



**The Machinery Of Silence: How Kenya's Legal System Became A Weapon Against Its Citizens**  
 The steady erosion of democratic freedoms in Kenya has reached a critical threshold. In 2024, CIVICUS reclassified Kenya's civic space from "obstructed" to "repressed," a damning assessment that reflects the government's systematic deployment of legal instruments to neutralize dissent.

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**News >> Ruto Rallies African Leaders Behind Urgent AU Reforms At Angola Meeting**

P. 8. President William Ruto has urged African countries to unite behind a bold and urgent reform of the African Union (AU), warning that the continent risks losing global influence if the institution does not modernise and strengthen its structures.



**News >> Murang'a Governor Irungu Kang'ata CPAC Directs Murang'a County To Urgently Complete Valuation Roll**

P. 12. The County Public Accounts Committee (CPAC) has directed the Murang'a County Executive to urgently conclude the preparation of the county's valuation register in the shortest time possible.

# Opposition Warns Of Election Manipulation

**The United Opposition yesterday sounded alarm over alleged attempts to manipulate today's by-elections, warning that intimidation, bribery, and ballot tampering will threaten the integrity of the vote.**

In a statement issued, party leaders Kalonzo Musyoka, Rigathi Gachagua and Eugene Wamalwa thanked supporters across the country for turning out in large numbers during peaceful campaigns, and reiterated that Kenyans are clearly hungry for change.

"The dissatisfaction is real, and the regime knows it. That is why they are trying every trick to frustrate the people's will," the statement read.



From left; Eugene Wamalwa, Kalonzo Musyoka and Rigathi Gachagua while issuing the statement yesterday. Photo/Courtesy.

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# KTDA Foundation Brings Health To The Heart Of Kenya's Tea Farmers

By: MKT Reporter  
 @themtkenyatimes

*Some Of The Moments As Captured In Pictures*

In a groundbreaking move to prioritize farmer wellbeing, the Kenya Tea Development Agency (KTDA) Foundation launched a comprehensive medical outreach at Gathuthi Tea Factory yesterday.

The initiative, hosted at Wandumbi Dispensary, is part of KTDA's renewed commitment to placing farmers at the centre of every decision under the mantra: "Farmer First, Leaving No Farmer Behind."

Speaking at the launch, Ms. Catherine Mankura, Chair of the Health and Wellness Committee, said, "Leadership is service. Our farmers are not statistics—they are families, communities, and the backbone of our economy. Today, we bring healthcare to those who faithfully sustain our tea sector."

The Foundation emphasized that sustainable agricultural development extends beyond production and bonuses; it must include systems that enhance community health and wellbeing.

Gathuthi Tea factory chairman Hosea Kimamo led the local officials in welcoming the Foundation team.



**Editor's Desk**

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## NEWS IN BRIEF



The Ministry of Health will mark World AIDS Day 2025 with a major national event on Saturday at Nyayo National Stadium, featuring a half marathon and a medical camp focused on adolescents and young people. The activities aim to expand access to HIV testing, treatment, prevention services, and accurate health information as part of Kenya's commitment to ending AIDS by 2030. Health CS Aden Duale urged Kenyans to participate in large numbers, emphasising the importance of collective responsibility, compassion, and inclusive health services. This year's commemoration will also highlight progress achieved through partnerships with county governments, civil society, and development partners, including the scale-up of PrEP and PEP, improved ART access for youth, and efforts to eliminate mother-to-child transmission. The Ministry reiterated that sustained investment and community engagement remain critical to strengthening HIV prevention and care across the country.



The commissioning of the 106 km Eminging–Marigat–Kabarnet–Kabartonjo Fiber Backbone Link marks a major milestone in Baringo's digital transformation. The new fibre route positions the county firmly within Kenya's expanding national digital network, boosting connectivity and improving service reliability for communities along the corridor. This investment is expected to open new opportunities in e-commerce, education, healthcare, and government services, ensuring more residents benefit from the country's Digital Superhighway agenda. The event was attended by CS William Kabogo, Governor Benjamin Cheboi, PS John Tanui, Baringo North MP Joseph Makilap, and other local leaders whose collaboration is key to deepening digital inclusion. The initiative underscores a shared national vision of enabling all Kenyans to connect, innovate, and thrive within the digital economy.



Kenya has taken a major step in strengthening respiratory care with the launch of a Bronchoscopy Training Programme at Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH). The three-day specialist training, organised in partnership with Nagasaki University and the Ministry of Health, introduces modern bronchoscopy technology to improve early detection and management of lung diseases. Speaking at the launch, Principal Secretary for Medical Services Dr. Ouma Oluga highlighted the programme's importance, noting that conditions such as Tuberculosis, Pneumonia, Asthma, and Lung Cancer continue to affect thousands of Kenyans each year. He emphasised that building diagnostic capacity is crucial for better patient outcomes.



Kakamega Court has sentenced lorry driver Shadrack Chirchir Kogo to one year in prison after convicting him for smuggling cigarettes worth over Sh26 million. Kogo appeared before Chief Magistrate Philip Mutua and was charged with conveying unaccustomed goods contrary to the East Africa Community Customs Management Act 2004. His alleged accomplices, Jacktone Andanyi and Christabel Wafula, who faced charges of possessing excisable goods under the Excise Duty Act 2015, were acquitted due to lack of evidence. The trio had been linked to 350 cartons of Super Match cigarettes, each containing 5,000 sticks, and 40 bags of smuggled wheat bran chicken feed from Burundi, which were being offloaded at a residential premises in Shuvumbe, Kakamega. They were arrested on 15 October 2023 during an intelligence-led operation by the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI) and Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) at the construction-site premises. The court also ordered the forfeiture of the cigarettes, valued at Sh26.2 million.

At the third African Forum on Cybercrime and Electronic Evidence in Nairobi, Raymond Omollo, PS, Internal Security, warned that while technology boosts economic growth and access to services, it also exposes governments, businesses, and citizens to sophisticated cyber threats. Africa lost over \$40 billion to cybercrime last year alone. The forum brought together ministers, judges, prosecutors, law enforcement, tech experts, and civil society, and was jointly organized by the Kenyan government, the Council of Europe, and the European Union. Its focus was on strengthening cross-border cooperation, harmonizing legislation, and improving digital forensics to enhance Africa's cyber resilience. The PS emphasized the need for secure digital identity systems, stronger mutual legal assistance frameworks, and youth-centered cybersecurity initiatives, highlighting that Africa's median age of 18 places young people at the heart of the continent's digital future. He cautioned that cyber incidents anywhere in the world could destabilize national institutions within seconds, citing Kenya's e-Citizen platform as both a digital innovation and a target for cybercrime.



# NEWS PAPER

IN BUSINESS



# The Mount Kenya Times

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# United Opposition Raises Alarm Over Alleged Manipulation Ahead Of Today's By-Elections

By: MKT Reporter  
@themkenyentimes

## Worth Noting:

- In a statement issued, party leaders Kalonzo Musyoka, Rigathi Gachagua and Eugene Wamalwa thanked supporters across the country for turning out in large numbers during peaceful campaigns, and reiterated that Kenyans are clearly hungry for change.
- "The dissatisfaction is real, and the regime knows it. That is why they are trying every trick to frustrate the people's will," the statement read.



From left; Eugene Wamalwa, Kalonzo Musyoka and Rigathi Gachagua while issuing the statement yesterday. Photo/Courtesy.

The United Opposition yesterday sounded alarm over alleged attempts to manipulate today's by-elections, warning that intimidation, bribery, and ballot tampering will threaten the integrity of the vote.

In a statement issued, party leaders Kalonzo Musyoka, Rigathi Gachagua and Eugene Wamalwa thanked supporters across the country for turning out in large numbers during peaceful campaigns, and reiterated that Kenyans are clearly hungry for change.

"The dissatisfaction is real, and the regime knows it. That is why they are trying every trick to frustrate the people's will," the statement read.

The opposition claimed that police officers, many in plainclothes, were deployed in constituencies such as Narok Town, Malava, and Mbeere North, not to protect citizens, but to

intimidate voters and opposition supporters. Unmarked vehicles, they said, were reported roaming towns, creating an atmosphere of fear rather than security.

The opposition also accused senior state officials, including MPs, MCAs, Chiefs, PSs, the Deputy President, and the President himself, of using public resources, including government vehicles, relief food, mattresses, and even letters of appointment to embassies to manipulate voters.

The misuse of these resources, they said, represents a betrayal of public trust and a deliberate attempt to influence the outcome of the by-elections.

