

# Relief As Kiambu Doctors Call Off Strike



**News:** Mudavadi: Kenya Must Invest In Data, Innovation And Technology Driven Agriculture **P.11**



**P.8** Kiambu Governor Dr. Kimani Wamatangi (right) shakes hands with KMPDU Secretary-General Davji Atellah after signing a return-to-work agreement that ended the four-month doctors' strike, during a meeting convened by the Council of Governors at Delta Corner, Nairobi, on October 24, 2025. Looking on is CoG CEO Mary Mwiti/CoG



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# English Premier League Trophy Arrives In Kenya



By: MKT Reporter  
@themtkenyatimes

## Some Of The Moments As Captured In Pictures

President William Ruto on Friday celebrated the arrival of the English Premier League Trophy in the country “We are a country full of cutting-edge sport talents that belong to the global stage,” the President said when he hosted the League officials at State House. He added, “That is why we are building modern sports infrastructure across Kenya to nurture talents and unlock opportunities for our youth to grow.”



Editor's Desk

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## NEWS IN BRIEF



On Friday, Kenyatta National Hospital presented Baby Ian to the public after a successful, world-first reconstructive surgery to heal injuries sustained during a bandit attack. Following a traumatic attack, our dedicated multidisciplinary team, led by Prof. Symon Guthua, Dr. Margaret Mwasha, and Dr. Andrew Okiriamu, restored Baby Ian's face and, with it, his future. "There is a will and in that will there is a way. And the way was this young man be given the necessary support that he should be given. The hospital has travelled this journey with him from the time he was brought here over a year ago, to where now he is ready to go back home in the first phase," said KNH Board Chair - Dr. Abbas Gullet. "Baby Ian recovery symbolizes what is possible when expertise, innovation, and compassion come together," stated Ag. CEO Dr. Richard Lesiyampe, CBS, at the press conference. Baby Ian is the face of resilience and a testament to the fact that miracles happen when science and humanity meet.



Cabinet Secretary for Defence Soipan Tuya (left) with Cabinet Secretary for Education Julius Mwangi (Right) and Kenya's Solicitor General Shadrack Mose (middle) planting a tree during groundbreaking ceremony of Nyamira university college on Friday. Photo/Deborah Bochere.



Poor eyesight, coupled with a lack of training, has been cited as a major cause of the increasing number of accidents involving boda boda operators across the country. This follows worrying statistics showing that by the end of September this year, Kenya had recorded 3,586 road fatalities, compared to just over 3,000 during the same period last year. According to Samuel Mbeche from Sight Aid International, poor vision among motorcyclists continues to be a leading contributor to road fatalities nationwide. Mbeche led a free eye check-up for boda boda riders in Naivasha during a road safety awareness campaign organised in partnership with Inchcape Kenya, NTSA, and Post Bank, aimed at addressing safety concerns within the rapidly growing sector. Speaking during the event, Maryanne Gathogo, the Managing Director of Inchcape Kenya, said the company had provided over 200 riders with high-quality safety gear in an effort to curb rising fatalities.



The treason trial of Tanzania's CHADEMA national chairperson Tundu Lissu adjourned until, November 3. This came after the prosecution admitted it was unprepared to proceed, having failed to produce any witnesses. The adjournment ensures that Lissu will remain in remand prison throughout Tanzania's October 29 presidential election so that he won't influence the electoral process.



Kenya Tourism Board on Friday rolled out a vibrant welcome at JKIA for Miss Tourism Global 2025 Award winner, Ms. Mitchell Otieno with a moment of song and dance from Bomas of Kenya performers and her proud Nazarene University colleagues. Tourism and Wildlife CS Rebecca Miano who received Ms Otieno in her offices hailed her global win as a powerful opportunity to spotlight Kenya's excellence and cement the country's place on the world tourism map.



Environment and Climate Change Principal Secretary and Patron Mau Forest Complex Integrated Conservation and Livelihood Improvement Programme (MFC-ICLIP) Dr Eng Festus Ngeno and PS Sports Elijah Mwangi together with renowned athletes and record holders Faith Kipyegon and Beatrice Chebet flag off 21KM Mau Conservation Marathon race for men and women at Keringet in Kuresoi South, Nakuru County.

# NEWS PAPER

IN BUSINESS



# The Mount Kenya Times

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# Gov't Expanding Sports Utilities To Support Talents, Says Ruto

By: PCS

@themkenyentimes

## Worth Noting:

- These initiatives, he said, will give talented Kenyans an opportunity to nurture their skills and thrive on the global stage.
- "My administration is deeply committed to nurturing talent and unlocking opportunity for our youth. We are investing in sports academies, community facilities, and the creative economy because we know that sports is not only about competition, but also about empowerment, unity, and national pride," President Ruto explained.

The government is expanding sports infrastructure across the country in an effort to support young talent, President William Ruto said.

The President said the government is also setting up 30 sports academies and an additional 22 stadia.

These initiatives, he said, will give talented Kenyans an opportunity to nurture their skills and thrive on the global stage.

"My administration is deeply committed to nurturing talent and unlocking opportunity for our youth. We are investing in sports academies, community facilities, and the creative economy because we know that sports is not only about competition, but also about empowerment, unity, and national pride," President Ruto explained.

The President made the remarks at State House, Nairobi, on Friday during a ceremony to mark the arrival of the English Premier League Trophy in Kenya.

He said the trophy should remind Kenyans that the country's love for football is boundless and, with teamwork, resilience, and purpose, greatness is within reach.

"As the Premier League Trophy begins its Kenyan tour during the Guinness Matchday Weekend, I invite all Kenyans to come out and celebrate this historic moment," he said.

The President noted that football runs deep in Kenya's national story, recalling the dazzling brilliance of the late Joe Kadenge, Victor Wanyama, who flew the national flag in the English Premier League, and McDonald Mariga, the first Kenyan to win the UEFA Champions League.

"These are men who inspired gener-



President William Ruto with other officials during a ceremony to mark the arrival of the English Premier League Trophy in Kenya

ations and reminded us that Kenyan talent belongs on the world stage," he said.

President Ruto commended the East African Breweries Ltd (EABL) for championing talent in the country by supporting various sports.

"Every year, EABL invests over KSh300 million in sports, ranging from football and rugby to golf, motorsport, and athletics, nurturing talent and building opportunity," he said.

Sports Fund Chief Executive Officer Nuh Ibrahim explained that the government has paid the backlog of cash

awards owed to sportsmen and women medal winners as way back as 2011.

Under President Ruto, Mr Ibrahim noted, sports has received much-needed attention, citing renewed interest among Kenyans and the development of sports facilities.

He also pointed out that Kenya is becoming a destination for many sports events, saying seven championships in various disciplines will be hosted in the country this month and the next.

Federation of Kenya Football President Hussein Mohammed said thanks to reforms in sports, the country's pro-

file is rising.

He noted that Kenya now holds high profile positions in the Stadium and Security, International Relations and Ethics committees of FIFA.

"These three positions are a clear testament to the trust FIFA now has in the local federation. All this is through the investments you have made over the last couple of months, which are very visible," he added.

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# Relief As Kiambu Doctors Call Off Strike After KMPDU, CoG Sign Return-To-Work Formula

By: John Kamau  
@themtkenyatimes

## Worth Noting:

- The KMPDU officials also asked the county to recover the union dues from doctors for the previous months when the remittance had been stopped, upon a written confirmation from the union.
- This was arrived at during a consultative meeting between the Kiambu County Government and KMPDU officials at the Council of Governors to discuss health issues.
- The meeting was chaired by CoG whip who is also the Tharaka Nithi Governor Muthomi Njuki and Health Committee chairman Abdulswamad Sherrif Nassir from Mombasa and attended by Kiambu Governor Kimani Wamatangi and KMPDU officials.
- The Kiambu government agreed to pay doctors' salaries that were withheld during the period of the strike to allow them to resume duty.

The County Government of Kiambu and the Kenya Medical Practitioners, Pharmacists and Dentists Union (KMPDU) officials have reached an agreement to end a stalemate that has seen approximately a third of its doctors go on strike for the last 151 days.

This is after the agreement on the remittance of KMPDU monthly deductions and consideration of payment of salaries of the striking doctors, which will be implemented in phases, with an initial payment of a month's salary being paid immediately.

The KMPDU officials also asked the county to recover the union dues from doctors for the previous months when the remittance had been stopped, upon a written confirmation from the union.

This was arrived at during a consultative meeting between the Kiambu County Government and KMPDU officials at the Council of Governors to discuss health issues.

The meeting was chaired by CoG whip who is also the Tharaka Nithi Governor Muthomi Njuki and Health Committee chairman Abdulswamad Sherrif Nassir from Mombasa and attended by Kiambu Governor Kimani Wamatangi and KMPDU officials.

The Kiambu government agreed to pay doctors' salaries that were withheld during the period of the strike to allow them to resume duty.

The doctors have been on strike for over four months, paralyzing medical services in the county.

In a statement, Governor Njuki declared that the County would pay the striking doctors one month's dues, alongside the October salary. The pending three months' arrears would be settled in the 2026/27 financial year.

Further, the County Government agreed to reinstate the deduction and remittance of Union dues forthwith. Any pending union dues would be paid as per the Return-to-Work formula.

