finance and National Planning has scheduled to meet the public to hear and receive memorandums on the 2025/26 Finance Bill.

Other areas; Nairobi, Nandi, Busia, Migori, Machakos, Kiambu, Kwale, Mombasa and Kilifi.

According to a notice published in the dailies yesterday by the Clerk to the National Assembly Samuel Njoroge, the public engagements will start on Saturday and ends on Friday next week.

Last evening, MMWVA Director General James Njuguna Mahuria,

they are expecting hundreds of the former freedom fighters and their descendants to meet in Kitale and move to the meeting venue where they will present their petition.

Although he did not disclose the content of their petition, Mahuria said it will be addressing various issues affecting their association members and Kenyans in general.

The National Assembly notice stated that the bill is seeking among other things; amend acts such as, Income Tax, VAT, Excise Duty, Tax Procedures and Miscellaneous Fees and Levies as proposed by the committee.

Further, the public is also expected to address the issues of Virtual Asset Providers bill which the government is seeking to regulate.

The presentations will coincide with their earlier planned nine-day nationwide campaign to push for their compensation from the British government.

It will also take place as Kenyans mark this year's Madaraka day.

The campaign will be running from June 1 to June 9 across the country with Trans Nzoia, West Pokot, Nyeri, and Homa Bay counties serving as the focal points of the campaign.



James Njuguna Mahuria addressing MMWVA and descendants in Kitale town last week. Photo/Courtesy.

According to Mahuria, the event will be hosted by the World Anthropological Union and the Mau Mau Veterans Association.

Saying that the events are expected to come out with a compensation lasting solution, Mahuria expressed his regret that, despite their significant contributions to the country's independence,

surviving former freedom fighters and their descendants continue to live in severe poverty.

He noted that his association has worked tirelessly to unite various groups to advocate for rightful compensation saying it was their hope that the issue will soon be resolved, once and for all.

According to posters being circulated to the public, the campaign whose theme is, "Your Voice Matters! Participate In Shaping Your Future" will also be carried in conjunction with the Kingdom Bank.

# The Killer Monster: Clergy Lives In Crisis

By: David Nyaga

[@themtkenyatimes](#)

In recent times, Kenya has witnessed a troubling surge in violence and insecurity targeting religious leaders, particularly the clergy members. Incidents ranging from abductions, killings and assaults have raised alarms about the safety of religious leaders across the nation.

## A wave for insecurity

In Marakwet West, Father Alloyce Cheruiyot Bett, a dedicated peace ambassador was shot dead while on a mission to promote peace in the Kerio Valley, a region that had experienced a period of calm before this resurgence of violence. This incident took place when Father Bett concluded the Holy Mass in the small christian community in the village of Kakkiken on May 22, 2025. The attack not only claimed lives but also

reignited fears of renewed banditry in the area.

Another incident is that of Father John Maina Ndegwa, who served at Saint Louis Parish in Igwamiti, Nyahururu and was known for his unwavering commitment to his congregation and community. His sudden death sent shockwaves through the parish, leaving parishioners and fellow clergy members mourning the loss of a beloved spiritual leader an incident which came to limelight on May 16, 2025 after being high-jacked and assaulted.

## "Why the Clergy Members?"

- Moral Authority – Clergy are seen as moral voices in the society. When they speak out against injustices such as corruption within the government or cultural practices such as FGM, automatically they may become targets

- Land and Wealth Disputes – Some priests or pastors own valuable land or resources, sparking conflicts

- Lack of Protection – Many priests serve in remote and insecure areas

with little or no security

- Political Involvement – In most cases, clergy may get involved in politics when they see that a burning issues needs to be addressed in the country and this may pose as a threat to them.

## "Action"

Urge the government to ensure safety of clergy especially in volatile regions.

Advocate for investigations and justice to victims like Fr. Alloyce and Fr. John

Encourage communities to stand up against violence and tracking for their members

Call on religious institutions to enhance internal security and tracking for their members

## Conclusion

The tragic deaths of the religious leaders such as Fr. Alloyce and Fr. John are not just isolated cases, they reflect a growing crisis facing the clergy in Kenya. It's saddening since those who dedicate their lives

in peace keeping and guiding on how to live ethical lives are being silenced.

It is time for Kenyans, the Church and the government to rise and protect spiritual leaders who once stood firm for the nation's moral compass.

If action is not taken, more lives may be lost and the devil will take control.



The late Father John Maina Ndegwa

# Drug Abuse Blamed For Heinous Murder Of 7-Year-Old Girl In Nyeri

By: James Wanjiku  
@themkenyatimes

The government has linked the recent defilement, murder, and burial of a seven-year-old girl in Nyeri County to the rising consumption of drugs, particularly bhang, among the youth.

Speaking to the media on Wednesday, Nyeri County Commissioner Ronald Mwiwawi said drug abuse has become a rampant problem in the region, contributing to an increase in violent and inhumane acts. “We must ask ourselves why such inhuman acts are occurring,” Mwiwawi said. “Drug consumption, especially bhang, is on the rise in our society.”

He called on residents to support the fight against drug abuse by collaborating with security agencies and reporting drug dealers operating in their communities.

“As a society, we must unite to eradicate this vice. Residents should work with our security agencies by alerting them about individuals selling drugs to our people,” he added.

His remarks come in the wake of a horrifying incident in which a suspect, Nicholas Macharia, allegedly lured seven-year-old Tamara Blessing to his rented house in the Witemere informal settlement on Saturday. He is accused of defiling and murdering her before burying her body beneath his bed.

Acting on a tip-off, residents stormed the suspect’s house, exhumed the child’s body, and carried it to the police station.

There, they clashed with officers while attempting to lynch the suspect, who had already been taken into custody.

Tamara’s body was later transferred to the Nyeri County Referral Hospital mortuary.

Police sources identified the suspect as a porter working at Nyeri town’s open-air market.

Tamara had gone missing at around 6pm on Saturday while playing at the market, where her mother, Susan Wanjiru, and grandmother, Jane Kabura, work as traders.