Concerns over ballot integrity were also highlighted, with the opposition claiming that 820,000 printed ballots were improperly serialized, creating a loophole for potential ballot-stuffing.

They further alleged that 30,000 pre-marked ballots were sent to targeted battleground areas through compromised presiding officers.

In addition, the opposition warned that regime agents have been conducting campaigns beyond the official period, accompanied by police and hired goons, in an effort to tilt the playing field.

Malava, in particular, was cited as a potential flashpoint, with fears of coordinated violence aimed at disrupting voting and enabling fraud.

The statement also raised alarm over the potential misuse of mobile phones in polling stations, warning that the secrecy of the ballot could be violated. The opposition criticized the IEBC for providing weak and insufficient responses to these concerns, calling into question the commission's indepen-

dence and ability to guarantee a free and fair vote.

In a rallying call to voters, the United Opposition urged Kenyans to turn out in large numbers, remain peaceful, and vigilantly document any irregularities.

Party agents were instructed to ensure that ballot boxes are empty before voting begins, stay at their stations until polls close, and report any attempt to influence or intimidate voters. Observers, the media, and civil society were also called upon to maintain maximum vigilance and expose any malpractice.

"The will of Kenyans is sacred. It cannot be bought, bullied, or broken. Tomorrow, let us vote with courage, guard the vote with vigilance, and move forward with faith, knowing that the truth may be delayed, but it cannot be denied," the statement concluded.

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# Ruto Rallies African Leaders Behind Urgent AU Reforms At Angola Meeting

By: MKT Reporter  
 @themtkenyatimes

**Worth Noting:**

- Ruto, who serves as the AU Champion for Institutional Reform, made the appeal on Tuesday when he chaired the African Union Institutional Reform Ad Hoc Committee Meeting of Heads of State in Luanda, Angola.
- The high-level session examined progress on eight priority areas outlined under Assembly Decision 920, which seeks to make the AU more effective, efficient and responsive to Africa's evolving needs.
- The President stressed that the reform process is not only necessary but achievable within a short time if Member States act with unity and urgency. He noted that without meaningful change, the AU could become increasingly ineffective, costing the continent valuable opportunities and weakening Africa's voice in global affairs.

President William Ruto has urged African countries to unite behind a bold and urgent reform of the African Union (AU), warning that the continent risks losing global influence if the institution does not modernise and strengthen its structures.

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The President stressed that the reform process is not only necessary but achievable within a short time if Member States act with unity and urgency. He noted that without meaningful change, the AU could become increasingly ineffective, costing the continent valuable opportunities and weakening Africa's voice in global affairs.

"This reform is doable. It is possible and necessary to have an effective African Union, and we can do it within the shortest time possible while carrying everyone on board," he told fellow leaders.

To widen participation, he announced that a summit of Heads of State would be convened to allow leaders to contribute their perspectives before the reform package is finalised.

Ruto called on Member States to read the detailed reform report and submit written feedback to the AU secretariat ahead of the February summit.

He cautioned against allowing concerns about the financial implication of some proposals to slow progress, pointing out that several reforms require no additional funding and are instead matters of structure, coordination and political will.

The report discussed in Luanda proposes far-reaching changes aimed at revitalising the AU's peace and security architecture, securing predictable financing for the Union, operationalising the long-delayed African Court of Justice and streamlining the AU Assembly agenda to improve focus and decision-making. It also calls for strengthening the Pan-African Parliament by advancing ratification of the Malabo Protocol, introducing clear categories for AU decisions to improve compliance, finalising the division of labour among AU organs and regional bodies, and restructuring AU institutions to create a leaner, more



President William Ruto addressing the forum on Tuesday.

efficient system.

According to Ruto, the recommendations form a coherent roadmap that would position the AU to better champion Agenda 2063 and respond to a rapidly changing world. The report also proposes merging the Peace

and Security Architecture with the African Governance Architecture to enhance crisis prevention and governance oversight, and advocates full adoption of the import levy to stabilise AU financing.

AU Commission Chairperson Mah-

moud Ali Youssouf affirmed the Commission's commitment to driving the reforms forward and praised Ruto for his sustained leadership in steering the process.



President William Ruto and AU chairperson Mahmoud Ali Youssouf leaving the conference hall on Tuesday. Photos/Courtesy

# MPs Accuse Sports Ministry Of Sabotage As Delays Stall 37 Academy Projects

By: MKT Correspondent  
 @themkenyatimes

**Worth Noting:**

- The lawmakers, led by committee chair Dan Wanyama, took issue with what they termed as “persistent and unexplained delays” in paying contractors, warning that the slow progress threatened to turn the flagship project into a series of white-elephant ventures.
- Wanyama, the Webuye West MP, claimed that officials within the Ministry of Sports were engaging in “malice and deliberate sabotage,” adding that Parliament would not hesitate to push for the removal of the PS and other senior officers if the Ministry failed to release funds.
- “Delay in actualising construction of the academies might cost many of us our seats in 2027,” Wanyama said. “Before we go home, we will ensure that any officer sabotaging these projects is fired.”

A storm erupted at Bunge Tower as members of the National Assembly Sports Committee accused Sports Principal Secretary Elijah Mwangi of frustrating the construction of sports academies in 37 constituencies.

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“Delay in actualising construction of the academies might cost many of us our seats in 2027,” Wanyama said. “Before we go home, we will ensure that any officer sabotaging these projects is fired.”

He questioned why the sports academy in his constituency had achieved only five per cent completion despite Parliament having allocated funds to the Ministry.

In response, PS Mwangi dismissed the allegations, insisting that payments could only be processed after verification of certificates submitted by contractors. He noted that only six certificates had been forwarded to his office so far, all undergoing review in line with public finance rules.

Mwangi attributed part of the delay to the government’s new payment system and additional compliance requirements, saying: “As an accounting officer, I cannot approve payments without validating the certificates. I will not flout procurement rules.”

But the lawmakers would have none of it. Wanyama insisted that the verification process had already been completed by contractors and told the Ministry to “stop looking at certificates and simply pay.”

Mwangi revealed that only 15 academies currently have ongoing construction, with the rest held back by funding gaps, land disputes and inadequate contractor capacity. He added that some contractors had expected upfront payments before mobilising on site, slowing progress further.

Busia Woman Representative Catherine Omanyo accused the Ministry of awarding tenders to contractors



PS Elijah Mwangi

unfamiliar to local leaders, saying MPs were sidelined from the process.

“We only found strangers on the ground. You cannot blame contractors you awarded tenders to without proper vetting,” she argued.

Yatta MP Basil Ngu said delayed payments had caused conflict be-

tween contractors and workers, many of whom had not been paid for months.

Matungulu MP Stephen Mule warned that the country risked accumulating huge pending bills and abandoned sites if the delays continued.

After lengthy deliberations, the

committee directed the Ministry to settle all verified certificates within two weeks to accelerate completion of the academies. MPs vowed to maintain close oversight, stressing that the projects were vital for nurturing grassroots sports talent and empowering youth nationwide.



Some of the parliamentary committee members. Photos/Courtesy.

# Sanlam Kenya Rebrands To SanlamAllianz, Sets Sights On Top-Three Market Position

By: MKT Reporter  
 @themtkenyatimes

Sanlam Kenya, a publicly listed company has unveiled a new corporate identity; SanlamAllianz Kenya, marking a major milestone following a landmark joint venture between South Africa's Sanlam Group and global insurer Allianz.

The merger has created SanlamAllianz, now Africa's largest non-banking financial services provider, boasting a combined heritage of more than 200 years across global markets.

The rebrand, announced on Tuesday, positions the Nairobi-listed firm to accelerate its ambition of becoming one of Kenya's top-three insurance providers.

Speaking during the announcement, SanlamAllianz Kenya Group CEO Dr. Nyamemba Patrick Tumbo said the new name reflects the company's strengthened promise to deliver world-class financial solutions tailored to local needs.

"This rebrand heralds a new dawn for us as SanlamAllianz, enhancing our corporate commitment to advance our

market effectiveness in the provision of quality, client-focused life and general insurance products," Dr. Tumbo said. He added that the business will leverage the broader SanlamAllianz global resources, technology and expertise to enhance service delivery and market competitiveness.

The company's subsidiaries; SanlamAllianz Life Insurance Kenya and SanlamAllianz General Insurance Kenya, will continue under the leadership of Ms Jacqueline Karasha and Mr George Kuria, respectively. Dr. Tumbo noted that the transition, which follows shareholder and regulatory approvals, will include investments in innovative technology to improve customer experience and expand distribution channels.