During the meeting, it was also resolved that the employer will not victimize the doctors who took part in the ongoing strike.

The CoG called upon the County Government and the Union to embrace dialogue to resolve the issues and restore normalcy in the health sector.

"We appeal to the doctors to always remember their highest call which is to protect and preserve life. We urge all doctors in Kiambu County to accept the goodwill extended by the County Government and for the KMPDU to call off the strike," the statement read in part.



From Right to Left; Kiambu Governor Kimani Wamatangi, KMPDU Secretary General Dr. Davji Bhimji Atallah, Mombasa Governor Abdulswamad Nassir and Tharaka Nithi Governor Muthomi Njuki after agreeing to end Kiambu doctors' strike.

"We remain committed to the doctors' cause for the betterment of the lives of Kenyans."

For months, the union has accused Governor Kimani Wamatangi's administration of ignoring a return-to-work agreement signed last year and of neglecting the suffering of residents who have been adversely affected by the health crisis.

Governor Wamatangi on his part noted with concern that the stalemate had been taken out of proportion and made fodder for politicians in the county adding that politicizing the crucial sector is detrimental to the well-being of the county and the

country.

"If politics and politicians were not part of the mix of the strike that has been there in Kiambu, we'd not have been here today. Moving forward we want to have a proper and direct engagement with the union when they have issues so that we can solve them," the Governor said.

He however divulged that his administration adopted deliberate measures to keep health services steady throughout the county during the strike period. He quipped that new medics were employed to render services to patients across all health facilities.

Wamatangi reiterated that the county government has been keen to streamline health services delivery noting that the county experiences an influx of patients. He stated that health facilities within the county attend to over 5 million patients annually.

"We have 14 level four hospitals and 103 level three hospitals and none of those facilities are lacking supplies like medicine. We have already installed a proper Hospital Information Management System to streamline service delivery," he said.

He however called on Doctors to work in unity to serve Kiambu residents.



Kiambu County Health CEC Dr. Elias Maina (left) signs the return-to-work formula with KMPDU Secretary General Dr. Davji Bhimji Atallah (right). Looking on is Mombasa Governor Abdulswamad Nassir the CoG Health Committee.

# Rotten from the Roots: Why Broken Societies Produce Broken Leaders

*“When a people raise men without integrity to power, they do not inherit betrayal; they inherit a mirror, and they forget that the cure for corruption is not in committees, but in character.”*



By: Maina Wahome  
@themkenyatimes

## Worth Noting:

- This pattern has pigeonholed social justice while elevating cronyism and entrenched injustices. Every time a scandal erupts in Kenya, the script is predictable: headlines scream corruption, billions vanish, and hashtags trend for days. Politicians appear on television, feigning outrage and promising accountability, while the public, fatigued yet fascinated, rehearses its indignation online.
- Press conferences multiply, pundits speculate, and memes dominate social media. Then, as suddenly as it began, the uproar fades, replaced by the next scandal. The nation collectively sighs and asks, “How did we get here?” However, this ritual outrage conceals a deeper denial, the refusal to recognize that the crisis is not merely political, but cultural.
- Our leaders are not extraordinary villains; they are the inevitable offspring of a society that prizes corruption over honesty and tribal loyalty over national conscience.

Kenya’s greatest tragedy is not merely the corruption in its offices, but the deeper corruption embedded in its culture. The problems are cultural, systemic, and structural, taking root in everyday habits, social norms, and institutional failures that together shape a society where dishonesty and self-interest are rewarded. The moral decay of leadership did not start at the top; it took root in the daily habits of ordinary citizens. When I observe the tribal rhetoric saturating political discourse, I am reminded of Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s stark warning: a tribe left unchecked becomes a cage of savages. Today, Kenya offers proof of this truth. Our political elite spread hate, deepen divisions, and cultivate loyalty based on tribe, while ordinary citizens defend them as if virtue were defined by ethnicity.

Social media, rather than serving as a platform for civic dialogue, has become a digital colosseum where tribes clash for validation and politicians hone their propaganda. These divisions are no accident; they are deliberately nurtured, refined, and weaponized by a political class that knows how to manipulate collective emotion for electoral gain. Institutions meant to uphold justice, such as the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC), often act inconsistently, summoning some while sparing others. This selective enforcement sends a clear message: in Kenya, justice is not universal; it is a privilege for the powerful rather than a right for all citizens.

This pattern has pigeonholed social justice while elevating cronyism and entrenched injustices. Every time a scandal erupts in Kenya, the script is predictable: headlines scream corruption, billions vanish, and hashtags trend for days. Politicians appear on television, feigning outrage and promising accountability, while the public, fatigued yet fascinated, rehearses its indignation online. Press conferences multiply, pundits speculate, and memes dominate social media. Then, as suddenly as it began, the uproar fades, replaced by the next scandal. The nation collectively sighs and asks, “How did we get here?” However, this ritual outrage conceals a deeper denial, the refusal to recognize that the crisis is not merely political, but cultural. Our leaders are not extraordinary villains; they are the inevitable offspring of a society that prizes

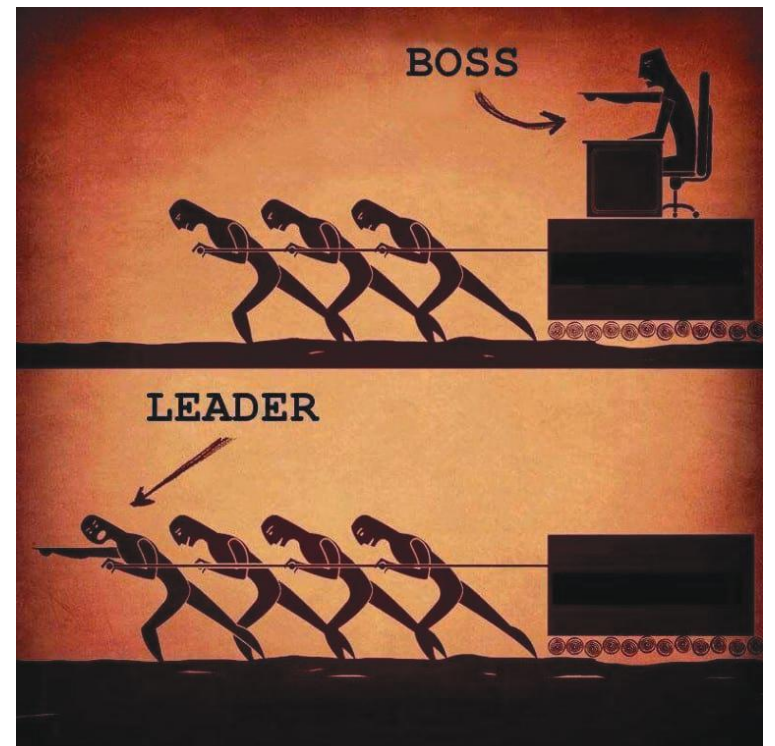
corruption over honesty and tribal loyalty over national conscience.

The uncomfortable truth is that our leaders are not outsiders. They are not strangers who arrived from distant lands to plunder our resources. They are our sons and daughters, educated in our schools, shaped in our homes, celebrated in our neighborhoods, and elected by our hands. Their moral failures are not alien; they reflect the same small compromises Kenyans make every day. They cheat on exams yet demand transparency in procurement. They bribe police officers yet condemn corruption in ministries. They prioritize expedience over ethics in business, yet expect ethical governance. The leaders who loot the nation’s coffers are merely performing on a larger stage the same play that many citizens rehearse privately.

Corruption in Kenya does not begin in State House; it starts in classrooms, marketplaces, and at traffic stops. It resides in the parent who pays for leaked exams to secure a child’s success, in the motorist who slips a note to a traffic officer to avoid a fine, and in the contractor who inflates costs to win a tender. These small acts, tolerated as survival tactics, accumulate into a culture of normalization. When dishonesty becomes the social glue of daily life, those elevated to leadership will inevitably embody the same traits. The moral decay of the citizenry rises until the rot at the top mirrors the rot at the bottom.

The obsession with appearances has deepened this malaise. People glorify wealth without questioning its source and equate success with the ability to manipulate systems rather than build them. A man who suddenly grows rich is admired, albeit without scrutiny; a woman who flaunts an exotic lifestyle is envied, not examined. People have fashioned a society that rewards mediocrity and punishes integrity. As a result, voters repeatedly elect individuals without integrity, no proven record, and sometimes no qualifications, expecting them to become reformers overnight. This delusion has turned elections into national rituals of disappointment. A functional democracy requires discernment; yet in practice, citizens often reward deception, tribal arithmetic, and emotional manipulation.

Religion, too, has not escaped this moral confusion. National prayers



and public ceremonies often spotlight a few dominant faiths while sidelining others, despite Kenya’s constitutional commitment to religious equality. Faith has become a stage prop for political legitimacy rather than a moral compass for social transformation. Politicians invoke God’s name at rallies while perpetuating injustice in office. Religious leaders bless those implicated in scandals and, in some cases, become beneficiaries of their patronage. If faith truly guided our national conscience, it would produce justice, humility, and accountability, not selective sanctity and self-interest. A nation that kneels in public but cheats in private is not devout; it is delusional.