CCTV footage from nearby buildings showed the suspect walking with the girl towards the Witemere area.

The footage, provided by local business owners to the police, played a crucial role in the investigation.

Commissioner Mwiwawi said while the suspect is in custody and will face the full force of the law, parents must take greater responsibility for their children’s safety.

“We should not wholly entrust our children to other people, even those we think we know well. Sadly, that trust has eroded in our society,” he warned.

He also expressed concern about the rising cases of femicide and called for collective efforts to end the trend.

“The government has introduced many programs aimed at economically empowering our youth. They



Nyeri County Commissioner Ronald Mwiwawi addressing the media in his office. PHOTOS BY JAMES WANJIKU

should not turn to drugs under the excuse of joblessness,” Mwiwawi said.

“There are funds available to help young people start income-generat-

ing activities. We urge them to visit our offices to learn about these initiatives,” he added.

# With Files In Hand, Mediheal Steps Into Scrutiny Over Kidney Transplants

By: Aoma Keziah  
@themkenyatimes

In a step signaling full cooperation with ongoing investigations, Mediheal Group’s proprietor, Kiprop Mishra, through his legal team, appeared at the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI) headquarters on Tuesday. The visit culminated in the formal handover of over 380 patient files connected to kidney transplant procedures conducted by the facility.

Speaking during a media briefing held shortly after the submission, lead counsel Conrad Maloba stated that the records spanning back to 2018, were delivered following court authorization obtained in Massachusetts. This legal step was essential due to the sensitive nature of the medical documents, which are protected under both local and international patient confidentiality laws.

“These records include vital details about patients and donors. We sought judicial clearance before presenting them, in line with legal obligations tied to doctor-patient confidentiality. We’ve now handed over everything, in accordance with summons issued by various arms of government,” Maloba explained

According to the legal team, the compiled documentation outlines Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), surgical details, and administrative steps linked to nearly 400 transplants conducted over a seven-year period. The files are intended to assist authorities in evaluating the hospital’s practices amid public scrutiny and inquiries launched by both Parliament and the Ministry of Health.

Investigators now have a 90-day window mirroring the timeline previously communicated by health officials to complete their audit. Maloba confirmed that Mediheal expects to participate in interviews as part of

the review phase, anticipated to begin as early as next week.

The legal team also clarified that the facility’s recent court filings are not meant to obstruct any proceedings but rather to ensure that compliance with summonses does not violate patient privacy.

“We’re not withholding cooperation. On the contrary, we’re protecting everyone involved patients, donors, and medical personnel, while making sure the legal process is fully observed. We expect to file a consent agreement with the Attorney General’s office this week. It will set terms on how the disclosed data will be handled moving forward,” Maloba emphasized.

This latest development follows weeks of heightened attention on private hospitals offering organ transplant services in Kenya, with lawmakers and regulators demanding greater transparency in light of ethical concerns and rising medical tourism.



Mediheal lawyer Conrad Maloba during a press briefing at the DCI Headquarters in Nairobi.

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# BUSINESS

## The Imperative For A Unified Global ESG Assessment Framework



By: Odhiambo Jerameel Kevins Owuor  
@themtkenyatimes



### Worth Noting:

- Social metrics in ESG, such as labor practices and community engagement, vary widely across global frameworks, creating confusion for Kenyan companies operating internationally. For instance, Kenya's informal sector, employing over 80% of the workforce according to the International Labour Organization, often lacks formal ESG reporting structures.
- A global standard would harmonize social impact assessments, ensuring Kenyan businesses can showcase their contributions to job creation and community welfare. This clarity would boost Kenya's appeal to socially conscious investors, fostering inclusive growth.
- Governance, the third ESG pillar, is critical in Kenya, where corruption perceptions remain high, with a 2023 Corruption Perceptions Index score of 31/100 by Transparency International.

Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) frameworks have emerged as critical tools for evaluating corporate sustainability and ethical practices, yet their global application remains fragmented. In Kenya, where sustainable development is vital due to climate vulnerabilities and socio-economic challenges, the absence of a standardized ESG assessment creates inefficiencies. Diverse methodologies across regions lead to inconsistent reporting, making it difficult for Kenyan firms to attract global investors who prioritize ESG compliance. A unified global ESG framework would streamline evaluations, enhance transparency, and align Kenya's sustainability efforts with international standards.

Kenya's economy heavily relies on agriculture, contributing 22.4% to GDP in 2023, but faces severe climate risks like droughts and floods, as reported by the World Bank. Without a standardized ESG framework, Kenyan businesses struggle to quantify their environmental impact, limiting access to green financing, which

globally reached \$580 billion in 2022. A unified system would provide clear metrics for emissions, water use, and biodiversity, enabling Kenyan firms to demonstrate resilience and attract investment. This alignment would also support Kenya's Vision 2030, which emphasizes sustainable growth and climate adaptation.

Social metrics in ESG, such as labor practices and community engagement, vary widely across global frameworks, creating confusion for Kenyan companies operating internationally. For instance, Kenya's informal sector, employing over 80% of the workforce according to the International Labour Organization, often lacks formal ESG reporting structures. A global standard would harmonize social impact assessments, ensuring Kenyan businesses can showcase their contributions to job creation and community welfare. This clarity would boost Kenya's appeal to socially conscious investors, fostering inclusive growth.

Governance, the third ESG pillar, is critical in Kenya, where corruption

perceptions remain high, with a 2023 Corruption Perceptions Index score of 31/100 by Transparency International. Divergent ESG governance criteria globally complicate compliance for Kenyan firms, particularly in anti-corruption and board diversity metrics. A unified framework would establish consistent governance benchmarks, enabling Kenyan companies to strengthen accountability and compete in global markets. This would also align with Kenya's legal reforms, such as the 2016 Anti-Bribery Act, enhancing investor trust.