SanlamAllianz operates in 26 countries and holds a combined group equity value of more than 33 billion South African rand (about €2 billion), giving the Kenyan operation access to deeper capacity, specialist knowledge and a wider network.

SanlamAllianz Group CEO Mr. Heinie Werth emphasized that the new entity aims to rank among the top-three players in every market it operates. "Our ambition as SanlamAllianz



Sanlam Allianz Life Insurance (Kenya) Limited Chief Executive Officer Ms. Jacqueline Karasha (left) joins Sanlam Allianz Holdings (Kenya) PLC Group CEO Dr. Patrick Tumbo (centre) and SanlamAllianz General Insurance (Kenya) CEO Mr George Kuria. Photo/Courtesy.

is to be among the top-three players in all our markets, and we will provide our full support to SanlamAllianz Kenya as it strives towards this ambition," he said.

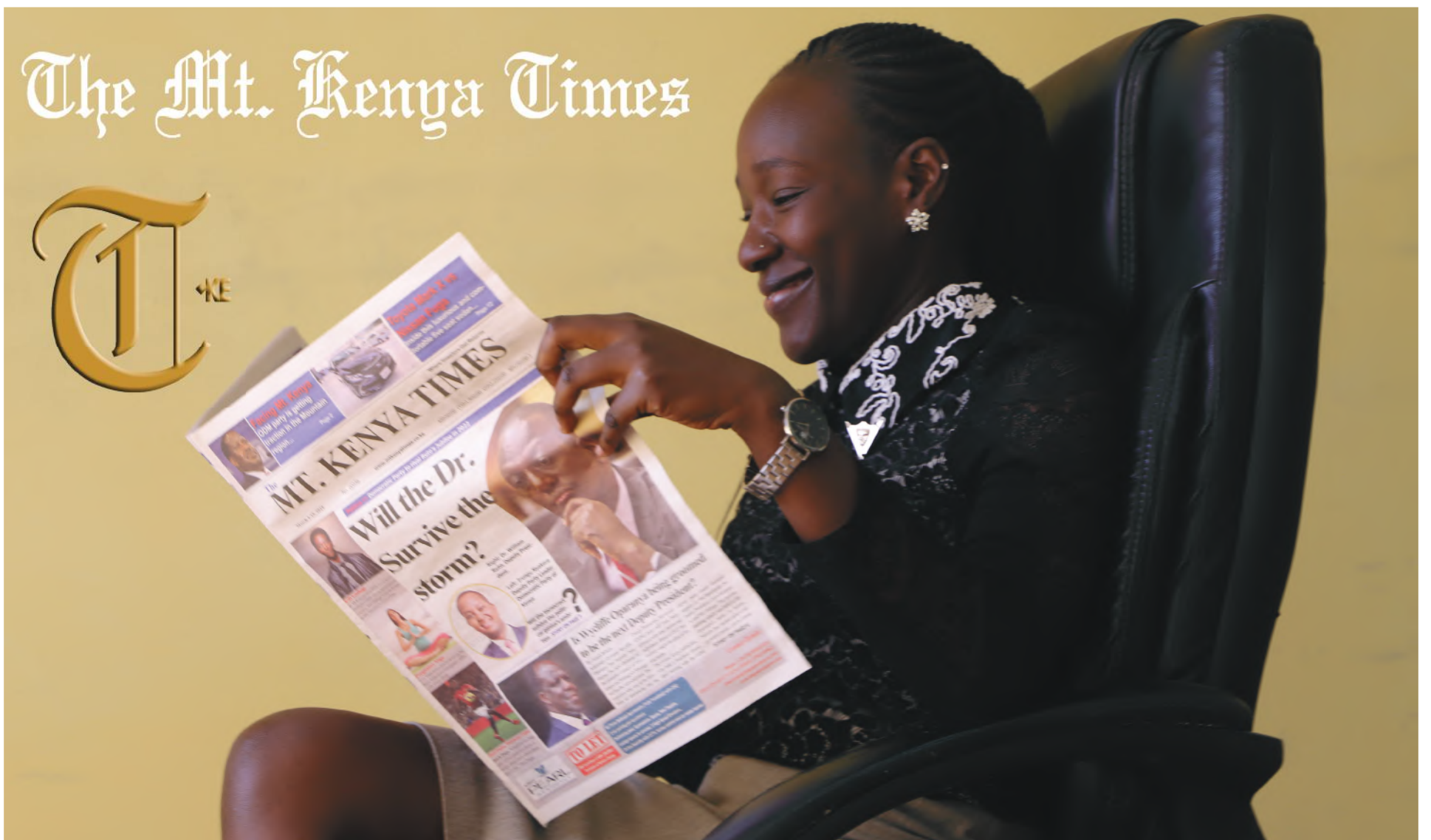
He added that the company will adopt a shared-value approach benefiting staff, clients, partners, shareholders,

and the communities it serves.

The firm has outlined four pillars guiding its continental strategy: market leadership through innovative and client-centric products; positive economic and social impact driven by strong ESG principles; consistent financial performance for shareholder

value; and a people-first culture to attract and retain top talent.

With the backing of a global powerhouse, SanlamAllianz Kenya aims to deliver cutting-edge insurance solutions that build financial confidence and security for future generations.



# Kalahari Cement Seals A KSh1.6 Billion Share Purchase Agreement To Acquire A 27% EAPC Equity Stake From NSSF

By: MKT Reporter  
@themkenyatimes

Kalahari Cement, a locally incorporated investment firm, has announced the sealing of a Share Purchase Agreement (SPA) to acquire a further 27 per cent equity stake in the East African Portland Cement Plc (EAPC), valued at KSh1.6 billion, from the National Social Security Fund (NSSF).

In a public notice published yesterday, Kalahari Cement confirmed that it had entered into the SPA with NSSF on Tuesday, in yet another strategic investment bid that will see the firm acquire 24.3 million ordinary shares at KSh66 per share in the issued share capital of EAPC from NSSF, subject to regulatory approvals.

Although the proposed transaction will see Kalahari Cement assume effective control of EAPC, the company has confirmed that it has no intention of making a takeover offer for the local cement manufacturing firm. Kalahari Cement, a subsidiary of the

pan-African Energy and manufacturing business conglomerate Amsons Group, recently acquired a 29.2 per cent stake in EAPC from Associated International Cement Limited (AIC) and Cementia Holding AG. Bamburi Cement Plc (a related company to Kalahari Cement) also holds approximately 12.5 per cent of ordinary shares in EAPC.

Speaking when he confirmed the proposed transaction, Amsons Group Managing Director Mr Edha Nahdi said Kalahari does not intend to make a general offer to acquire all the voting shares in EAPC and will apply to the Capital Markets Authority (CMA) for an exemption from the requirement to make a takeover offer to all shareholders of the cement manufacturing firm.

“Kalahari does not intend to delist EAPC from the NSE after completion of the Proposed

Transaction,” Nahdi said. He added, “Kalahari, as a long-term strategic investor, is committed to assisting EAPC in achieving its strategic objectives whilst deepening the capital markets regime, which is vital for Kenya’s economic prosperity.”

The proposed transaction, Nahdi reiterated, is designed to build long-term value for EAPC by strengthening the firm’s infrastructure and providing access to additional resources.

“As I have previously mentioned, as a long-term strategic investor, Kalahari Cement will assist EAPC to achieve its strategic objectives through a shared prosperity model with all stakeholders, from staff, trade partners and government of Kenya agencies. At Amsons Group, we do not intend to spare any resource, financial or otherwise, in our turnaround partnership with all EAPC Stakeholders.”

Listed at the Nairobi Securities Exchange (NSE), EAPC owns an integrated cement plant located on the outskirts of Kenya’s capital, Nairobi. Its brands include Blue Triangle Cement, its longest-standing brand in the market, and Green Triangle Cement, an innovative product designed with less clinker and lower energy consumption, providing a sustainable alternative that meets the growing demands of environmentally conscious customers in the construction sector. Other brands in its product portfolio



Amsons Group Managing Director Mr Edha Nahdi. Photo/Courtesy.

include Falcon Cabro, Olympia Cabro, Tri-Hex Cabro, Cosmic Cabro and Brick (Quad) Cabro.

Amsons Group is a family-owned business founded in 2006 in Tanzania, built on a foundation of integrity and a commitment to shared pros-

perity. While its roots lie in the importation of bulk oil and petroleum products under the Camel Oil Tanzania retail brand, the firm has steadily grown and diversified into a wide range of sectors.