The media, which should serve as a mirror of truth, has largely abandoned its moral duty, often doing a disservice to viewers and listeners. Editorials are shallow, frequently pigeonholing those without handouts while elevating flamboyant figures who attract mass attention despite being known for criminal vices. Vernacular stations have become hubs of tribal stereotypes, employing personalities based on social media followings rather than journalistic skill. Media ethics are often discarded, and investigative journalism has been replaced by gossip-driven sensationalism. Newsrooms compete for attention rather than accuracy, while serious issues are drowned out by trivial debates. Many journalists have become mere stenographers

for politicians, recycling press releases instead of interrogating them. By glorifying mediocrity and sensationalism, the media feeds public apathy and normalizes corruption. Brown-envelope journalism has further eroded accountability, ensuring that those in power rarely face meaningful scrutiny. Without credible journalism, citizens cannot make informed choices, and democracy degenerates into a theater of distraction.

People often comfort themselves with a convenient fiction: that the people are good and the leaders are bad. This binary is emotionally satisfying because it absolves ordinary citizens of responsibility. However, it collapses under scrutiny. How can citizens who evade taxes demand better hospitals? How can parents who bribe teachers for exam success demand meritocracy in public service? How can communities that reward tribal loyalty over competence expect national unity? The truth is uncomfortable but unavoidable: the political class does not rise above us; it emerges from among us. Our leaders are not exceptions to the rule; they are its perfect reflection.

History offers countless warnings about what happens when societies lose their moral compass. Rome did not fall because of a single corrupt

# Rotten from the Roots: Why Broken Societies Produce Broken Leaders

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emperor; it collapsed because its citizens became addicted to performance and abandoned their civic duties. When public morality erodes, leadership inevitably degenerates into performance. Kenya is treading the same path. Our leaders thrive on the very lies we tell ourselves: that corruption is acceptable if it benefits “our people,” that tribalism is tolerable if it secures “our candidate,” and that impunity is forgivable if it shields “our side.” In such an environment, leadership becomes a mirror of collective hypocrisy rather than a beacon of collective hope.

To believe that salvation will come from a single masquerading reformist leader or a catchy campaign slogan is naïve. Each election cycle brings a new messiah promising redemption and a new scapegoat blamed for failure. Ruto rose to the

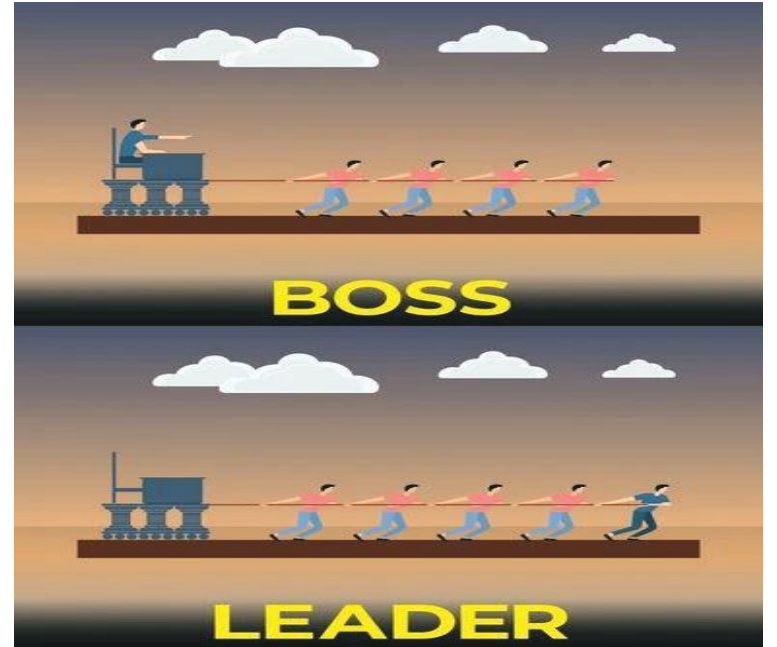
presidency through the “hustler” narrative and later rode the same cycle of promises and public expectation. However, every cycle ends the same way, with scandal, frustration, and excuses. You cannot legislate honesty into a population that glorifies shortcuts. A nation that cheats in the classroom will one day cheat in the treasury. Moral bankruptcy does not vanish with regime change; it must be uprooted at its source.

True change, therefore, cannot begin in Parliament. It must start in our homes, schools, workplaces, and communities. It begins when parents teach their children that truth is more valuable than deceit, when schools reward integrity alongside performance, when businesses prioritize fairness over profit, and when religious and civic institutions value moral courage above political convenience. Change starts in the simple act of saying “no” to dishonesty, even when it comes at a personal cost. It begins when citizens hold themselves to the same standards they

demand of those they elect. Simple acts, avoiding littering, refraining from spitting indiscriminately, and maintaining community hygiene, are part of this moral foundation. Only then can leadership transform from a mirror of national decay into a reflection of civic virtue.

A nation is not destroyed by its laws but by its habits. Kenya’s Constitution is among the most progressive in the world, yet it remains powerless when citizens prioritize convenience over principle. Laws can define justice, but only habits can sustain it. If small lies go unchecked, minor thefts go unpunished, and selfish acts are excused, then no constitutional reform, anti-corruption commission, or electoral overhaul can save the populace. Leadership will continue to mirror the culture that produces it.

Until Kenyans rebuild themselves from the ground up, until honesty is rediscovered as a virtue, fairness embraced as a duty, and integrity restored as a national value, scandal will remain our national anthem,



outrage our daily prayer, and disappointment our political tradition. When a people raise thieves to power, they should not be shocked when the treasury runs dry. They need only look into the mirror and recognize themselves.

**Short Bio**

*Maina Wahome is an author, linguist, and columnist. He also serves as a lecturer of the English language and conducts academic research.*



# Mudavadi: Kenya Must Invest In Data, Innovation And Technology Driven Agriculture

By: OPCS PS

@themtkenyatimes

## Worth Noting:

Mudavadi said his office is working with Ministry of Agriculture and like-minded national and international institutions to build integrated digital ecosystems that will revolutionize service delivery within the agricultural sector.

These systems are expected to support farmer registration, e-extension, digital input access, and real-time market intelligence.

“For agriculture to thrive, partnerships must deepen and coordination must strengthen. The Government alone cannot achieve the transformation we seek,” Mudavadi said.

He also urged the private sector to lead in investment, processing, and logistics while also calling on development partners to continue supporting financing, capacity building, and knowledge sharing.

Prime Cabinet Secretary, Musalia Mudavadi has said the future of agriculture lies in innovation, data and technology, a practice that should be urgently embraced in the country.

Mudavadi said his office is working with Ministry of Agriculture and like-minded national and international institutions to build integrated digital ecosystems that will revolutionize service delivery within the agricultural sector.

These systems are expected to support farmer registration, e-extension, digital input access, and real-time market intelligence.

“For agriculture to thrive, partnerships must deepen and coordination must strengthen. The Government alone cannot achieve the transformation we seek,” Mudavadi said.

He also urged the private sector to lead in investment, processing, and logistics while also calling on development partners to continue supporting financing, capacity building, and knowledge sharing.

Similarly, he called for the need to empower county governments to implement programmes at the grassroots, where real transformation happens.

“My Office remains committed to facilitating coordination across all these actors. We will continue to bridge the gap between policy and practice, ensuring that every initiative is aligned, efficient, transparent, and results-oriented. This approach will ensure that national ambitions translate into tangible benefits for farmers and rural communities,” he explained.

He was speaking when he attended the national agribusiness excellence awards during the fifth National Agribusiness Summit held in Nairobi.

He urged counties to invest in agricultural data platforms that align with national systems such as Kenya Integrated Agricultural Management Information System and the National Farmer Registration System.

These, he said, will ensure that planning and resource allocation are based on credible data and that every farmer in Kenya is visible, reachable, and supported effectively.

He also said that innovation hubs and incubators will continue to play a pivotal role, linking youth-led startups and agri-tech innovators with public programmes, financial institutions, and investors ready to scale transformative ideas.

The PCS also emphasized on value addition and agro-processing saying Kenya can no longer afford to export raw produce only to import processed goods at a premium.



Prime Cabinet Secretary, Musalia Mudavadi

According to Mudavadi, this practice drains national wealth and denies our youth jobs.

“We are promoting local manufacturing and agro-processing to ensure that more value is retained within our borders. By supporting the establishment of cottage industries, cold storage facilities, and agro-industrial parks, we are not only improving farm incomes but also creating sustainable employment, especially for women and young people who are the future of this nation,” he said.

Mudavadi said that agriculture remains the cornerstone of national development agenda and is the heartbeat of rural economies, the source of food and nutritional security, and the foundation upon which millions of livelihoods depend.

It contributes not only to exports and industrial growth but also to the very stability of our nation.

Despite this, he regretted that agriculture has been viewed merely as a means of survival and time has come

to reposition it as a competitive, profitable, and technology-driven business sector capable of powering Kenya’s transformation.

He said the Government has made bold and deliberate policy commitments to drive this transition.

Through the Agricultural Sector Transformation and Growth Strategy (ASTGS) and the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), Mudavadi said the Government is undertaking reforms that cut across value chains, strengthen market systems, and modernize rural infrastructure.

“These frameworks are helping us to align county and national interventions, eliminate duplication, and deliver tangible results for our farmers and agripreneurs,” he explained.