The lack of a global ESG standard creates inefficiencies in data collection and reporting, increasing costs for Kenyan businesses. In 2022, ESG reporting costs for African firms averaged \$250,000 annually, per a PwC study, a burden for Kenya's SMEs, which constitute 90% of businesses. A standardized framework would reduce these costs by streamlining data requirements, allowing Kenyan firms to allocate resources to innovation and growth. This efficiency would also support Kenya's integration into

global value chains, particularly in renewable energy and sustainable agriculture.

In conclusion, a unified global ESG assessment framework is essential for Kenya to navigate the complexities of sustainable development and global investment. By harmonizing environmental, social, and governance metrics, such a system would reduce costs, enhance transparency, and boost competitiveness. For Kenya, this alignment would accelerate progress toward Vision 2030 and climate resilience goals. Ultimately, a global standard would empower Kenyan businesses to thrive in a sustainability-driven world economy.

*The writer is a legal researcher and writer*

# Boost For Coffee Farmers As Kirinyaga County Government Constructs A Mega Warehouse To Support Direct Sale

By: MKT Reporter  
@themkenyatimes

The County Government of Kirinyaga County Government is constructing a coffee storage warehouse to strengthen farmer's capacity to directly market and sell their produce at the auction.

The state-of-the-art warehouse is expected to benefit over 120,000 coffee farmers in the county.

The warehouse that is coming up at the Kirinyaga County Cooperative Union premises in Kimicha along Kutus-Kagio highway is expected to address post-harvest challenges and improve earnings for the farmers.

It will have the capacity to hold up to 40,000 bags of parchment coffee- coffee that has been pulped, fermented and dried but not yet milled- and will be fitted with modern features such as aeration cyclones to ensure quality preservation.

Governor Anne Waiguru said the project is aligned to her administration's vision to empower farmers increase earnings from production, value addition, processing and marketing in order to uplift their living standards. She noted that the union has been constrained in terms of coffee storage since their existing facility is unable to hold increasing volumes of coffee.

She emphasized the broader vision behind the project. "Once complete, this warehouse will enable us to store and mill coffee from all over the county at our facility. My administration remains committed to making favorable policies that will strengthen coffee farming and ensure our farmers get value for their produce," she said, noting that the efforts has paid off with Kirinyaga farmers getting the highest payoff in last season's coffee where some cooperatives paid as high as Ksh.149 per kilo.

Kirinyaga coffee farmers market their produce under the auspices of their union's Kirinyaga Slopes Coffee Brokerage Company which works closely to the County Government to improve the entire coffee value chain from milling to marketing. The firm attained its brokerage status in 2023 after Governor Waiguru assisted in fast-tracking the issuance of its brokerage license at the Capital Markets Authority. The firm has since been one of the best performing at the Nairobi Coffee Exchange

Kirinyaga Slopes serves 14 cooperative societies across the county namely Mwirua, Kibirigwi, Inoi, Mutira, Kabare, Baragwi, Kanjuu, Mirichi, Rwama, Ngirambu, New Ngariama, Rungeto, Thirikwa, and Karithathi all representing over 120,000 smallholder coffee farmers.



Ongoing Construction of a state of art Coffee Warehouse by Kirinyaga County Government that it set to transform Kirinyaga Cooperative Union operations.

Geoffrey Kinyua, Chairman of the Kirinyaga County Cooperative Union, said the county's rapidly growing production had created a pressing need for additional storage space.

"We produced around 42,000 tonnes of cherry last year and we expect to reach 60,000 tonnes soon which the old warehouse couldn't handle," he said.

He noted that consolidating of Kirinyaga's coffee through Kirinyaga Slopes has helped improve its visibility and value in the auction market. He noted that the upcoming warehouse is at 40% completion and is expected to be completed by the end of the year. At the heart of the coffee transformation is a clearly structured processing system which Patrick Kahonge, Mill

Manager at Kirinyaga Slopes says starts with the farmer delivering their red cherry at cooperative factories for pulping and fermenting after which the beans are sun or solar dried until they attain the required moisture content of 10 to 11 percent. The parchment coffee is then brought to the dry mill for grading based on quality. Once milled, clean coffee beans are dispatched to national marketing warehouses for distribution and sale.

Kahonge said the new warehouse will fill a critical gap in the chain. "This warehouse measures 22 by 50 meters and is equipped to hold 40,000 bags of parchment coffee. The inclusion of cyclones ensures proper aeration, which is essential for maintaining coffee quality before milling," he reiterated.

With improved infrastructure, consolidated processing, and strong policy backing, Kirinyaga's coffee farmers are expected to be more competitive in both local and international markets.

The project is being implemented by the county government under the National Agricultural Value Chain Development Project whose goal is to transform smallholder farmers in the counties into commercial farmers by improving their value chains and market access. It invests in infrastructure, financial services and sustainable agricultural practices relying on community interest groups (CIG) and Farmers Producer Organizations (FPOs) to reach and empower farmers



Patrick Kahonge (left) Mill Manager at Kirinyaga Slopes together with Geoffrey Kinyua the chairperson inspects progress at the county-funded modern warehouse aimed at boosting cooperative operations.

## Worth Noting:

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# Behind The Story Of Coffee: African Countries Enhance Positions In Global Coffee Industry

*African coffee-producing countries are fostering South-South cooperation to enhance their positions in the global coffee industry by expanding their sales networks through trade fairs and e-commerce platforms, targeting emerging markets such as Egypt, Nigeria and China.*

By: Xinhua

NAIROBI, (Xinhua) -- The call for Africa to move beyond being merely a supplier of raw materials in the global coffee industry is growing stronger in coffee-producing countries like Kenya, Ethiopia and Uganda.

One of Kenya's strategies to achieve this goal has been the formation of smallholder coffee cooperatives.

According to the African Fine Coffees Association, Kenya's coffee sector comprises approximately 800,000 smallholder farmers who are organized into around 500 cooperatives.

By doing so, small-scale farmers can pool resources, share knowledge, and improve the quality and consistency of their coffee.

This collective approach not only empowers farmers economically but also contributes to the sustainable development of the coffee industry in Kenya, said Karuga Macharia, vice chairman of the association.