# Women MPs Push To Scrap Death Penalty For Female Offenders

By: MKT Reporter  
@themkenyatimes

Members of the Kenya Women Parliamentary Association (KEWOPA) have launched a fresh bid to abolish the death penalty for women, calling for alternative deterrent punishments that uphold gender justice.

The initiative comes as Kenya prepares to mark the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, with the lawmakers urging the government to adopt the African Union’s draft Protocol on the abolition of the death penalty.

Speaking during a roundtable breakfast meeting organised by the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) Kenya chapter, the Women MPs said their push is driven by their role as human rights defenders and their understanding of the unique vulnerabilities women face in the criminal justice system.

Senator Beth Syengo, who spoke on behalf of the KEWOPA chairperson, reaffirmed the group’s commitment to championing legal reforms and building gender-responsive justice systems.

“We stand ready to work with ICJ Kenya, the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty, development partners and fellow parliamentarians to ensure that no woman is further victimised by a system meant to protect her,” she said.

Sen. Syengo highlighted the harsh realities faced by women on death row, saying many suffer double injustices rooted in systemic gender inequities.

“When a woman is sentenced to death, she is not only punished for a crime, she is often punished again for her gender, for systemic inequities, and for the failures in structures meant to protect her,” she said.

ICJ Kenya chairperson Christine Alai noted that despite reforms, courts in Kenya still issue death sentences for crimes such as murder,



Some of KEWOPA members and ICJ officials after the Tuesday meeting. Photo/Courtesy.

robbery with violence, attempted robbery with violence and treason.

“Although the mandatory death penalty for murder was abolished in 2017 and mass commutations have reduced death row numbers, capital punishment is still being imposed,” Ms. Alai said.

She urged women lawmakers to consider the overlooked needs of

women facing capital punishment, arguing that legal systems historically designed “by men, for men” fail to recognise the pathways that lead women into conflict with the law.

The MPs emphasised the need for leaders to engage directly with women prisoners, noting that many women facing capital charges are survivors of domestic violence. They

argued that such circumstances must be taken into account by judges when passing sentences.

KEWOPA members insisted that Kenya’s debate on the death penalty must incorporate a gender perspective, stressing that “justice that is blind to gender is not justice at all.”

# CPAC Directs Murang'a County To Urgently Complete Valuation Roll

By: PSCU  
 @themtkenyatimes

**Worth Noting:**

- The process is initiated upon request from a county government and requires supporting documents like development plans, official searches, maps, and resolutions.
- This roll serves as the legal basis for revenue collection by county governments and includes details such as property location, ownership, use, size, and corresponding market value.
- The last valuation for the county was conducted in 2006, something the committee says has undermined the financial status of the entity.
- During the session held on Tuesday, the Governor revealed that the County Assembly has already enacted the necessary legislation, marking the first step in the process.
- While the county had recruited a valuer who will undertake the task, the Governor revealed the biggest challenge is public participation.



Murang'a Governor Irungu Kang'ata.

The County Public Accounts Committee (CPAC) has directed the Murang'a County Executive to urgently conclude the preparation of the county's valuation register in the shortest time possible.

The Committee issued the order after Governor Irungu Kangata said he requires at least two years to complete the process which is already in motion.

The process involves compiling a comprehensive register of properties within a county, each with its assessed value, to support the administration of property rates and taxation. The process is initiated upon request from a county government and requires supporting documents like development plans, official searches, maps, and resolutions.

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During the session held on Tuesday, the Governor revealed that the County Assembly has already enacted the necessary legislation, marking the first step in the process.

While the county had recruited a valuer who will undertake the task, the Governor revealed the biggest challenge is public participation.

"This is not the right time to conduct public participation," he told the

Committee, even as he insisted that the process was on course during the session chaired by Senator Johnes Mwaruma, who is the vice chair of the Committee.

"Conducting public participation may cause panic among property owners in the County," he said, adding that the process may complete in the next one or two years.

He told the Committee he had succeeded in circumventing procurement of private consultants and instead deal with valuers from the national government which had substantially reduced the cost of the process to Sh7 million.

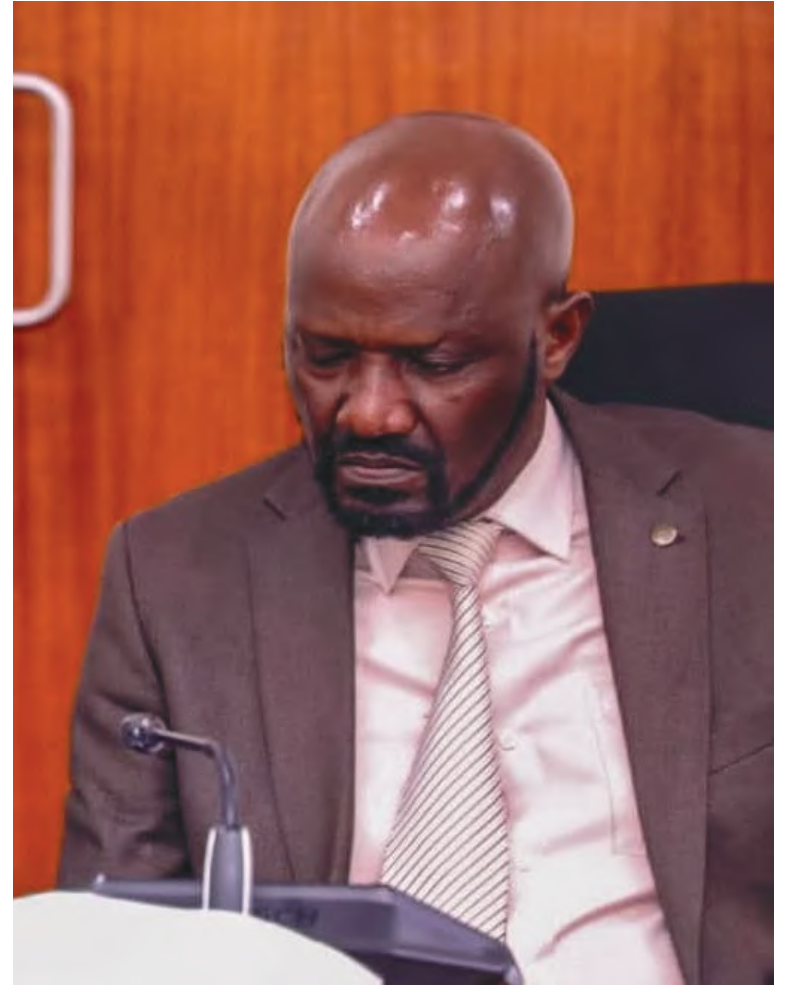
Whereas Muranga Senator Joe Nyutu supported the Governor, Senator Mwaruma and Senator Samson Cherarkey rejected the explanation and insisted the process must be concluded and the outcome submitted to the Senate as proof.

"I agree with the Governor. We should not make people of Muranga to pay more in taxes. Let's digest the projects the Governor has rolled out and their impact before the valuation," said Senator Nyutu.

He said the reason the Governor is cautious with the process was that he will be seeking a second term in the next general election.

"He may not tell you but he is hesitant because he does not want to tax the people of Muranga more before the election."

Senator Mwaruma insisted the valuation must be done so that the actual value of the revenue from the proper-



Murang'a Senator Joe Nyutu

ty in the county is ascertained. "Complete the process so that we can determine the actual value of the property rates," said Senator Mwaruma, saying the county can reduce the percentage of rates payable if the

conditions will not be right. "When the right time comes you can increase the rates accordingly."



Committee Vice Chair Johnes Mwaruma

# Kenya Coffee Market Holds Steady As This Week's Sale Hits KSh892 Million

By: Henry Kinyua  
 @themtkenyatimes

The Nairobi Coffee Exchange this week witnessed a lively auction, with 14,024 bags of coffee, equivalent to 892,141 kilograms, changing hands. The sale generated USD 6.9 million (about KSh892 million), underscoring the sustained strength and stability of the Kenyan coffee market.

The average price per 50-kilogram bag remained steady at USD 388, translating to about KSh154 per kilogram of cherry, the same as in last week's sale.

This was despite a 24 percent increase in trading volume, signaling continued strong demand for Kenyan coffee.

The top price of the day reached USD 464 per bag, achieved by 37 bags of AA-grade coffee from the Kiganjo factory in Kiambu County, marketed by Alliance Berries.