One of the Government’s foremost priorities is market efficiency.

“For decades, our farmers have remained price-takers in their own markets, vulnerable to exploitation and volatility. This must change,” he

insisted.

By strengthening aggregation centres, cooperatives, and digital marketplaces, he said the Government seeks to connect smallholder farmers directly to buyers, processors, and exporters.

This will enable them to negotiate better prices, access new markets, and earn higher returns for their labour and investment.

This year’s summit brought together leaders from government, the private sector, academia, and development partners, united by a shared mission to transform agriculture into a vibrant engine of enterprise, innovation, and prosperity.

It was guided by the theme “From Promise to Action: Advancing Agribusiness through Dialogue and Innovation,” with conversations and commitments forged affirming one truth, the future of agriculture lies in innovation, data, and technology.



Prime Cabinet Secretary, Musalia Mudavadi (3rd right)

# MSK Opens Entries For 2025 Awards Gala Set For Mombasa

By: Correspondent  
@themtkenyatimes

The Marketing Society of Kenya (MSK) has officially opened entries for its prestigious 2025 Awards Gala. The highly anticipated event will culminate on November 28 in Mombasa, bringing together Kenya's leading brands, marketing agencies, media houses, and industry leaders to celebrate innovation, excellence, and the transformative power of marketing.

In her opening remarks during a launch event in Nairobi on Friday, MSK Chairperson Zuhura Odhiambo underscored the critical role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in shaping the future of marketing, urging the industry to embrace technology-driven creativity.

"Today, we invite all brands, media houses, and marketing agencies to embrace this journey. With the proper use of AI, this year's awards should be the best yet," Odhiambo said.

She commended Absa Bank, the 2024 overall winner, for its impactful campaigns that not only elevated the brand but also created employment

opportunities for young people.

"We recognize and encourage agencies that are creating jobs for youth — not just locally, but globally — through the power of mobile technology," she added.

Odhiambo reaffirmed MSK's commitment to empower, educate, and inspire excellence through innovation in marketing, noting that the 2025 edition will spotlight brands driving meaningful change.

Catalyst for innovation

Dr. Gilda Odera, President of the Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE), who will serve as one of this year's judges, delivered the keynote address on the theme "Business Innovation and National Development."

"Marketing is more than advertising — it is a catalyst for innovation. It connects value creation with value exchange, and in that exchange lies economic progress," she said.

Odera emphasized the need for sustainable marketing practices in an era of rapid global transformation and rising youth unemployment.

"We have many young people desperate for jobs. Have we thought of the connecting dots that marketing can create?" the FKE President



MSK Chairperson Zuhura Odhiambo underscored the critical role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in shaping the future of marketing, urging the industry to embrace technology-driven creativity/MSK/FILE

posed.

"Marketing strengthens economic resilience. Sustainable marketing is no longer optional — it is a must for every business," she urged.

Addressing concerns about emerging technologies, she urged marketers to see AI as an enabler rather than a threat.

"AI is not here to take away your jobs. Let us use it to enhance marketing and drive economic growth," she said.

This year's gala, themed "Celebrating Innovation. Inspiring Excellence.", will honor bold ideas and transformative strategies redefining Kenya's marketing landscape.

"We are not just celebrating campaigns — we are celebrating catalysts of change," MSK noted.

The MSK Awards Gala remains the country's premier platform for recognizing marketing excellence, setting the tone for an industry increasingly shaped by AI, sustainability, and youth empowerment.

# EACC Recovers Grabbed Road Reserve In Nyali After 12-Year Legal Battle

By: Correspondent  
@themtkenyatimes

In a landmark ruling that underscores the fight against land grabbing in Kenya, the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) has successfully reclaimed a 0.13-hectare parcel of public land in Nyali, Mombasa County. The land, valued at approximately Ksh30 million, had been illegally acquired and was originally designated as a road reserve for the expansion of Links Road adjoining First Avenue.

The recovery marks the end of a protracted 12-year legal battle initiated by the EACC to restore the land for public use. On October 22, 2025, Justice Stephen Kibunja of the Mombasa Environment and Land

Court delivered a decisive judgment declaring the issuance of title MN/I/9816 to the late Sheikh Ali Taib "illegal, null, and void ab initio." The court ordered the Mombasa Land Registrar to cancel the fraudulent title and update the land register to reflect its rightful status as public property.

Investigations by the EACC revealed that the land was irregularly allocated on January 19, 1996, by the then Commissioner of Lands without any formal application or justification. A 99-year lease was issued starting February 1, 1996, and a grant (CR Number 28222) was subsequently awarded to Shaibu Hamisi Mgandi. Mgandi later sold the property to Sheikh Ali Taib, further complicating the ownership trail.

Justice Kibunja also issued a permanent injunction barring any future trespass, transfer, or dealings with



the land, except for its surrender to the government. The ruling not only restores the land for its intended infrastructural use but also sends a strong message about the consequences of illegal land acquisition.

The EACC hailed the judgment as a victory for public interest and a testament to the commission's commitment to safeguarding public resources.

The agency emphasized that land grabbing remains a significant challenge in Kenya, often hindering development and infrastructure projects.

This recovery adds to the growing list of public assets reclaimed by the EACC through legal channels. It highlights the importance of vigilance, institutional accountability,

and judicial independence in the fight against corruption and illegal land dealings.

As Nyali residents anticipate the expansion of Links Road, the ruling offers renewed hope for transparent land management and urban planning that prioritizes public welfare over private gain.

# NYOTA Programme Verification Exercise



From left PS for Science, Research and Innovation Prof Abdulrazak Shaukat has a word with Kwale County Commissioner Stephen Orinde and Deputy Government Spokesperson Mwanai-sha Chidzuga when he arrived at the Kwale Cultural Center in Kwale town to launch the NYOTA business support component physical verification exercise in Matuga Constituency.



Machakos county youths from the nine Sub counties turned up in large numbers for the Nyota verification exercise at the Machakos Social led by the Deputy County Commissioner Machira Gathungu.



Principal Secretary for Roads, Eng. Joseph Mbugua oversaw NYOTA verification exercise in Kinangop Constituency, Nyandarua County. A huge turnout of youths from Kinangop Constituency during the exercise at Jabini Rurinja Stadium.



A total of 3,962 youths from Kirinyaga County were successfully verified on Friday during the National Youth Opportunities Towards Advancement (NYOTA) exercise. The verification took place in all four constituencies; Kirinyaga Central (1,235 youths), Mwea (1,150 youths) Gichugu (1,102 youths) and Ndia (475 youths) at venues including Kerugoya Stadium, General Kassam Njogu Stadium in Kianyaga, Thiba North Grounds, and Kianjanga Grounds. The exercise brought together representatives from the State Department for Public Health and Professional Standards ,NGAO, NG-CDF, MSEA and Youth Affairs, underscoring the Government's commitment to empowering youth through access to capital, enterprise support, and sustainable livelihood opportunities.



The Physical Validation Exercise for the NYOTA Business Support Component in Mandera county took place at Mandera Polytechnic. Young people turned out in large numbers to participate in the programme.



Principal Secretary State Department of Children Services, Carren Ageng'o presided over the NYOTA physical verification exercise in Nyang'oma Chief's Camp, Muhoroni sub-county.



Verification exercise of Nyota programme in Laikipia East sub county took place in Nanyuki town. Over 3000 youth turned up seeking to get the KSh50,000 seed money as start-up capital for business growth from the government.



Principal Secretary, department of broadcasting and Telecommunication Stephen Isaboke and Kisii county Commissioner Joseph Kibet during the NYOTA verification exercise at Kisii National Polytechnic in the outskirts of Kisii town in Kisii County.

## The Forth Monkey Had Emerged, Guess Who



The topic deeply analyzes the period Before and after the use of mobile .

Before the mobile era

People are concerned with others  
And monitor others' activities.

They insisted the three monkeys theory  
Avoiding to see, hear and talk about the bad things.

They are very much cautious in those evils  
Even if anyone tries that, others have the right to warn them.

In the mobile era

All are busy with their mobiles  
They don't have time for other wails.

Others won't allow them to monitor  
And also don't want to interfere with personals.

The children of every family are drowned in mobiles  
Even the parents are very scared of their behaviour.

I am Rajesh Kanna B N  
B T Asst,  
From Government Model High School, Tirur.  
Tiruvallur District.  
Tamil Nadu, India.

## Your Path Is Entirely Unique



Your path is entirely unique,  
No need to compared with others  
Yours is not common with others,  
in any manner or style  
No one will understand yours,  
nor need to understand your way,  
Just go in your own path, for it's special, every day.

Your journey can't be shared with others  
Travel alone, even if you also are travelling

No need to give explanations, to anyone  
It's your path, your journey – trust , don't quit

Trust your step, don't deviate, stay on your own ground,  
Don't compare your way, with anyone else's path  
Each one's path is entirely different,  
They are uniquely designed,  
Comparing leads only to failure,

So always choose your own path, with confidence  
For it's yours alone, where your true potential is there

Brinda. D  
GRADUATE TEACHER,  
GOVT HIGH SCHOOL,  
MELPATTAMPAKKAM  
CUDDALORE, Tamilnadu India  
creativewritersmag@gmail.com

## Happy Diwali



Lights shine bright, in the dark of night,  
Diwali's here, with its radiant light.