He explained that due to the limited availability of suitable land for coffee cultivation, Kenya's coffee industry is focusing on increasing per-tree yields to boost overall production without expanding farmland.

Currently, cooperatives are assisting farmers in enhancing per-tree yields, with some reports indicating that well-managed trees can produce up to 40 kilograms annually, said Macharia.

In Kenya's Kirinyaga County, the Mutira Farmers' Cooperative Society, comprising approximately 8,000 smallholder farmers, is leveraging the region's unique volcanic soils and favorable climate to produce high-quality coffee that is in demand on the international market.

Victor Munene, an agronomist with the cooperative, noted that the cooperative provides fertilizers and pesticides to farmers on credit, allowing them to repay the loans after delivering their coffee cherries.

"This system ensures that farmers can access necessary inputs even when they lack immediate funds, thereby improving both the yield and quality of their coffee," said Munene.

He added that the cooperative offers both online and in-person training sessions, as well as telephone consultations, to support farmers.

In addition, the cooperative also regularly hires agronomists to conduct soil sampling and analysis, enabling precise identification of the nutrients



People make coffee during the 20th African Fine Coffees Conference and Exhibition and the First African Coffee Week in Addis Ababa, capital of Ethiopia, Feb. 8, 2024. (Photo by Michael Tewelde/Xinhua)

## Worth Noting:

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- In addition, the cooperative also regularly hires agronomists to conduct soil sampling and analysis, enabling precise identification of the nutrients

required for optimal crop growth.

In recent years, the Kenyan government has intensified its efforts to support and reform the nation's coffee industry through several key initiatives.

One major initiative has been the establishment and expansion of the Coffee Cherry Advance Revolving Fund, which provides unsecured loans to smallholder farmers to ease their access to credit.

The government has also introduced a "three-day payment guarantee" under the Direct Settlement System platform, ensuring that farmers receive payment within 72 hours after delivering their coffee cherries, a significant improvement from the previous approval period of 5 to 14 days.

Earlier this year, several government departments jointly rolled out new policies aimed at further improving coffee farming techniques, expanding cultivation into non-traditional regions and enhancing transparency in the auction system.

According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, the country's coffee export volume rose by 12 percent in 2024 to 53,519 tons. Export earnings also increased, climbing from 251 million dollars in 2023 to 296 million dollars in 2024.

## NEW MARKET AND OPPORTUNITY

In addition to organizing smallholder farmers into cooperatives to strengthen collective bargaining power, several African countries are also working to boost value addition in the coffee sector by developing local brands.

Ethiopia, currently Africa's largest coffee producer and the fifth largest globally, produces approximately 600,000 tons of coffee annually.

In recent years, the country has taken significant steps to restructure its coffee industry, shifting from raw bean exports to customized, value-added products, as it climbs up the value chain.

To support this transition, the Ethiopian government has introduced a range of policies, including registering national coffee trademarks in key international markets and actively promoting Ethiopian coffee brands globally.

In 2004, recognizing that most of its coffee producers were smallholder farmers, the Ethiopian government launched the Ethiopian Fine Coffee Trademarking and Licensing Initiative.

This initiative registered trademarks

for three renowned coffee-producing regions: Yirgacheffe, Sidamo and Harar.

Uganda has also been making concerted efforts to enhance value addition in its coffee sector.

Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni has consistently emphasized that increasing value addition is central to the development of the country's coffee industry.

In 2024, he signed the National Coffee (Amendment) Bill into law, which encourages the establishment of a transparent coffee auction system to protect farmers from exploitation by middlemen and promotes the growth of local processing enterprises focusing on value-added coffee products.

Kenya, Ethiopia and other African coffee-producing countries are also fostering South-South cooperation to enhance their positions in the global coffee industry by expanding their sales networks through trade fairs and e-commerce platforms, targeting emerging markets such as Egypt, Nigeria and China.

# Zainab Mustafa And Her Role In Volunteer Force Pakistan: Empowering Change Through Words And Action

By: Zainab Mustafa

@themtkenyatimes

I am Zainab Mustafa, a rising literary star whose journey reflects a dynamic fusion of academic excellence and professional dedication. My academic path began at AMSB with a matriculation in pre-medical and continued through an intermediate in humanities from Trinity Girls College. Currently, I am pursuing a BS in Mass Communication from Awas Institutions of Media and Management Sciences. As the founder of Soul Words Publication and a celebrated author of books such as Soul Words, Radiant Reflections, and WorldCraft, my work has touched hearts across national and international platforms. With over 100 anthologies and numerous published pieces, I have used words as a means to heal, connect, and empower.

Recognized with accolades such as the Geoffrey Chaucer Award 2023 and the Rising Star Award at the Transform Pakistan Conference 2024, I write under the pen name @soul\_words\_publication, with a clear mission: to inspire meaningful change through storytelling and to build a lasting literary legacy.

In addition to my literary endeavors, I serve as a content writer for Volunteer Force Pakistan (VFP)—an organization that perfectly mirrors my values of service and empowerment. Founded by the visionary Usman Raza Jolaha, VFP is a globally recognized platform dedicated to mobilizing volunteers—especially youth—for education, healthcare, social welfare, and emergency response. It seeks to nurture a selfless, united, and progressive Pakistan by creating opportunities for individuals to contribute meaningfully to national development.

As a writer for VFP, I consider it my responsibility to give voice to its mission. Through articles, blogs, social media campaigns, and awareness programs, I aim to craft compelling narratives that influence attitudes, spark civic participation, and connect people with causes larger than themselves. Writing for VFP allows me to amplify the organization's initiatives and showcase its wide-reaching impact, aligning perfectly with my belief in the power of words to inspire action and shift perspectives.

Usman Raza Jolaha's leadership has been instrumental in transforming Volunteer Force Pakistan into a dynamic engine of social change and youth empowerment. Since 2024,



VFP has launched groundbreaking initiatives addressing core challenges like unemployment, lack of skills, and low civic engagement. Through nationwide training camps, leadership conferences, and community-driven projects, the organization has extended its influence across more than 30 cities—uplifting marginalized communities and encouraging national cohesion.