Among the brokers, Alliance Ber-

ries emerged as the clear leader, selling 4,091 bags at an average price of USD 402 per bag. They were closely followed by New KPCU, which sold 2,313 bags at USD 376 per bag, and Kipkelion, which moved 1,864 bags at USD 391 per bag. Other brokers, including Kirinyaga Slopes, Mt. Elgon, United Eastern, and Kinya Coffee, also recorded solid sales and maintained competitive average prices, demonstrating the healthy competitiveness within the market.

On the buyer side, Ibero Kenya Ltd led the way, purchasing 4,235 bags valued at over USD 2.2 million. C.Dormans SEZ Ltd followed with 3,411 bags, and the Louis Dreyfus Company bought 1,798 bags. Sasini (K) Ltd and Kenyacof Ltd also made significant purchases, while First Cup Coffee Ltd recorded the smallest volume, acquiring 10 bags of grade AB at an average price of USD 397.

Despite the increase in trading volume, the steady average price highlights a balanced market sentiment, reflecting strong confidence in the

quality and value of Kenyan coffee. Market observers note that the continued performance of leading brokers and buyers is a testament to Kenya's

sustained reputation as a premium coffee-producing country.

With this week's sale, the Nairobi Coffee Exchange continues to demonstrate its pivotal role in supporting

farmers, brokers, and buyers, while ensuring transparency and stability in the local coffee market.

**NCE** NAIROBI COFFEE EXCHANGE **NCE**  
 MARKET TOTAL  
 Sale 8 of Tuesday, November 25, 2025

GRADE	Bags offered	Weight offered	Min price	Max price	Value (USD)	Average price
AA	5,092	335,930	232.00	464.00	2,818,316.20	418.23
AB	5,315	325,278	294.00	458.00	2,618,365.22	402.48
C	937	59,736	222.00	401.00	442,883.80	370.70
E	93	5,903	348.00	401.00	45,485.80	385.28
HE	32	2,139	130.00	315.00	10,651.74	248.99
MH	652	40,168	251.00	338.00	243,217.66	302.75
ML	181	11,466	108.00	186.00	36,809.74	160.52
NL	13	828	222.00	249.00	3,973.32	239.93
PB	634	40,858	313.00	436.00	324,399.40	396.98
RH	105	6,541	198.00	233.00	28,989.66	221.60
SB	18	1,159	97.00	182.00	2,959.76	127.69
T	177	11,800	112.00	294.00	51,591.58	218.61
TT	245	15,768	254.00	397.00	115,741.74	367.01
UG	15	1,166	114.00	382.00	4,832.60	206.88
UG1	351	22,052	160.00	373.00	137,486.68	311.73
UG2	148	9,430	112.00	265.00	29,466.04	156.25
UG3	15	917	94.00	120.00	1,917.92	104.58
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>14,024</b>	<b>892,141</b>	<b>94.00</b>	<b>464.00</b>	<b>6,917,110.86</b>	<b>387.67</b>

**Note** Prices are in USD per 50 Kg

# Rukuriri Tea Factory Celebrates Unprecedented Success At 46th AGM, Sets Record With Highest Bonus Payout

By: MKT Reporter  
 @themtkenyatimes

The 46th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Rukuriri Tea Factory, held yesterday was nothing short of spectacular, drawing over 2,000 farmers and stakeholders from across its catchment region.

The atmosphere at the event was electric, brimming with joy, pride, and a profound sense of unity as the tea farmers gathered to celebrate the factory's remarkable achievements.

Led by Embu Zone Kenya Tea Development Agency (KTDA) Holdings director, Mr Enos Njeru, the farmers attending the meeting expressed immense satisfaction with the factory's exemplary leadership and governance, noting the strong performance, unity of purpose, and consistent high quality that have positioned the factory as the top-per-

forming factory in the country. "This outstanding performance has been tangibly reflected in the nationwide highest bonus payout of Ksh57.50, a milestone that has brought pride not only to the farmers but also to the entire community supporting the factory," Njeru noted in his address to farmers.

He added, "The level of confidence in the factory's management was so high that no farmer raised a single question during the meeting, a rare occurrence in such gatherings signifying deep trust and appreciation for the factory's leadership and its ongoing journey of excellence.

Njeru who is also a former national chairman of KTDA Holdings, extended heartfelt gratitude to all stakeholders as he praised the factory fraternity and the wider community for their unwavering support and outstanding contribution to the factory's exceptional performance.

"This achievement is not just about

numbers or bonuses," said Njeru. "It is a testament to the unity, dedication, and hard work of our farmers and the entire team that makes Rukuriri Tea Factory a symbol of excellence in the tea sector."

The 46th AGM of Rukuriri Tea Factory will long be remembered as a celebration of collective achievement, a moment of pride for farmers, and a clear demonstration that with strong leadership, unity, and commitment to quality, local enterprises can achieve national recognition and set industry benchmarks.



Director Enos Njeru addressing farmers at Rukuriri Tea Factory yesterday. Photo/Courtesy.

## Love



With every breath, my heart is with you,  
In every dream, I remember your heart

Love is magic, but pure magic,  
For it there is no time, no distance, no path.  
It asks for honesty from hearts,  
It asks for loyalty from hearts.

And if you say that my love will not fade,  
Keep it forever in the depths of your heart  
Preserved feelings are always pure,  
Because love is a great miracle

Charoskhon Ismoilova

Second-year student of the Faculty  
of Philology and Art at Urgench State  
University, Khorezm region

A candle lit quietly in my heart,  
I said its name - love.  
A star in my eyes, a dream in my hand,  
And a wonderful dew in my heart.

You came, the world suddenly changed,  
The mornings were laughing, the nights were  
clear.

## When God Wants To Give You Something



No one can take it

When God wants to give you something,  
Who has the right to take it from you?  
You deserve it in the eyes of God,  
So he has given his blessings.

Others don't have anything to say,  
Even if the whole world stands against you.  
God is with you, believe that firmly,  
It is all God's blessing, no one can deny.

Because it is the gift from God,  
Thousands of people may come to stop,

No worries, nothing will happen.  
Even in the dark hours, God can send you a  
ray of light.

That is the power of God's gift and blessings,  
Same way, if God doesn't like to give you  
something,

That won't stay with you.  
At any cost no one can make it stay,  
What's meant for you, will find its way.

No one can stop, what's meant to be yours,  
No hand can stop God's gift  
So trust the plan, and have faith in His power  
When God wants to give, no one can stop

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

## When The Lord Wants To Give You .....



So trust in His abundance, goodness, might  
Always hold him tight for your life as a  
beacon light

For when He decides to give, it's so  
precious right,  
So learn to see him in all painful souls in  
their sight!

When the universe is on your side as a ray  
No earthly power can stand in your way  
When LORD wants to bless you, there is no  
pun

He'll bless you from the rising to the setting  
sun

Faith and determination can move  
mountains, right?  
He fill every heart pouring out His goodness,  
and trait!

When the Lord wants to bless you!  
No one can stop; Though it's you!! 🥰

( SAVAAL SATHIYA )

Sathiya V  
B. T assistant,  
GHS Themmavur,  
Kunrandar Kovil Block,  
Pudukkottai district.

When Lord Wants to Give you, no one can  
stand!  
Against his love filled heart and his giving  
hand.

There is God in every soul in form of mercy  
Never miss any chance of yours to be a  
gramercy

He opens doors though few of it close,  
Showering all the goodness as His love  
grows.

What ever the situation is, No obstacle can  
block His way,  
And no challenge can with stand to diminish  
your gay

He helps you hold new opportunities in wide  
And pours his blessings overflow, far and  
inside.

## Winter's Snowfall



Softly falling snowflakes  
Frozen trees with ice cakes  
When my eyes admiring  
The beauty of nature glowing

Beautiful lines of winter  
Appeared in mind from nowhere  
The snowflakes like delicate ballerinas  
Touch's the earth like a wonderful  
phenomenon  
The crazy nature  
With all it's amazing features  
Creates beauty to the world  
And sometimes it's beauty is dazzled.

--S.M. Pranavkumar  
Grade 8  
St.Paul Public School  
CBSE  
Panikankuppam,  
Panruti.

## My Mother Tongue



My nation's heartbeat, bound in your  
embrace.

A tale within my breast — my pride in you,  
In this tongue sang poets noble and true.  
Cholpon, Usmon, Erkin — their spirits soar,  
With you our past and future shine once  
more.