A festival of joy, of love and of cheer,  
Wishing you happiness, this year and every year.

May the lamps of Diwali, illuminate your way,  
And fill your heart with joy, on this special day.

May the sweetness of mithai, and the warmth  
of firecrackers too,  
Bring you delight and happiness, and make your  
heart anew.

Diwali's sparkles, lights up the air,  
A time for family, friends, and love to share.  
May your heart be filled, with joy and delight,  
On this special day, of lights, and every night.  
Happy Diwali!

R. Sripriya  
BT ASSISTANT ENGLISH GHSS  
KOLAPAKKAM KANCHIPURAM DISTRICT  
TAMILNADU INDIA

## Unheard Voices



A woman swings in the hands of others,  
Risking herself to prove her worth,  
Fails many times in the eyes of family,

Discouraged by those with similar fate,  
Punished for being loyal,  
She is a woman betrayed by love,  
Walking slowly on her path,  
The stupidity of others drives her to madness,  
Her emotions are always at stake,  
She needs a break to breathe in freedom,  
Failure itself fails in her cause,  
Still, she waits for the warmth of love to honor her.

– Viji. T Nkl

## This Melody Is As Precious As A Mother's Lullaby



This melody is as precious as a mother's lullaby,  
Every morning awakens a feeling in my heart.  
When I listen, the world grows in my soul,  
My anthem, dawn breaks in my heart.  
At dawn, gentle winds whisper,  
Spreading the praise of my homeland  
throughout the world.  
Kind bees hurry to the flower garden,  
He holds his love for flowers with reverence.  
It is an honor to speak in honor of the  
Motherland.

Let each line pour into hearts like light.  
"The Land That Captivated the World,"  
If you listen, your heart will be filled with pride.  
The sun shines in the sky of my heart,  
Its destination is a luminous bright path.  
There are geniuses who breathe with the  
homeland,  
My Uzbek people are a nation that has become  
its own master.

Time rushes by in the caravan of years,  
Springs come spreading the breeze.  
To follow Hazrat Navoi is happiness,  
You are eternally alive, teacher, Grandfather  
Abdulla.

Atojanova Suray  
In memory of Abdulla Aripov  
Student of Karakalpak State University named  
after Berdakh,  
Chemical technology faculty 2nd course

## My Beloved Autumn



Golden whispers fill the air,  
Leaves like fire everywhere.  
The world turns soft, the sky turns deep,  
And nature drifts in gentle sleep.

I walk through paths of amber light,  
Where day feels calm, yet dreams of night.  
Each breeze retells a tender song,

Of endings sweet, yet never wrong.

The trees wear gowns of red and gold,  
Their beauty quiet, warm, and bold.  
The scent of rain, the hush of skies,  
Bring peace and wonder to my eyes.

Oh Autumn, dear, you speak to me,  
Of change, of hope, of memory.  
You teach my heart to let things go,  
And find new blooms beneath the snow.

Ziyodullayeva Ma'lumaxon

She was born on August 3, 2007, in Namangan,  
Uzbekistan. She is a first-year student of  
Uzbekistan State World Languages University.  
She is passionate about learning languages and  
has achieved successes in the field of literature  
within republic

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## BUSINESS

## Universities, NGO Partner To Boost Green Employment

By: Arnold Linga Masila  
@themtkenyetimes



Sellah Bogonko

#### Worth Noting:

- Speaking at the event, Sellah Bogonko, Co-Founder and CEO of Jacob's Ladder Africa, emphasised the urgency of converting Africa's demographic potential into tangible outcomes.
- "We are witnessing a historic convergence of Africa's demographic dividend and the global green transition. But potential alone is a passive promise. Only when our young people are fully aware of opportunities, equipped with relevant skills, empowered through access and networks, guided by strong ethics, and driven by an entrepreneurial mindset within systems that work for them, will they become the active builders, innovators, and leaders who turn Africa's promise into the world's greatest story of transformation," Bogonko said.

Fifteen public universities have partnered with Jacob's Ladder to launch an ambitious five-year initiative to prepare Kenyan youth for the green economy, making its second stop at Taita Taveta University this week as part of a nationwide campaign to address the country's deepening youth unemployment crisis.

The Green Careers Caravan, launched through the Vice-Chancellors' Committee and the State Department of Higher Education and Research, aims to directly engage over 150,000 young people across 42 public universities by 2030.

The initiative comes at a critical time when nearly 12 percent of the youthful workforce and more than 31 percent of the 10 million youth in the labour force are either unemployed or underemployed.

Speaking at the event, Sellah Bogonko, Co-Founder and CEO of Jacob's Ladder Africa, emphasised the urgency of converting Africa's demographic potential into tangible outcomes.

"We are witnessing a historic convergence of Africa's demographic dividend and the global green transition. But potential alone is a passive promise. Only when our young people are fully aware of opportunities, equipped with relevant skills,

empowered through access and networks, guided by strong ethics, and driven by an entrepreneurial mindset within systems that work for them, will they become the active builders, innovators, and leaders who turn Africa's promise into the world's greatest story of transformation," Bogonko said.

The transition to a green economy offers significant hope across Africa, with the shift potentially generating 3.3 million jobs by 2030 in renewable energy, e-mobility, construction, manufacturing, and sustainable agriculture.

The caravan is designed to help students understand and access these emerging opportunities through inspiration sessions, innovation pitches, and debates on critical environmental challenges.

Professor Christine Onyango, Acting Vice Chancellor of Taita Taveta University, highlighted the institution's pioneering role in integrating environmental sustainability with economic opportunity. The university, known as the home of ideas with a niche in mining and engineering, has established the Center of Excellence for Mining Environment and Natural Resource Management under a German-Kenya project funded by DAAD.

"Mining engineering happens in the environment, and when we think about green, we think about the environment," Professor Onyango explained.

She stated how the university has developed programmes to address environmental destruction caused by mining, including a Master of Science in Engineering Environmental Reengineering focused on rehabilitating land damaged by artisanal miners.

The university has also created innovative sustainability programmes, including SUMEWA, an initiative that uses solar energy to recycle mining water and make it safe for human consumption, and a biogas system that converts kitchen waste into cooking fuel.

These practical applications of circular economy principles are complemented by academic programmes such as an MBA in Natural Resource Management and climate-smart agriculture initiatives.

Noting the university's comprehensive approach to environmental restoration and sustainable resource management, Professor Onyango emphasised that Taita Taveta's approach extends beyond reforestation stating that, "Planting trees is one thing, but taking back the soil so that you can support plant growth and other activ-

ities of human nature is important."

Shedrack Mutungi, County Executive Committee Member for the Department of Youth Affairs, Sports, Gender and Social Services, pledged the county government's full support for the initiative.

He revealed that the county has passed the Poverty Alleviation and Empowerment Act, which will allocate 5 percent of the county's total budget every financial year to youth empowerment programmes, including green economy initiatives.

"The current government is committed to ensuring that the youths are able to get job opportunities and investment opportunities within the county," Mutungi said, urging students to remain patient and entrepreneurial while avoiding get-rich-quick schemes.

The Green Careers Caravan, which began at Kisii University, will extend to thirteen more universities during the first half of 2026 before scaling to all 42 public universities across Kenya over the next five years.

The programme then plans to expand to one new African region each year, delivering more than 150 university activations continent-wide.



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# KRA's Crosshairs: Decoding Fringe Benefit Tax (FBT) Before Your Audit Hits



By: Odhiambo Jerameel Kevins Owuor  
@themkenyatimes

The Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) collected over KES 2.4 trillion in revenue during the 2023/2024 financial year, with Pay As You Earn (PAYE) and related employment taxes contributing approximately 20% of this total. Within this landscape, Fringe Benefit Tax remains one of the most misunderstood and frequently contested areas during KRA audits. Recent compliance sweeps have revealed that over 60% of Kenyan employers either underreport or completely omit certain fringe benefits from their tax computations, exposing themselves to significant penalties, interest charges, and potential criminal prosecution. As KRA intensifies its enforcement mechanisms through sophisticated data analytics and inter-agency information sharing, understanding Fringe Benefit Tax is no longer optional; it's a survival imperative for every employer operating in Kenya.

Fringe Benefit Tax is a levy imposed on non-cash benefits that employers provide to their employees beyond basic salary. Under Section 12(2) of the Income Tax Act, these benefits are deemed part of taxable income and must be valued, reported, and taxed accordingly. The underlying principle is simple: if an employee receives economic value from their employer whether through a company car, housing allowance, low-interest loans, or private medical cover that value constitutes income and should be taxed. The current FBT rate in Kenya stands at 30% of the benefit's taxable value, paid by the employer on behalf of the employee. This tax applies to benefits provided to directors, employees earning above KES 24,000 per month, and in some cases, their family members who enjoy these benefits.

Put differently, Fringe Benefit Tax (FBT) is a levy imposed by the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) on non-cash benefits that employers provide to their employees, directors, or their associates. These are benefits that are not part of the employee's basic salary but add value to their overall compensation package. The employer, not the employee, bears the responsibility of remitting FBT to the KRA.