Notably, in the past six months alone, VFP has organized three major events reflecting its dual commitment to youth development and environmental sustainability. The Pakistan Wilderness Congress 2025 in Islamabad's Margalla Hills offered young leaders a unique blend of adventure-based learning and ecological awareness. Meanwhile, the Future Youth Leadership Conference (FYLC) 2025 in Faisalabad brought

together hundreds of aspiring change-makers for high-impact workshops, dialogues, and networking opportunities. Adding to this, Leopardship 4.0 in Shangla, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, provided a powerful outdoor experience where youth explored leadership through team-building and resilience in nature.

These bold initiatives continue to position Volunteer Force Pakistan as one of the most impactful non-profit organizations in the country. With an expanding digital footprint, visionary collaborations, and a clear focus on sustainable impact, VFP—under Usman Raza Jolaha's guidance—has evolved into a national movement. It champions youth leadership, environmental responsibility, and collective progress, empowering individuals to become agents of change in their communities.

Being part of this movement is a profound honor for me. Volunteer Force Pakistan's mission—to uplift communities, educate citizens, and respond to crises—echoes the very principles of a welfare state. It invites every Pakistani to be part of something greater than themselves. As a writer, I am proud to lend my voice to a cause that truly matters—a cause that is shaping the future of Pakistan, one act of service and one inspiring story at a time.

## Worth Noting:

- As a writer for VFP, I consider it my responsibility to give voice to its mission. Through articles, blogs, social media campaigns, and awareness programs, I aim to craft compelling narratives that influence attitudes, spark civic participation, and connect people with causes larger than themselves. Writing for VFP allows me to amplify the organization's initiatives and showcase its wide-reaching impact, aligning perfectly with my belief in the power of words to inspire action and shift perspectives.

- Usman Raza Jolaha's leadership has been instrumental in transforming Volunteer Force Pakistan into a dynamic engine of social change and youth empowerment.

# Behind The Story Of Coffee: Africa's Struggle Against Colonialism

By: Xinhua

NAIROBI, (Xinhua) -- From "Originating in Africa" to "Out of Africa," the humble coffee bean carries with it a painful legacy of colonization and exploitation.

Today, the magic bean has become a symbol of resilience and self-reliance for Africa and the Global South, bearing witness to a rising new tide from the Global South.

## COFFEE CHERRY AND WHIP

"I had a farm in Africa, at the foot of the Ngong Hills. The Equator runs across these highlands, a hundred miles to the north, and the farm lay at an altitude of over six thousand feet."

Karen Blixen, a Danish author, begins her 1937 memoir *Out of Africa* with this iconic line.

In the book, Blixen recounts her experiences from 1914 to 1931, during which she managed a coffee plantation in British East Africa, now Kenya.

Her reflections provide insight into the complexities of colonialism and the personal transformations she underwent during her time in Africa.

In the late 19th century, driven by profit motives, Western colonial powers forcibly seized land from indigenous communities in East Africa to establish plantations for cash crops like coffee.

In 1893, French missionaries introduced coffee to Kenya, planting the first Bourbon variety seeds from Reunion Island near Nairobi. Two years later, in 1895, the British government declared the region the British East Africa Protectorate, and by 1920, it had become the Kenya Colony under direct British colonial rule.

Recognizing the profitability of cash crops, the British colonial administration prioritized the cultivation of coffee. They identified the central highlands -- characterized by fertile volcanic soils, elevations between 1,500 and 2,100 meters and a temperate climate -- as ideal for Arabica coffee farming, leading to the rapid commercialization of coffee cultivation in Kenya.

Land was among the foremost targets of colonial plunder. In 1902, the British colonial administration enacted the Crown Lands Ordinance, declaring all land within the East Africa Protectorate as Crown Land under the authority of the British monarch.

This legislation permitted the sale or lease of parcels of land of up to 1,000 acres by authorized officials, with leases commonly set at



Women pour fresh coffee berries on a tarpaulin for sun-drying in a plantation near the town of Budadiri in the eastern Ugandan district of Sironko on June 6, 2024. (Photo by Ronald Ssekandi/Xinhua)

Worth Noting:

The coffee bean has become a symbol of resilience and self-reliance for Africa and the Global South, bearing witness to a rising new tide from the Global South.

99 years. The most fertile regions, particularly in Kenya's central highlands, were designated as the "White Highlands" and reserved exclusively for European settlers.

Indigenous communities, notably the Kikuyu and Kalenjin peoples, were forcibly displaced from their ancestral lands and relocated to less arable reserves. Under stringent colonial policies and burdensome taxation, many local inhabitants not only lost their land but were also compelled to serve as cheap labor on settlers' farms.

Maina Kiarie, curator at the Enzi Museum in Kenya, said the European settler population in regions designated as the "White Highlands," including Nanyuki, Nyahururu and the Uasin Gishu area, was approximately 100 in 1903. By 1950, this number had surged to over 80,000.

By 1960, around 2,000 European settlers each owned farms exceeding 2,000 acres, reflecting the extensive land consolidation by European settlers during the colonial period.

In "Out of Africa," Blixen reflects on the exploitation of local tenant farmers by European landowners.

On her 6,000-acre farm, approximately 1,000 acres were cultivated by tenant families. These tenants, whose parents had also been born and raised on the estate, were indigenous to the land yet held no ownership rights.

"The squatters were natives, who lived on the farm with their families and cultivated their little shambas

there. In return for this, they had to work for me a certain number of days in the year," she wrote.

During the colonial era, European settlers prohibited indigenous Kenyans from cultivating coffee themselves, said Karuga Macharia, vice chairman of the African Fine Coffees Association based in Kenya.

"They were forcibly removed from fertile lands and relegated to laboring on settler-owned coffee plantations, often under exploitative conditions," Macharia told Xinhua.

The colonial coffee industry was structured primarily for the export of raw coffee beans to Europe, where processing and sales occurred, leaving local communities with minimal economic benefit despite the crop being grown on their land, he said.