Abdusaidova Jasmina  
Born on July 20, 2011, in G'allaorol  
district, Jizzakh region. She is the winner  
of district and regional stages of the  
competitions "Young Reader", "Mushoira",  
and "Green Light". Her creative works have  
been featured in several newspapers and  
journals, including "Gulxan", "Tong Yulduzi",  
and "G'allaorol Ovozi". Additionally, her  
works have been published in international  
media such as "Diaspora Times Global"  
(foreign), "Kenya Times" (Africa),  
"Synchronized Chaos" (USA), and "Gazeta  
Destinacioni" (Albania). She is a member of  
the "Qaqnus" Creative Club.

My mother tongue — my soul, my cherished  
tone,

With you, each word I speak feels sweetly  
grown.

Your graceful melody lives in my chest,  
A priceless heirloom my forefathers  
blessed.

When I listen, I hear ancestors breathe,  
You light the thoughts where shadows used  
to weave.

Through you I found my essence, my true  
face,

## The Unsent Message



The moment I read the hurtful line,  
I felt my blood begin to boil.  
I was ready to answer with turmoil.  
With my fingers racing across the keys.

Then, I read the message I'd typed in rage,  
They felt too angry and far too strong.  
So, I paused a moment, took a deep breath,  
Letting my anger fade into a calm.

When I sat and thought in silence,  
Reality stuck me in a flash:  
'If I send it, wouldn't it break a bond,  
And push a relationship aside'.

So, Why can't I simply let it go,  
Forgive, forget, and rise above?  
And so it rests, unsent and unseen,  
An angry message sealed in my phone.

M. Raddhika  
Freelance content writer  
Creative Writers,  
Sivakasi, Tamil Nadu  
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# AGRIBUSINESS

## KTDA Foundation Launches Healthcare For Tea Farmers

By: MKT Reporter  
@themtkenyatimes

### Worth Noting:

- During the exercise, a section of farmers from Nyeri County received a much-needed boost as the Foundation launched a comprehensive medical camp at Wandumbi dispensary near Gathuthi tea factory in Tetu constituency.
- The initiative aims to ensure that tea growers who often postpone treatment due to demanding farm schedules have access to timely medical attention.
- For many tea farmers, long hours in the fields, unpredictable weather, and the pressure to meet strict production cycles mean that regular medical check-ups are often delayed, sometimes until minor health issues escalate into serious concerns.
- The KTDA Foundation's outreach seeks to change that, placing farmer health and well-being at the center of its operations.

Thousands of tea farmers are set to benefit from free medical care.

Through Kenya Tea Development Agency (KTDA) Foundation, the farmers will be getting free medical checkups in a bid to have them maintain healthy status as they tend to their farms.

To kick-start the process, yesterday the Foundation launched the exercise in a ceremony attended by hundreds of farmers.

During the exercise, a section of farmers from Nyeri County received a much-needed boost as the Foundation launched a comprehensive medical camp at Wandumbi dispensary near Gathuthi tea factory in Tetu constituency.

The initiative aims to ensure that tea growers who often postpone treatment due to demanding farm schedules have access to timely medical attention.

For many tea farmers, long hours in the fields, unpredictable weather, and the pressure to meet strict production cycles mean that regular medical check-ups are often delayed, sometimes until minor health issues escalate into serious concerns.

The KTDA Foundation's outreach seeks to change that, placing farmer health and well-being at the center of its operations.

"Our farmers are not statistics. They are families, communities, and the backbone of our economy," said Catherine Mankura, chairperson of the KTDA Board's Health and Wellness Committee. She added, "Today, we bring healthcare to those who faithfully bring life to our tea sub-sector."

Those who attended the camp were offered a range of free services including screenings, consultations, treatment, and health education.

The exercise will be focusing on conditions that are common but often overlooked in rural populations, such as high blood pressure, diabetes, respiratory issues, and musculoskeletal pain resulting from long days spent in the fields.

"This is a great opportunity for us to undergo a medical checkup," said Ms. Florence Nyambura, a farmer affiliated with Gathuthi Tea Factory.

"We are always busy attending to our tea plantations and we often forget to seek medical attention or frequent medical checkups. We thank KTDA for this noble initiative."

Farmers noted that the distance and cost are significant barriers to accessing healthcare and commended the KTDA Foundation for the initiative.



A health worker checking the Blood Pressure of a farmer at Wandumbi dispensary, Tetu yesterday

By bringing services directly to the farmers, KTDA ensures that these obstacles are removed, making it easier for them to prioritize their health.

The medical camp is part of a broader shift in KTDA's strategy, which now places farmer health and dignity on par with production goals. "Good health is the foundation of productivity. Early detection saves lives; prevention saves families," Ms. Mankura emphasized.

She noted that the move reflects KTDA's sharpened strategic focus on placing farmers at the centre of every decision, guided by the Board's Health and Wellness Committee under the rallying mantra: Farmer First, Leaving No Farmer Behind.

Ms Mankura reaffirmed the organisation's responsibility to advance

farmers' welfare beyond the factory floor saying, "Leadership is service. Our farmers are not statistics. They are families, communities, and the backbone of our economy. Today we bring healthcare to those who faithfully bring life to our tea sub-sector."

The Foundation will be carrying out the exercise under the tagline, "Your Health Is Your Greatest Wealth: And When Farmers Thrive, Communities Thrive"

KTDA leaders announced that this is the first of several health initiatives planned across tea-growing regions, aimed at strengthening community health systems and improving the quality of life for farmers.

More medical camps and wellness programmes are expected in the coming months, offering services that

extend beyond treatment to include health education and preventive care.

As the camp officially opened, KTDA expressed confidence that the initiative would restore strength, knowledge, and peace of mind to thousands of growers who sustain Kenya's tea industry, keeping it globally competitive.

By prioritizing farmer welfare, the Foundation demonstrates that the success of the nation's tea sector is inseparable from the health and well-being of the people who make it thrive.

Gathuthi Tea Factory leadership led by chairman Hosea Kimamo commended the initiative saying it will greatly help the farmers.



KTDA's Christine Mankura (in green dress) and Gathuthi Tea Factory chairman Hosea Kimamo (on her left) with other officials and medics during the launch of medical camp.



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# The Machinery Of Silence: How Kenya's Legal System Became A Weapon Against Its Citizens



By: Odhiambo Jerameel Kevins Owuor  
@themkenyatimes

The steady erosion of democratic freedoms in Kenya has reached a critical threshold. In 2024, CIVICUS reclassified Kenya's civic space from "obstructed" to "repressed," a damning assessment that reflects the government's systematic deployment of legal instruments to neutralize dissent. This downgrade is not merely symbolic, it documents a calculated transformation of the criminal justice system into an apparatus of political control, where constitutional guarantees of freedom mean little against the weight of repressive legislation and impunity-shielded enforcement.

The Public Order Act stands as the cornerstone of this architecture of suppression. By mandating advance police notification for public gatherings and granting authorities sweeping powers to deny or disrupt demonstrations, the law effectively criminalizes the spontaneous expression of collective grievance. During the 2024 anti-Finance Bill protests, this framework revealed its lethal potential. Police deployed live ammunition against citizens exercising their constitutional right to peaceful assembly, transforming streets into zones of violence where the state's monopoly on force was wielded without restraint or accountability. The requirement that organizers "oversee" gatherings creates an insidious trap: activists become legally liable for events they cannot control, particularly when police themselves instigate chaos.

Digital space, once a frontier of relative freedom, has become another battlefield in the state's war on dissent. The Cybercrimes Act and its amendments function as legal cover for the intimidation of activists, journalists, and ordinary citizens who dare to criticize government action online. Surveillance has moved beyond abstract concern into documented practice. Safaricom's reported sharing of customer location data with law enforcement has facilitated a campaign of terror enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, and targeted harassment that operates in the shadows of due process. When citizens cannot speak freely without fearing that their digital footprints will lead security forces to their doors, civic engagement withers at its roots.

The bodies tell a story that official statements refuse to acknowledge. Human rights organizations have documented cases of missing protesters whose remains were later discovered bearing unmistakable signs of torture and mutilation. These are not isolated incidents but patterns that



reveal the calculated use of extrajudicial violence to send a message: dissent carries a price that extends beyond arrest or prosecution. The impunity enjoyed by perpetrators within law enforcement confirms that these acts are not aberrations but features of a system where accountability has been deliberately dismantled. When the machinery of justice is turned against justice itself, citizens are left without recourse.

Strategic lawsuits against public participation, SLAPPs, represent another dimension of this multi-pronged assault. Civil society organizations face bureaucratic suffocation through funding delays, threats of deregistration, and frivolous legal challenges designed not to win in court but to drain resources and energy. These tactics are devastatingly effective because they exploit the vulnerability of organizations dependent on donor funding and legal standing. Activists and journalists covering sensitive issues operate under constant threat, knowing that their work could trigger legal retaliation that consumes years and drains organizational capacity. The effect is predictable: self-censorship, withdrawal, and the gradual hollowing out of the civil society sector.