Let me use a practical example to illustrate the same and make it sink home. Consider a marketing manager in Nairobi whose employer provides a fully maintained company vehicle valued at KES 3 million for both business and personal use. The taxable benefit is calculated at 2% of the vehicle's cost per month (KES 60,000), resulting in an annual FBT liability of



KES 216,000 (30% of KES 720,000). Similarly, if a multinational corporation provides its country director with a serviced apartment in Westlands worth KES 300,000 monthly, the fair market value of this accommodation becomes a taxable benefit, generating an annual FBT liability of KES 1.08 million. Low-interest or interest-free loans present another common scenario: when an employer extends a KES 5 million housing loan to a senior executive at 5% interest while the prescribed rate is 13%, the 8% differential on the loan amount (KES 400,000 annually) constitutes a taxable benefit, attracting FBT of KES 120,000. Educational assistance for employees' children, club memberships, stock options below market value, and even employer contributions to unregistered pension schemes all fall within FBT's expansive net.

The rationale behind FBT is to ensure fairness in taxation by capturing the economic value of benefits that employees receive outside their regular pay. Without it, employees enjoying significant non-cash benefits could escape taxation on a substantial part of their income. KRA views FBT as a way of maintaining horizontal equity thus ensuring that employees earning the same total value (cash and non-cash) are taxed similarly. In essence, FBT closes potential loopholes that could encourage under-declaration of taxable income.

I have argued elsewhere that the justification behind Fringe Benefit Tax is fundamentally about equity and revenue integrity. Without FBT, high-income earners could structure their compensation packages to minimize cash salary (which attracts progressive PAYE rates up to

35%) and maximize non-cash benefits, effectively eroding the tax base. This would shift the tax burden disproportionately onto lower-income workers who receive predominantly cash compensation. FBT ensures horizontal equity that two employees receiving equal total compensation pay similar taxes regardless of whether that compensation comes as salary or benefits. From a fiscal perspective, FBT protects government revenue streams that fund essential public services, infrastructure development, and social programs. The tax also discourages excessive perks that could widen income inequality and ensures that compensation practices remain transparent and economically efficient rather than being distorted by tax avoidance strategies.

Employers across Kenya increasingly voice concerns that FBT represents excessive taxation that stifles business competitiveness and economic growth. The argument centers on double or even triple taxation: an employer pays corporate tax on profits, then pays FBT on benefits provided from those already-taxed profits, while the employee may also bear indirect costs through reduced take-home benefits. A manufacturing company in Thika providing medical insurance, housing, and transport to 200 employees might face an additional KES 15 million in annual FBT obligations funds that could otherwise finance expansion, equipment upgrades, or additional hiring. Small and medium enterprises particularly struggle with FBT compliance costs, which include not just the tax itself but also the administrative burden of valuation, documentation, and reporting. The 30% FBT rate, one of the

highest in East Africa combined with the absence of meaningful thresholds or exemptions for modest benefits, creates a particularly harsh environment for businesses trying to attract and retain talent through non-monetary incentives.

The complexity of FBT regulations creates a minefield for well-intentioned employers. Many struggle with benefit valuation: how do you fairly value a company car that's three years old, or a housing benefit in a market with fluctuating rental rates? The Income Tax (Fringe Benefit Tax) Rules provide formulas, but they often fail to capture real-world nuances. Some benefits occupy grey areas, is an occasional team lunch taxable? What about an employee wellness program or mental health support? Employers also grapple with the challenge of benefits provided to employee families; when a director's spouse uses the company car or children attend school on employer-funded scholarships, determining the apportionment of taxable benefit becomes contentious. Record-keeping requirements compound these challenges: KRA expects detailed logs of personal versus business use for vehicles, comprehensive benefit registers, and contemporaneous documentation that many Kenyan businesses lack the systems to maintain.

Despite these concerns, FBT remains a critical focus during KRA audits. Employers who fail to account for FBT correctly risk backdated assessments, penalties, and interest.

## Worth Noting:

- Put differently, Fringe Benefit Tax (FBT) is a levy imposed by the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) on non-cash benefits that employers provide to their employees, directors, or their associates. These are benefits that are not part of the employee's basic salary but add value to their overall compensation package. The employer, not the employee, bears the responsibility of remitting FBT to the KRA.

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# KRA's Crosshairs: Decoding Fringe Benefit Tax (FBT) Before Your Audit Hits

Contd from page 18

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The KRA's current audit approach is data-driven, using technology such as iTax cross-referencing, integrated payroll records, and even car logbook data to trace undeclared fringe benefits. A company that gives a director a company car but fails to declare FBT could be hit with a hefty bill sometimes spanning multiple financial years.

KRA has dramatically enhanced its FBT enforcement capabilities through technology and intelligence-gathering. The Integrated Tax Management System (iTax) now cross-references employee P9 forms, employer PAYE returns, and third-party data from insurance companies, financial institutions, and motor vehicle registries. When a company declares vehicle operating expenses of KES 5 million annually but reports minimal fringe benefits, red flags trigger automatic audit selections. KRA auditors arrive armed with detailed queries about specific employees, particular benefits, and unexplained discrepancies between lifestyle indicators and declared income. Recent audits have uncovered schemes where employers deliberately misclassify benefits as business expenses, provide benefits through related entities to obscure the true employer-employee relationship, or simply rely on KRA's limited enforcement capacity. However, the consequences of non-compliance have become severe: penalties of 25% of unpaid tax, interest at 1% per month, potential prosecution of directors, and mandatory tax agent oversight for repeat offenders. Public naming of non-compliant taxpayers further amplifies reputational risks that can damage client relationships and competitive positioning.

Before your audit notice arrives, it is essential to ensure that your company's policies and documentation around benefits are watertight. Maintain detailed records showing the purpose, value, and treatment of each benefit. For instance, if an employee loan exists, document the interest rate charged, repayment schedule, and justification. The "market rate" should align with the CBR as announced by the Central Bank of Kenya plus 2%. For cars, maintain logbooks, fuel policies, and usage records to separate private from business mileage.

While FBT may appear burdensome, compliance offers long-term advantages. A compliant employer avoids surprise tax bills, builds trust with KRA, and improves corporate governance standards. Additionally, clear documentation of benefits can enhance employee transparency,



KRA Head Quarters

showing that benefits are structured, valued, and compliant. In an era where tax compliance contributes to a company's public image, being proactive about FBT positions a business as responsible and credible.

While FBT serves legitimate policy objectives, Kenya's current framework demands urgent reform to balance revenue collection with economic pragmatism. First, the 30% rate should be reconsidered; neighboring countries like Uganda (30%) and Tanzania (30%) are increasingly seen as examples not to follow, while Rwanda's more nuanced approach recognizes that excessive taxation drives businesses to informal arrangements or offshore structures. Second, exemptions for modest benefits would remove disproportionate compliance burdens: why should a small business face complex valuations and tax liabilities for providing employees with basic transport allowances or subsidized meals? A de minimis threshold of, say, KES 50,000 annually would ease pressure on SMEs while focusing enforcement on genuinely significant benefits. Third, the valuation methodology needs updating to reflect actual economic benefit rather

than crude proxies; a five-year-old vehicle shouldn't be valued at original cost when its utility and market value have depreciated substantially. Fourth, safe harbor provisions could offer certainty: if employers follow prescribed methods and maintain adequate documentation, they should receive protection from arbitrary reassessments based on KRA's shifting interpretations.

However, there is a growing case for reviewing how FBT is applied in Kenya. Policymakers should consider thresholds or exemptions for SMEs, or allow certain benefits like professional development programs or wellness perks to be tax-deductible. This would preserve the spirit of FBT without stifling employee welfare initiatives. Simplifying the FBT regime could also encourage more transparent declarations instead of pushing employers toward avoidance or underreporting.

To stay ahead, employers should conduct internal FBT reviews annually, involve tax professionals in structuring benefit packages, and leverage technology to automate payroll and benefit tracking. Regular training for HR and finance staff can also prevent

costly errors. Above all, aligning benefit policies with current KRA guidelines and market rates can safeguard your company from future disputes.

In the current tax environment, ignorance is no defense. KRA's crosshairs are increasingly trained on fringe benefits, especially as data analytics sharpen audit accuracy. Employers must not view FBT as an arbitrary penalty but as part of Kenya's effort to tax income equitably. By understanding, documenting, and complying with FBT obligations, companies can avoid unnecessary exposure while still rewarding their teams fairly. In today's compliance-driven business landscape, the best defense against an audit is proactive transparency because when the audit hits, it's too late to start explaining what you should have declared.

*The writer is a legal researcher and writer*

# How Serious Is Europe's Latest Bird Flu Outbreak?

By: Xinhua News Agency  
 @themtkenyatimes

Europe has seen a sharp rise in cases of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI), also known as the bird flu, since September, forcing governments to raise alert levels and order mass culling.

France, Germany, the Netherlands, and others are racing to contain the virus as it spreads rapidly among poultry and wild birds. Here's what you need to know:

## How Bad Is The Outbreak

According to the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH), Europe saw a steep increase in bird flu cases in September. Bird infections jumped from 759 to more than 61,000, while poultry losses (from deaths and culling) surged from 291 to around 334,000. Germany, Spain and France are among the worst affected. Belgium reported an outbreak on Wednesday, with 319 birds dead and over 60,000 culled. The federal food safety agency ordered all poultry to be kept indoors nationwide.