Meanwhile, Chris Oluoch, programmes director at Fairtrade Africa, highlighted the enduring impact of colonialism on Kenya's coffee industry.

Today, Kenyan local producers often find themselves compelled to engage in the coffee trade through multinational corporations based in Western countries, he said.

Uganda, Kenya's neighbor, became a British protectorate in the late 19th century.

During the colonial period, British authorities actively promoted tea cultivation, encouraging the local population to adopt tea as their primary beverage.

Meanwhile, Uganda's coffee production was geared almost entirely

towards export. This export-oriented approach meant that, despite being a major coffee producer, domestic consumption remained minimal.

In Uganda, the legacy of British colonialism continues to influence the perceptions of coffee. A coffee brand named "kiboko," meaning "hippopotamus" in Swahili, also refers to a whip traditionally made from hippopotamus hide.

During colonial times, British overseers used such whips to enforce labor on coffee plantations, leading to the association of coffee with forced labor among Ugandans.

This historical context has contributed to the perception of coffee as a "white man's drink" in Uganda. Many locals have traditionally viewed coffee primarily as a cash crop for export rather than a beverage for local consumption.

## INDEPENDENCE AND STRUGGLES

In the 1950s and 1960s, Africa witnessed a surge in national liberation movements.

On Dec. 12, 1963, Kenya gained independence from British colonial rule. However, the departure of the colonizers did not dismantle the economic structures they had established.

Coffee, introduced during the colo-

# Behind The Story Of Coffee: Unexpected Gift From Africa

By: Xinhua

**NAIROBI, (Xinhua)** -- In a cozy café nestled in Nairobi's Karen district, chestnut-colored AA-grade Kenyan coffee beans are carefully ground, extracted and brewed under the focused gaze of a local barista.

The bitterness transforms into something wondrous, a bright acidity blossoms, reminiscent of ripe, juicy tropical fruits. The aroma quickly fills the room, invigorating the senses.

Eastern Africa, where Kenya is located, shares an inseparable bond with coffee, while Ethiopia, in the Horn of Africa, is widely hailed as the birthplace of coffee.

Specialty beans like Kenya AA and Ethiopia Yirgacheffe are beloved by coffee aficionados around the globe and remain highly sought-after commodities on the world market.

## UNEXPECTED GIFT FROM AFRICA

Coffee is often regarded as an unexpected gift from Africa.

Legend has it that around 800 CE, in the Kaffa region of southern Ethiopia, a goat herder named Kaldi noticed his goats becoming unusually energetic and lively after consuming red berries from an unfamiliar shrub.

Curious, Kaldi tried the berries himself and experienced a similar invigorating effect. He shared the discovery with a local monastery, where the monks, initially skeptical, eventually found that the beverage made from these berries helped them stay awake during long hours of prayer.

The tale, though likely apocryphal, is widely accepted as the origin story of coffee, with the word "coffee" believed to derive from "Kaffa," the region where it was first discovered.

Today, coffee remains integral to Ethiopian culture, with expressions like "Buna dabo naw (Coffee is our bread)" illustrating its importance.

Arabica and Robusta, the two most prominent coffee bean varieties globally, are believed to have their origins in Africa. The highland climates of East Africa provide ideal conditions for cultivating Arabica beans, while the lowland regions of Central, Western and parts of Eastern Africa are well-suited for Robusta cultivation.



A farmer picks coffee berries in a coffee farm in Kirinyaga, Kenya, Dec. 20, 2024. (Xinhua/Wang Guansen)

Both varieties play crucial roles in the global coffee industry, catering to diverse consumer preferences and supporting the economies of coffee-producing regions worldwide.

The Lake Victoria Crescent region, with its suitable terrain and tropical climate, provides an ideal environment for cultivating Robusta coffee.

This area, characterized by its fertile soils and consistent rainfall, has long been recognized as the native habitat of wild Robusta coffee trees.

For centuries, wild Robusta coffee trees have thrived in Uganda's natural forests. Long before the arrival of European colonizers, the Baganda people had already begun cultivating

coffee.

Today, in traditional coffee-growing regions such as the areas surrounding Mount Elgon and the Rwenzori Mountains, some ancient coffee trees still stand, bearing witness to the country's enduring coffee heritage.

# Behind The Story Of Coffee: Africa's Struggle Against Colonialism

Contd from page 20

nial era as a primary cash crop, became a double-edged sword in Kenya's post-independence economic development.

While it generated foreign exchange earnings, it also contributed to food insecurity, rural poverty and entrenched inequalities within the agricultural value chain.

In the early years following independence, the Kenyan government continued the colonial economic model, allocating vast tracts of land to the cultivation of cash crops like coffee and tea.

This focus on export-oriented agriculture brought in foreign revenue but marginalized food production,

leading to reduced domestic food supplies.

While merchants and exporters profited, many farmers remained impoverished. In rural Kenya, protests frequently erupted over the low prices offered for coffee, reflecting widespread discontent among smallholder farmers.

In the heart of Nairobi, a white-and-green high-rise building, home to the Nairobi Coffee Exchange (NCE), still stands. Established in 1935, the institution from the colonial era continues to dominate Kenya's coffee export.

"We are still deeply reliant on international markets, exporting mostly semi-processed coffee beans. As a result, the majority of profits are captured by middlemen and developed countries, leaving our farmers with just a fraction of the final retail

value," said Dennis Munene Mwaniki, executive director of the China-Africa Center at Kenya's Africa Policy Institute.

The majority of Kenyan coffee is exported in semi-processed form through the NCE, a system established during colonial rule, he said, adding that this structure limits Kenya's control and influence over the coffee value chain.

"This approach is one of the reasons behind the challenges facing Kenya's coffee industry today," he said.

Pricing at the NCE is largely determined by a few international buyers and local intermediaries, leaving local coffee farmers with little choice but to accept the prices offered.

The coffee industry's business model is based on a type of neo-colonialism, dominated by a handful of transnational coffee merchants

whose profits are bountiful, said a commentary on Australia's The Conversation website.