Young activists, who should represent the future of democratic participation, instead find themselves primary targets of state surveillance and police infiltration. Their digital fluency makes them effective organizers and therefore threats requiring neutralization. Internet shutdowns during moments of political tension have become routine, severing the communication networks that enable collective action. Cyber surveillance tracks

their movements, maps their networks, and identifies pressure points. Rural youth and minorities face compounded vulnerabilities, lacking both resources for legal defense and access to platforms that might amplify their voices. The state's strategy is clear: break the next generation of civic leaders before they can build sustainable movements.

Kenya's Constitution enshrines protections for freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly in Articles 33, 36, and 37. These guarantees exist on paper with considerable eloquence. Yet the gap between constitutional text and lived reality has become a chasm. Courts have occasionally issued rulings that impose limits on police overreach, moments of judicial resistance that offer brief hope. But implementation remains the critical failure. Without enforcement mechanisms that carry real consequences for violations, these rulings become symbolic gestures rather than binding constraints. The criminal justice system processes what it chooses to process, and what it increasingly chooses is the prosecution of citizens exercising democratic rights.

The system's focus on petty offenses accounting for over seventy percent of cases in a 2018 audit has been weaponized with particular cynicism. Activists and protesters find themselves charged with unlawful assembly, blocking roads, or spreading misinformation, offenses that clog courts with cases designed not for conviction but for harassment. The process becomes the punishment: arrests that disrupt organizing, bail requirements that drain limited funds, court dates that consume time and energy. This

judicial harassment operates as a tax on dissent, making civic participation costly enough that many cannot afford to pay. It is criminalization by bureaucratic attrition, a slow suffocation of democratic practice through administrative burden.

Media freedom, the oxygen of democratic accountability, faces parallel assault. Journalists exposing corruption and human rights abuses encounter harassment, censorship pressures, and threats that make their work increasingly dangerous. Calls for legal defense funds and enhanced protections acknowledge what is already clear: reporting the truth in Kenya now requires courage that should never be necessary in a functioning democracy. When those who document abuses become targets themselves, the cycle of impunity accelerates. The Public Order Act, Cybercrimes Act, surveillance apparatus, and judicial harassment function as interlocking components of a system designed not to deliver justice but to eliminate challenge. This is the machinery of silence, and it operates with bureaucratic efficiency to ensure that those who would hold power accountable face criminalization, violence, or erasure. The question is not whether this system exists, the evidence is overwhelming, but whether Kenyans will accept its continued operation as the price of stability, or demand the democratic space their Constitution promises and their dignity requires.

*The writer is a legal scrivener*

## Worth Noting:

- Digital space, once a frontier of relative freedom, has become another battlefield in the state's war on dissent. The Cybercrimes Act and its amendments function as legal cover for the intimidation of activists, journalists, and ordinary citizens who dare to criticize government action online.
- Surveillance has moved beyond abstract concern into documented practice. Safaricom's reported sharing of customer location data with law enforcement has facilitated a campaign of terror enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, and targeted harassment that operates in the shadows of due process.
- When citizens cannot speak freely without fearing that their digital footprints will lead security forces to their doors, civic engagement withers at its roots.

# Security Withdrawal And The Strain On Democratic Norms In Kenya



By: Simiyu Stanford  
@themtkenyatimes

## Worth Noting:

- **Personal Safety Risks:** Public officials who command significant attention, exercise oversight, or challenge powerful interests face real threats. The state cannot ignore this reality.
- **Institutional Risks:** For officeholders like the Chief Justice, security is not merely personal, it protects the independence of the Judiciary. Undermining this protection sends a troubling message about how the Executive relates to co-equal arms of government.
- **Public Confidence:** Citizens assess the fairness of government actions not only by what is said, but by what is done. When security withdrawal appears selective or reactive, it erodes confidence in state neutrality.



Governor George Nitemba and Senator Boni Khalwale

In recent years, Kenya has experienced a concerning pattern in the administration of state security: the withdrawal of protection from key public figures at moments of heightened political or institutional tension. Though the National Police Service (NPS) retains legal authority over the deployment of officers, the way this authority is exercised has significant implications for public trust, governance and constitutional order.

The withdrawal of security from Governor George Nitemba, closely followed by similar actions against Senator Boni Khalwale, attracted national attention not only because of the individuals involved but because of the timing. Both politicians had, in the period preceding these decisions, adopted firm positions at odds with the administration's preferred direction. Earlier in the year, the reduction of security around Chief Justice Martha Koome raised even deeper institutional concerns, given the office she occupies and the constitutional safeguards intended to protect judicial independence.

These incidents, taken together, form a pattern that must be taken seriously.

### Security and the Responsibilities of the State

The provision of security to public officials is not a privilege, it is an obligation tied to their roles, the risks inherent to their work and the stability of national institutions. When this protection is withdrawn, especially

without transparent explanation, several risks emerge:

- **Personal Safety Risks:** Public officials who command significant attention, exercise oversight, or challenge powerful interests face real threats. The state cannot ignore this reality.
- **Institutional Risks:** For officeholders like the Chief Justice, security is not merely personal, it protects the independence of the Judiciary. Undermining this protection sends a troubling message about how the Executive relates to co-equal arms of government.
- **Public Confidence:** Citizens assess the fairness of government actions not only by what is said, but by what is done. When security withdrawal appears selective or reactive, it erodes confidence in state neutrality.

### Political Context Cannot Be Ignored

Although the government has explained some of these withdrawals as routine administrative reassignments or precautionary measures linked to intelligence reports, these justifications must be scrutinized in context.

The timing has frequently coincided with: moments of political contestation, disagreements between state actors or public criticism directed at the Executive.

In political analysis, patterns of timing are often as significant as the actions themselves. Where withdrawals

align with dissent, the perception, fair or not, is that security has become a tool for disciplining critics rather than a neutral instrument of public protection.

Perception matters in governance. It shapes trust, legitimacy, and the degree to which institutions are viewed as impartial.

### Legal Authority vs. Democratic Norms

One may distinguish between what is legally permissible and what is democratically prudent. Legally, the NPS may reassign officers. Democratically, such decisions should follow transparent criteria, be communicated clearly, and avoid any appearance of retaliation.

A constitutional democracy depends not only on the letter of the law but on adherence to norms, restraint, fairness, and respect for institutional independence. When decisions fall short of these standards, even if technically lawful, they risk undermining the democratic fabric that supports the nation.

Even without explicit threats, the withdrawal of security can create an atmosphere in which public officers, politicians, and even independent institutions begin to self-censor or exercise undue caution. Governance thrives when leaders are able to speak and act without fear of personal vulnerability. A system that inadvertently or intentionally introduces such fear weakens its own democratic

foundations.

The withdrawal of security from public figures is not a minor administrative matter. It is an action that touches on the safety of individuals, the autonomy of institutions, and the legitimacy of the state. Kenya must treat it with the seriousness it deserves.

A robust democracy ensures that protection is not influenced by political alignment, opinion, or institutional stance. If the country is to preserve the integrity of its constitutional order, security decisions must be transparent, fair, and insulated from political motivations.

### About the Writer

The writer is a political analyst and a PhD student in Literature at Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST). He is also a literary scholar, blending political insight with humanistic analysis. His works include: *The Ring of the Moon* (2023) "A masterpiece to explore and achieve academic excellence in poetry.", *Robai Nabisino Makokha* (2023) "The remarkable life of a distinguished woman." And, *Off Walls Unbroken and Other Stories* (2025)-a collection portraying contemporary society through keen literary observation. His scholarship and analysis focus on the intersections of governance, culture and the narratives that shape public life.

# Chinese Vehicles Roll In For Johannesburg G20 Summit

*As the Group of 20 (G20) Leaders' Summit made its debut on the African continent in Johannesburg, South Africa's economic hub, on Saturday, Chinese vehicles were seen shuttling between the airport, hotels and summit venues, adding a distinctive Chinese touch to the event.*

By: Xinhua  
 @themtkenyatimes

As the Group of 20 (G20) Leaders' Summit made its debut on the African continent in Johannesburg, South Africa's economic hub, on Saturday, Chinese vehicles were seen shuttling between the airport, hotels and summit venues, adding a distinctive Chinese touch to the event.

Chinese automakers delivered hundreds of vehicles to form part of the summit's shuttle fleet, with Jetour contributing 70 units, the largest share among the Chinese brands.