France raised its national alert level from "moderate" to "high" on October 21 after reporting four outbreaks at poultry farms since early October. Meanwhile, Germany has logged infections at more than 15 farms this month, up from just four in September, and upgraded its risk level for poultry holdings to "high." In Spain's Castilla y Leon region, the province of Valladolid has been the hardest hit, with six outbreaks affecting more than 2 million birds. Portugal has reported seven cases since September, including one at a duck farm that impacted 250,000 birds.

## How Do Countries Respond

The main response across Europe has been mass culling and movement restrictions on poultry. France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal and Poland have all adopted such measures to slow the spread. In the Netherlands, for instance, authorities culled 161,000 birds at a layer farm in Gelderland province on Oct. 22 and 71,000 more earlier this month at another site. The country has also imposed nationwide indoor housing rules and 10-km transport bans around affected farms, covering birds, eggs, manure and related materials.

According to Euronews, European governments are also expanding monitoring and vaccination programs to help the poultry sector



prevent and recover from the HPAI outbreaks.

## Where Did The Virus Come From

According to the WOAH, wild birds, especially waterfowl, are the natural hosts of avian influenza viruses and are often responsible for transmitting the virus to domestic flocks. France's Agriculture Ministry said detections among migratory birds have risen significantly in recent weeks. Many outbreaks were located along the Atlantic migratory flyway, suggesting that wild birds traveling south between September and December are a key source of infection.

Environmental authorities in Germany's Brandenburg state said that they are dealing with the largest-ever wild bird outbreak, mainly among migrating cranes. More than 1,000 crane deaths have been confirmed. The virus has also been detected in dead swans and ducks in the Neth-

erlands, Portugal, and Latvia. The Friedrich-Loeffler-Institut, Germany's federal animal health agency, said infected birds can still fly in the early stages of the disease, potentially spreading the virus along migration routes.

## How Big Could The Impact Be

WOAH said September's bird flu outbreaks in poultry hit the highest level compared to the same month in the previous two seasonal waves, and are expected to rise further in the coming months. As migratory birds move southwest, environmental authorities of Germany's Brandenburg state expect the virus to spread deeper into France and Spain, causing more bird deaths. Dutch officials warned that the spread of HPAI remains highly unpredictable and requires close monitoring. The outbreak could also threaten endangered species such as the great bustard, of which only about 100 remain in Germany.

According to Euronews, the outbreaks pose a threat to Europe's poultry industry and trade. For instance, Morocco suspended imports of poultry, eggs and related products from Portugal in September.

It is extremely rare for humans to become infected with bird flu, and no sustained human-to-human transmission has been observed, the European Center for Disease Prevention and Control said on Oct. 17 in a statement. The risk to the general population in the EU and European Economic Area is considered low. Spain's health authorities said there is no evidence that bird flu can spread through properly cooked poultry or eggs. Germany's Robert Koch Institute said transmission to humans has only occurred in isolated cases, mainly among people having close contact with infected birds, such as farm workers or veterinarians. Officials advise avoiding any direct contact with sick or dead wild birds.

**Worth Noting:**

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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## An Open Letter to NCIC: Justice Cannot Be Selective

By: Prof. Gitile Naituli  
 @themtkenyatimes



### Worth Noting:

- Reverend, justice that is selective is injustice in disguise. For NCIC to be credible, it must be consistent. Its silence in the face of other, equally grave violations has not gone unnoticed. The country remembers that Farah Maalim, the former Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, declared without shame that if he were President William Ruto, he would have killed 5,000 Gen Z demonstrators per day. Governor Kahiga's words were insensitive, but Farah Maalim's were genocidal. Yet the NCIC, whose duty it is to prevent the normalisation of hate and violence, remained unmoved.
- Similarly, the Commission watched in silence as Governor Gladys Wanga, MP Peter Kaluma, and their ilk publicly profiled Kikuyus to shadow-box former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua turning an individual political contest into an ethnic confrontation.

Dear Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia,

Let me begin by commending the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) for finally re-discovering its voice. By summoning Nyeri Governor Mutahi Kahiga over his reckless and regrettable remarks on the late Raila Odinga, you demonstrated that the Commission still remembers its founding purpose to guard the moral and social fabric of our Republic. For that, I say kudos.

But Reverend, justice that is selective is injustice in disguise. For NCIC to be credible, it must be consistent. Its silence in the face of other, equally grave violations has not gone unnoticed. The country remembers that Farah Maalim, the former Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, declared without shame that if he were President William Ruto, he would have killed 5,000 Gen Z demonstrators per day. Governor Kahiga's words were insensitive, but Farah Maalim's were genocidal. Yet the NCIC, whose duty it is to prevent the normalisation of hate and violence, remained unmoved.

Similarly, the Commission watched in silence as Governor Gladys Wanga, MP Peter Kaluma, and their ilk publicly profiled Kikuyus to shadow-box former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua turning an individual political contest into an ethnic confrontation. It also said nothing when leaders such as William Kamket and Wajir Woman Representative Fatuma Jehow boasted that they would "steal the 2027 election for Ruto." These are not careless remarks. They are deliberate provocations that corrode national unity. And yet, NCIC, the very body created to tame the monster of ethnic hatred, has been a bystander.

This pattern raises troubling questions. Why is outrage loud when the offender is from Mt. Kenya, but muted when the offender is not? Why does the Commission's moral radar only seem to activate when a Kikuyu politician errs? We cannot build cohesion by vilifying one region while excusing another. Kenya deserves a commission of conscience, not one of convenience.

Let me be clear: Mutahi Kahiga's comments were unacceptable. They were hurtful, reckless, and unbecoming of a leader. But he has since apologised and resigned as Vice Chair of the Council of Governors, an act of humility rare in our politics. He has



Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia

been summoned, condemned, and corrected. Meanwhile, those who have called for mass killings or profiled entire communities continue to walk free, smiling for the cameras, unbothered and unaccountable.

This is not cohesion. It is hypocrisy. It is as though in Kenya, hate speech has a tribe and justice has a direction. Reverend Kobia, I write not as a critic but as one who once served in that very commission. I understand its constraints and its potential. But I also know that the NCIC's true power lies not in police summonses or press conferences, but in moral courage, the courage to be fair when fairness is inconvenient. Cohesion cannot be built on selective outrage. The law cannot thunder at one community and whisper to another.

The Mt. Kenya region has become Kenya's favourite political scapegoat, condemned when it supports the government, condemned when it questions it. Every election cycle, the mountain is treated as the cause of all problems and the cure for none. This collective resentment has bred a dangerous national bias: to hate Mt. Kenya is to appear progressive; to defend it is to appear tribal. Such distortion is poisonous to the idea of nationhood.

But what is worse is that NCIC, the very body meant to neutralize these divisions, sometimes appears to amplify them through omission. When you punish selectively, you don't silence hate. You feed it. You tell Kenyans that some tribes are safe to insult and others are not; that justice

depends not on the law but on identity.

As I have written before, "The moral test of a nation is not in how loudly it condemns, but in how fairly it judges." NCIC's duty is to ensure that standard applies to everyone from Kahiga to Maalim, from Wanga to Kamket.

Reverend, your office carries a sacred trust. You are not merely the head of a statutory commission; you are the custodian of our fragile national soul. You must not allow NCIC to become a public relations theatre that performs outrage for headlines while ignoring deeper injustice. The Commission must rise above political convenience and reassert itself as the impartial guardian of Kenya's social peace.

Therefore, I urge you to summon all those who have recently crossed the line of decency, Farah Maalim, Gladys Wanga, Peter Kaluma, William Kamket, and Fatuma Jehow among others. Let the law speak evenly. Let Kenya see that NCIC does not judge by tribe, status, or political alignment but by principle.

Our cohesion will not come from selective punishment but from consistent justice. If we are ever to heal, we must learn to be fair even to those we love to hate.

Yours sincerely,  
 Prof. Gitile Naituli, PhD, EBS, FKNAS  
 Former Commissioner, National Cohesion and Integration Commission

You can write Letter to the Editor on any subject through:

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# SPORTS NEWS

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**Sports >>** \*An NBA player and coach are among dozens of people arrested as part of a sweeping FBI investigation into illegal sports betting and allegedly rigged, mafia-linked poker games.

## NBA Stars And Mafia Among Dozens Arrested In Illegal Gambling Crackdown

An NBA player and coach are among dozens of people arrested as part of a sweeping FBI investigation into illegal sports betting and allegedly rigged, mafia-linked poker games.

Miami Heat player Terry Rozier and Portland Trail Blazers head coach Chauncey Billups were named by federal prosecutors in two separate indictments on Thursday. Both men deny the allegations.

Rozier, 31, is among six people arrested over alleged betting irregularities. They include NBA players accused of faking injuries to influence gambling markets.

Billups, a Hall of Fame player turned coach, is one of 31 people charged in a separate illegal poker game case involving retired players and the mafia.

That case, which prosecutors said involved four of the five major crime families in New York, uncovered an alleged scheme to lure victims into playing rigged poker games alongside high-profile sports stars before stealing millions of dollars.

They did so using technology including special contact lenses and glasses that could read pre-marked cards and an X-ray table, according to authorities.

The NBA said in a statement that Rozier and Billups were being placed on immediate leave as it reviews the federal indictments.

“We take these allegations with the utmost seriousness, and the integrity of our game remains our top priority,” it said.