"Over 80 percent of the world's coffee comes from 25 million small-scale farmers and 60 percent is produced by farmers on less than 5 hectares. Many of them struggle to make a decent living," it said.

Kenyan coffee farmers exemplify this disparity. While a cup of coffee in European specialty cafés typically costs around 4 U.S. dollars, many Kenyan coffee laborers earn at most 2.3 dollars per day.

For Ethiopia, despite the global acclaim and high retail prices of Ethiopian coffee, only about 5 to 10 percent of the final retail price returns to Ethiopia.

The majority of profits are captured by international distributors and brokers. Consequently, many Ethiopian

coffee farmers earn as little as 500 dollars annually, despite their year-round labor, according to data from the World Bank.

Meanwhile, in Uganda, the coffee industry is similar to that of other African countries, as it continues to grapple with the enduring legacies of colonial economic structures.

Nelson Tugume, chairman of Inspire Africa Group, said that this profound inequity not only demoralizes coffee farmers but also impedes the sustainable development of Africa's coffee sector.

He called for a more equitable and reasonable allocation of the substantial wealth generated by the global coffee trade, asserting that African coffee farmers deserve a fairer share of the profits.

# SPORTS NEWS

PHOTOS  
SCORES  
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BREAKING NEWS



**Sports >>** \*Bayanda Walaza, a 19-year-old South African sprinter, has already made global headlines for his incredible performance, collecting five gold.

## Teen Sensation Walaza To Take On Omanyala At Kip Keino Classic



Bayanda Walaza

Bayanda Walaza, a 19-year-old South African sprinter, has already made global headlines for his incredible performance, collecting five gold.

Fresh from clocking his personal best of 9.94 seconds at the Zagreb continental tour last weekend, Walaza is in town for the sixth Absa Kip Keino Classic Continental Tour at the Ulinzi Sports Complex.

The speedster began his international career winning bronze in 100m at the 2023 Africa Under-18 Championships in Ndola,

Zambia.

In 2024, he competed in his first Olympics in Paris, where he was a member of the 4x100m men's team that won silver.

In 2024, he competed in his first Olympics in Paris, where he was a member of the 4x100m men's team that won silver.

He is in Nairobi for the Kip Keino meet, full of confidence after helping South Africa win gold in the 4x100m relay at the World Relays in Guangzhou, China, earlier this month.

On Saturday Walaza will take

on Africa's fastest man Ferdinand Omanyala, the darling of the home spectators who will be keen to make amends after disappointing them last year when he finished outside the podium positions.

Omanyala has a season best of 10.00, which he set at the Botswana Grand Prix.

Mark Otieno of Kenya, Claude ITOUNGUE of Cameroon, Shaun Maswanganyi of South Africa, American Elijah Hall, and Australian Lachan Kennedy are also competing in the 100m

dash.

The race will be the final event on Saturday's schedule, beginning at 5:52pm.

KBC

# GET THE BEST OF WORLD

**Sports >>>** \*The national rugby 15's team's 2027 World Cup qualification got a timely boost after Kenya Airways inked a Ksh.15Million sponsorship with Kenya Rugby Union.

# Reprieve For Simba's As Kq Returns As Teams Sponsor



The national rugby 15's team's 2027 World Cup qualification got a timely boost after Kenya Airways inked a Ksh.15Million sponsorship with Kenya Rugby Union. The sponsorship in kind, will play a key role in easing the team's travel logistics ahead of the qualifiers. The Simbas are set to hold a three-week training camp in South Africa starting this week then after return home ahead of the 2027 Africa Rugby World Cup qualifiers starting on July 3rd. KRU CEO Thomas Odundo, speaking during the launch, expressed the union's gratitude. "Thank you very much on behalf

of KRU," he said, acknowledging the critical role the national carrier will play in supporting the Simbas' mission. KRU Chairman Sasha Mutai highlighted the strategic importance of the partnership, saying, "As the Simbas begin their World Cup qualification journey, this is a big step up. We are very grateful and we hope the partnership will extend to other teams like the U20, Shujaa, and the Lionesses." Kenya Airways' Chief Commercial and Customer Officer Julius Thairu reaffirmed the airline's commitment, stating, "We are back. On behalf of our CEO, we are happy and proud

to be part of the Simbas' journey as they seek a place in the World Cup. We not only focus on sponsorship but also on socioeconomic development. There is a lot of talent in Kenya, and as a brand, we would like to help nurture and showcase it. We are going to walk this journey together—this is just a start, and we are also looking forward to supporting the other national teams." Simbas captain George Nyambua spoke on behalf of the team, expressing deep appreciation for the partnership. "We really want to say thank you. This sponsorship will have a big impact on our qualification journey. We believe

we are going to qualify and make you proud."

KBC

# SPORTS NEWS



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# Understanding Artificial Intelligence: Friend, Foe Or Both?

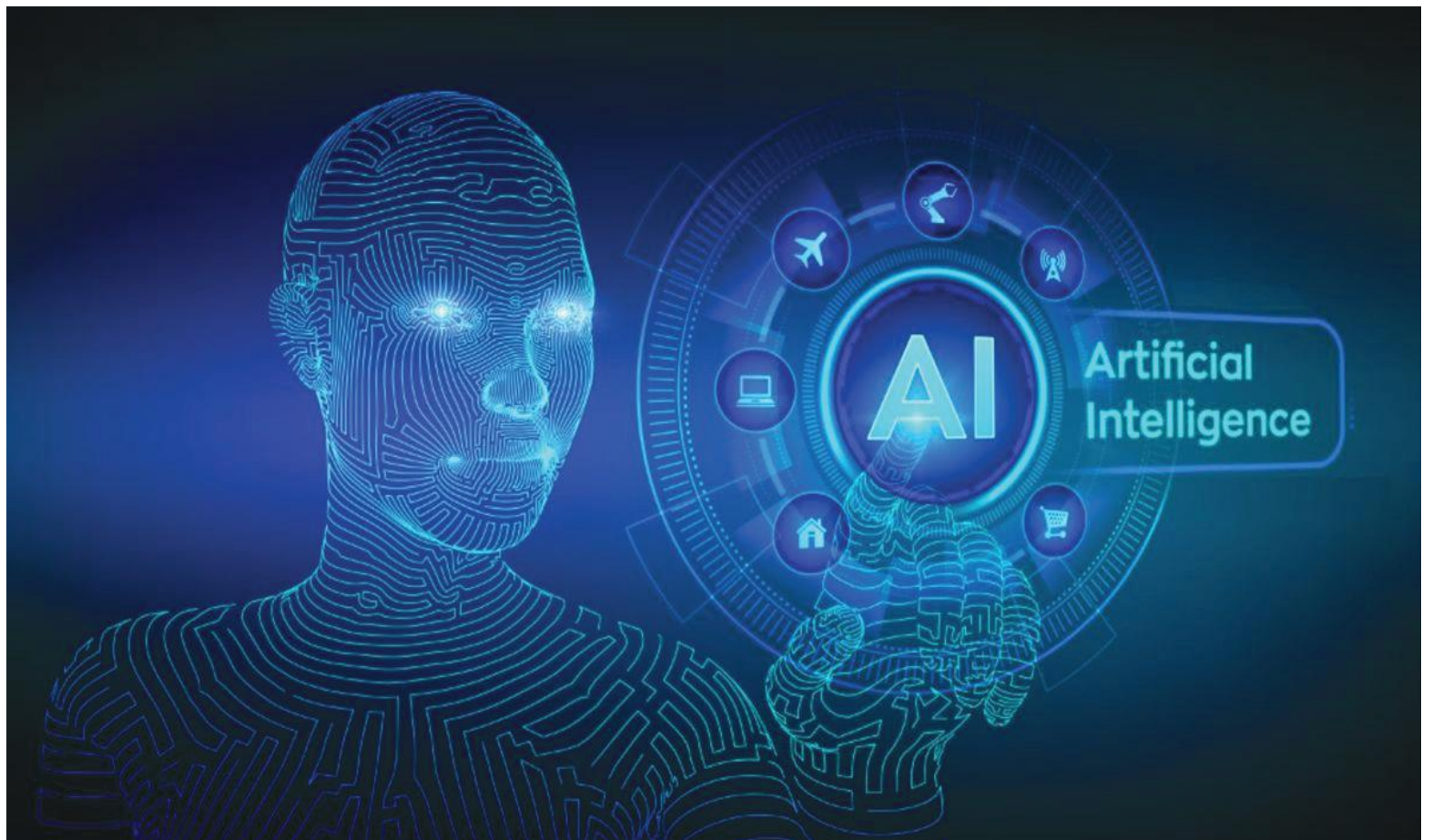


By: Brian Oigara  
@themkenyetimes

## Worth Noting:

“This is the intelligence that powers voice assistants like Siri, helps your phone suggest the next word while you are texting, and allows YouTube or Netflix to recommend what you might like to watch next.

Young innovators are participating in coding bootcamps and tech competitions. Startups are developing AI tools for health, education, transport and agriculture.”



Artificial Intelligence has become one of the most talked about technologies of our time. Just a few years ago, many of us associated AI with science fiction movies and robots taking over the world. But today, AI is no longer confined to the screens or textbooks. It is right here with us, silently shaping the way we live, work and interact with the world around us.

AI simply refers to the ability of machines to think and act like human beings. It enables computers and programs to learn from experience, understand human language, recognize images, solve problems and even make decisions. This is the intelligence that powers voice assistants like Siri, helps your phone suggest the next word while you are texting, and allows YouTube or Netflix to recommend what you might like to watch next. In Kenya, AI is already making waves in various sectors. Banks are using it to detect fraud. Farmers are receiving weather updates and planting advice through AI powered platforms. Teachers are getting support in tailoring learning

materials to suit individual students. In hospitals, doctors are using AI tools to interpret medical scans and diagnose conditions faster than ever before.

But with power comes responsibility. AI offers enormous benefits, but it also raises serious questions. Will machines take away our jobs? Who is in control of the decisions they make? What happens if the data used to train AI is biased or unfair? These are concerns that are being raised not only in the United States or China, but right here in Africa.

One of the fears that often comes up is the idea that AI will replace people in the workplace. While it is true that some jobs may change or even disappear, many experts believe that new opportunities will also emerge. We may need fewer data entry clerks, but we will need more data analysts, AI trainers and ethical researchers. As machines take over repetitive tasks, humans may have more time to focus on creative thinking, emotional intelligence and decision making. Still, the transition will not be easy, especially if there is no

clear policy to guide it.

There is also a need to ensure that AI systems are fair and inclusive. For example, studies have shown that some facial recognition tools struggle to identify people with darker skin tones. That kind of bias can have dangerous consequences, especially if such tools are used in law enforcement or public services. Experts stress the importance of building AI systems that serve everyone equally.

The conversation about AI is not just for scientists and engineers. It is for all of us. Whether you are a parent, a teacher, a student or a boda boda rider, AI is touching your life in one way or another. The key is to become more aware of how it works and how it affects our choices. The more informed we are, the better we can shape the future of this technology.

In Kenya, we are already taking steps in the right direction. Universities like Strathmore and JKUAT are offering AI and data science courses. Young innovators are participating in coding bootcamps and tech com-

petitions. Startups are developing AI tools for health, education, transport and agriculture. But there is still a lot to be done. We need strong leadership, investment in local talent and laws that protect people without killing innovation.

AI is not something to fear, but it is something to understand and manage wisely. It can help us solve problems we once thought were too big. It can make life easier, safer and more productive. But like any tool, it depends on how we use it. The future is not about machines replacing people. It is about people working with machines to build a better society.

So next time you hear someone mention Artificial Intelligence, do not just imagine robots or spaceships. Think about your own role in the story. Think about how you can be part of this incredible journey. And most importantly, think about how we can use AI to make life better for all of us.