Rozier’s lawyer denied the allegations to CBS News, the BBC’s US partner, saying: “Terry is not a gambler, but he is not afraid of a fight, and he looks forward to winning this fight.”

He appeared in federal court in Orlando, Florida, on Thursday and was released on bail after he put up his Florida home – valued



Miami Heats’ Terry Rozier. PHOTO/LEGION HOOPS

at \$6m (£4.5m) – as collateral, according to local media.

Billups, who has coached the Portland Trail Blazers since 2021, was arrested in Portland, Oregon, and arraigned in court on Thursday, according to local media. He is expected to prepare a substantial bond for his release, too.

His lawyer Chris Heywood also denied the accusations, telling CBS in a statement: “He will fight these allegations with the same tenacity that marked his 28-year career. We look forward to our day in court.”

FBI Director Kash Patel held a news conference with other

prosecutors in Brooklyn, New York, on Thursday where he announced the two indictments.

He called the arrests “extraordinary” and said there was a “co-ordinated takedown across 11 states”.

“We’re talking about tens of millions of dollars in fraud and theft and robbery across a multi-year investigation,” he said.

US Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, Joseph Nocella Jr, said all defendants were innocent until proven guilty, but warned: “Your winning streak has ended. Your luck has run out.”

### NBA games under scrutiny

Prosecutors said the first case involved players and associates who allegedly used information not available to the public to manipulate bets on major gambling platforms.

Nocella called it “one of the most brazen sports corruption schemes since online sports betting became widely legalised”.

Seven NBA games between February 2023 and March 2024 have been identified as part of

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Sports >> \* .....

# NBA Stars And Mafia Among Dozens Arrested In Illegal Gambling Crackdown

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the case. Rozier is said to have been involved in one between the Charlotte Hornets and New Orleans Pelicans, when he was playing for the Hornets.

Rozier is alleged to have told a friend that he would leave the game early due to injury. The friend and his associates then placed bets, or directed others to bet, "more than \$200,000" that Rozier would underperform expectations in the game, prosecutors said.

He left the game after nine minutes, they said, which resulted in tens of thousands of dollars in betting profits for those involved.

During the game, Rozier scored just five points before going off because of a sore right foot, according to the official NBA match report.

Before that game, he averaged 35 minutes of playing time and about 21 points per game.

"As the NBA season tips off, his career is already benched, not for injury but for integrity," New York City Police Commissioner Jessica Tisch said.

Rozier's lawyer James Trusty said in a statement that prosecutors "appear to be taking the word of spectacularly in-credible sources rather than relying on actual evidence of wrongdoing. Terry was cleared by the NBA and these prosecutors revived that non-case".

Mr Trusty said he had been representing Rozier for more than a year and said prosecutors characterised Rozier as a subject, not a target, until they informed him FBI agents were arresting the player at a hotel on Thursday morning.

Former NBA player Damon Jones was also arrested as part of



Miami Heats' Terry Rozier. PHOTO/LEGION HOOPS

the investigation.

Jones is said to have been involved in two of the identified games – when the Los Angeles Lakers met the Milwaukee Bucks in February 2023, and a January 2024 game between the Lakers and Oklahoma City Thunder.

Sports betting was outlawed in most of the US from 1992 until 2018, when the Supreme Court turned regulation of the practice over to the states.

Since the federal ban was struck down, sports betting has exploded with major sports leagues and media companies making deals with gambling firms to get in on the billion-dollar industry.

### Rigged poker games and the mafia

The second indictment announced on Thursday involves 31 defendants alleged to have participated in a scheme to rig illegal

poker games and steal millions of dollars.

The case involved 13 members and associates of the Bonanno, Genovese and Gambino crime families in New York.

Nocella said the targeted victims were lured to play games with former professional athletes, including Billups and Jones, in Las Vegas, Miami, Manhattan and the Hamptons.

Victims were "fleeced" out of tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars per game, he said.

He said defendants used "very sophisticated technology" like altered off-the-shelf shuffling machines that could read the cards. Some of the defendants used special contact lenses and glasses to read marked cards, and an X-ray table that could read cards when they were face-down.

"What [the victims] didn't know is that everybody else at the pok-

er game – from the dealer to the players were in on the scam," Nocella said.

Tisch said that, when people refused to pay, the organised crime families used threats and intimidation to get them to hand over the money.

The charges include robbery, extortion, wire fraud, bank fraud and illegal gambling.

The conspiracy cheated victims out of \$7m, with one losing \$1.8 million, officials said.

"This is only the tip of the iceberg," Christopher Raia, the FBI assistant director of the New York field office, said, adding that the FBI was working hard to ensure members of mafia families "cannot continue to wreak havoc in our communities".

BBC

# SPORTS NEWS



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# The Compassionate Journey Of Dr. Karon Graves: A Lifelong Dedication To Service And Empowerment



By: Anila Bukhari

@themkenyatimes

## Worth Noting:

As a compassionate leader, Dr. Graves founded \*Push Towards Purpose Supportive Services, LLC\*, a recovery life coaching organization rooted in the belief that everyone deserves support, guidance, and a chance to realize their potential. Her work through this organization exemplifies her humanitarian spirit—helping individuals impacted by trauma and life stressors to find healing and hope. Her coaching focuses on restoring strength, rebuilding confidence, and guiding people to discover their purpose amidst adversity.

Beyond coaching, Dr. Graves authored a \*Coaching Workbook\* that serves as a practical resource for those seeking personal growth and empowerment. This publication reflects her heartfelt desire to share knowledge and tools that can help others navigate life's challenges and embrace their inherent worth.

*\*Biography of Dr. Karon Graves\**

Dr. Karon Graves is a remarkable humanitarian whose life has been dedicated to uplifting others, fostering healing, and creating pathways to purpose for individuals and communities alike. Her story is one of unwavering compassion, deep faith, and a relentless commitment to making a positive difference in the lives of those she serves. Through her educational pursuits, entrepreneurial ventures, and community involvement, she exemplifies the true spirit of service and human kindness.

From an early age, Dr. Graves was driven by a profound love for her faith, family, and community. She embraced Christianity at just eight years old, being baptized at a young age, which laid the foundation for her lifelong dedication to serving others with love and humility. Her personal faith has been a guiding force, inspiring her to pursue a path that prioritizes service, healing, and empowerment.

Academic excellence has played a vital role in equipping Dr. Graves to serve effectively. She earned her Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees in Human Services from Springfield College, fields that reflect her commitment to understanding human needs and advocating for well-being. She further pursued doctoral studies in counseling, culminating in a PhD in Christian Leadership from the Great Commission Theological Seminary. Her ongoing efforts to obtain certification as a Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselor demonstrate her dedication to continuous growth and her desire to provide the highest quality of care.

In addition to her formal education, Dr. Graves has obtained numerous certifications related to early childhood education and developmental disabilities. These credentials highlight her comprehensive approach to human development and her understanding of the diverse challenges faced by individuals across different stages of life.

As a compassionate leader, Dr. Graves founded \*Push Towards Pur-

pose Supportive Services, LLC\*, a recovery life coaching organization rooted in the belief that everyone deserves support, guidance, and a chance to realize their potential. Her work through this organization exemplifies her humanitarian spirit—helping individuals impacted by trauma and life stressors to find healing and hope. Her coaching focuses on restoring strength, rebuilding confidence, and guiding people to discover their purpose amidst adversity.

Beyond coaching, Dr. Graves authored a \*Coaching Workbook\* that serves as a practical resource for those seeking personal growth and empowerment. This publication reflects her heartfelt desire to share knowledge and tools that can help others navigate life's challenges and embrace their inherent worth.

Her entrepreneurial spirit is also evident in her establishment of \*Push Tax Solutions\*, a business dedicated to tax preparation, financial education, and business coaching. This venture underscores her commitment to empowering individuals with financial literacy and supporting small business owners to thrive.

Throughout her career, Dr. Graves has been a passionate speaker on international platforms, sharing messages of hope, resilience, and faith. Her contributions extend to co-authoring two bestselling books: \*"Breaking the Chains, Liberating Your Lineage From Generational Curses"\* and \*"From Brokenness To Brilliance, Finding Purpose and Passion in Your Pain."\* Her writings and speaking engagements serve as beacons of inspiration, encouraging others to break free from limiting beliefs, overcome trauma, and pursue lives filled with purpose and passion.

Her dedication to service has been recognized through numerous awards and honors. Yet, what truly sets her apart is her genuine compassion and her ongoing volunteer work in various communities across multiple states. She continually seeks opportunities to serve, advocate, and bring about positive change, em-



Dr. Karon Graves

bodying the core values of a humanitarian committed to social justice, healing, and empowerment.

Despite her many achievements, Dr. Graves remains rooted in her faith and her love for God. Her spiritual journey continues to inspire her work, providing her with strength, humility, and a deep sense of purpose. Her life story is a testament to the transformative power of faith, education, and compassionate service.

In every facet of her life—whether through coaching, speaking, writing, or community service—Dr. Karon Graves exemplifies what it means

to dedicate oneself to the well-being of others. Her work is driven by a heartfelt desire to see individuals and communities thrive, heal from past wounds, and step into their fullest potential. Her journey is a powerful reminder that true humanitarianism is rooted in love, service, and a steadfast belief in the dignity and worth of every human being.