The vehicle sponsorship was finalized early in February with South Africa's Department of International Relations and Cooperation.

Jetour International's President Ke Chuandeng recalled that the department sealed the deal quickly after reviewing their T2 SUV, a model that had not yet entered the market at the time. "It speaks to South Africa's confidence in Chinese auto brands and in what our products can deliver," Ke said.

Chinese cars have become an increasingly familiar sight on South Africa's roads in recent years, with brands such as Jetour gaining popularity among urban buyers, especially younger consumers.

"Chinese automakers are gaining strong traction in South Africa by combining high-tech features, modern styling and competitive pricing in a way traditional brands struggle to match," said Charmaine Spangenberg, a young South African consumer.

As an economic powerhouse on the African continent, South Africa is known as a country "built on wheels" for its well-established automotive industry. Since Chinese automakers entered the market more than a decade ago, a dozen Chinese brands have gained a foothold and posted solid sales.

According to the National Association of Automobile Manufacturers of South Africa, the country's automotive market continued to expand in 2024, with new-vehicle sales reaching 515,800 units, a 5.6 percent increase from 2023. Meanwhile, Chinese brands continued to show strong momentum, accounting for 12.8 percent of total market sales.

Marly Vivier, a young South Afri-

can who previously owned a Chinese car, said she has always found Chinese models stylish and reliable. She has noticed that Chinese brands are gaining ground on long-established brands. "I really think they are going to take over, and I love that," she said.

As part of the official escort fleet at the G20 Leaders' Summit, Jetour deployed the T2 SUV, a model that combines comfort and safety and is well-suited to the demands of high-level diplomatic events.

Launched in South Africa in October, the T2 comes with L2 driving-assistance features and a 360-degree panoramic camera system, giving drivers a comprehensive view for easy maneuvering. Its spacious and quiet cabin, equipped with ergonomic seating and an infotainment system, provides a comfortable, composed ride for dignitaries.

The presence of Chinese automobiles in the G20 fleet signals a shift in the international perception of China's carmakers, who are no longer seen just as market players but as reliable partners capable of supporting major global events.

"I think the G20 summit provides a favourable wind for China-South Africa relations. For Chinese automakers, the path to greater brand influence lies in complementing their successful sales strategies with deeper, more visible local investment and community integration," said Spangenberg.

Ke said Jetour is proud to be part of the Chinese automakers providing vehicles for the G20 summit. "We hope this collaboration gives the world a clearer sense of our capability and confidence, and shows our ambition to keep raising the bar as we expand globally."



A Jetour vehicle arrives outside the venue of the G20 Leaders' Summit as an escort for the delegation motorcade, in Johannesburg, South Africa, Nov. 22, 2025. (Xinhua/Yang Guang)



This photo taken on Nov. 20, 2025, shows the delegation motorcade outside the G20 Leaders' Summit venue in Johannesburg, South Africa, including a Jetour vehicle as an escort. (Xinhua/Yang Guang)



This photo taken on Nov. 20, 2025, shows the delegation motorcade outside the G20 Leaders' Summit venue in Johannesburg, South Africa, including a Jetour vehicle as an escort. (Xinhua/Yang Guang)

# The High Court, Omtatah, And Why This Ruling Is A Warning Shot To Kenya's Political Banking Cartels

By: Martin Masinde

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## Worth Noting:

- To understand the weight of this win, we must revisit the heart of the matter. When NIC and CBA merged in 2019 to form NCBA, the merger was expected to yield the government KSh 384.5 million in stamp duty. This was not discretionary money.
- It was lawful revenue owed to the people of Kenya. But because NCBA was closely associated with powerful individuals in the former regime, a miracle happened. A "special" stamp duty exemption appeared via Gazette Notice.
- Somehow, a private bank was lifted above the law and granted a benefit unavailable to millions of ordinary Kenyans who shoulder every shilling of tax imposed upon them.

Another victory has landed squarely in favour of the people. The High Court has once again affirmed what Kenyans have long suspected: that power, when left unchecked, slowly morphs into a network of privilege, impunity, and selective application of the law. The upholding of the ruling in Petition 337 of 2019, Okiya Omtatah Okioti v National Treasury CS & 5 others, and the invalidation of the unlawful KSh 384.5 million stamp duty exemption granted to NCBA, is more than a tax matter. It is a moment of civic truth. A reminder that even in a captured political climate, the courts can still stand tall when pushed by courageous citizens.

To understand the weight of this win, we must revisit the heart of the matter. When NIC and CBA merged in 2019 to form NCBA, the merger was expected to yield the government KSh 384.5 million in stamp duty. This was not discretionary money. It was lawful revenue owed to the people of Kenya. But because NCBA was closely associated with powerful individuals in the former regime, a miracle happened. A "special" stamp duty exemption appeared via Gazette Notice. Somehow, a private bank was lifted above the law and granted a benefit unavailable to millions of ordinary Kenyans who shoulder every shilling of tax imposed upon them.

This is the kind of abuse that corrodes a democracy from within. It signals that public institutions can be bent, not by reason, but by proximity to power. It tells Kenyans that taxation is not based on equity, principle, or law, but on who you know. And it exposes how governments, past and present, use financial institutions as political extensions of their influence.

Enter Okiya Omtatah. In a country where many complain but few act, he moved to court. What he challenged was not just a fraudulent tax exemption. He challenged the creeping normalisation of state capture in Kenya's financial oversight ecosystem. And he did so not as a politician seeking power but as The People's Advocate, insisting that public finance must remain anchored in the Constitution.

The High Court agreed. It ruled that the Treasury's exemption was unlawful, unconstitutional, and dangerous. It went further to dismiss NCBA's attempt to delay the ruling's implementation. The message was clear: no corporation, no matter how connected, should enjoy tax



Okiya Omtatah Okioti

holidays at the expense of citizens.

Omtatah put it even more sharply: granting such exemptions amounts to an unconstitutional reward to private business interests and sets a dangerous precedent. This statement should be tattooed on the conscience of every public official in Kenya. Because if NCBA can be exempted from a lawful obligation of nearly half a billion shillings, what stops the government from waiving billions more for politically aligned companies? What stops powerful banks from developing the confidence to operate above the law? And what stops every new regime from weaponising financial institutions to punish rivals and reward loyalists?

We must not pretend this is an isolated case. The recent tension between Governor Sakaja and the Senate over the transfer of county funds to Sidian Bank is a loud echo of the same pattern. Just as NCBA was favoured for its proximity to power then, Sidian Bank is now seen as the politically convenient bank of the moment. Public funds are being shifted without clear justification. County finances are being exposed to risk by decisions that smell more

of politics than prudence. The actors may change, but the script remains stubbornly familiar: banks aligned to power get an unfair slice of public business.

What is emerging is a politically aligned banking ecosystem, institutions that thrive not because of market strength or public trust, but because they are strategically positioned within the country's political architecture. This is how a nation slowly drifts into oligarchy.

This is why the High Court decision matters far beyond the KSh 384.5 million. It is not just about recovering lost revenue. It is a precedent that strikes at the heart of political patronage masquerading as financial policy. It affirms that state capture can be confronted, and defeated, when citizens are vigilant. And it reminds us that democracy is not only safeguarded at the ballot box, but also in courtrooms where ordinary citizens challenge the misuse of power.

There is something deeply symbolic about this ruling coming at a time when Kenyans are questioning how decisions about public money are made. When families are suffocat-

ing under heavy taxation, when unemployment is rising, when service delivery is collapsing, it is insulting to hear that politically aligned banks are quietly receiving exemptions worth hundreds of millions. In such a context, this ruling is not merely a legal victory. It is a moral one. It tells Kenyans that the law still has teeth. It tells political elites that impunity has limits. And it tells citizens that activism is not noise; it is a form of national defence.

We often ask where Kenya's hope lies. The answer, again and again, is found in people like Okiya Omtatah, citizens who refuse to be cowed, who refuse to be silent, and who insist that public resources must serve the public, not private cartels.

This ruling is a reminder that every time the people fight, the people win. But it is also a warning: unless citizens remain vigilant, unless institutions remain brave, and unless courts remain independent, political capture will continue creeping back, one bank, one gazette notice, one exemption at a time. For today, the people have won. Tomorrow, the struggle continues.

# SPORTS NEWS

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**Sports >>** \*The campaign, being rolled out in phases, features a multi-agency approach, including collaboration with the Ministry of Health through the Counselling Psychology and Addiction Services Board.

## Gaming Industry Embark On Sensitization Campaign For Safe Playing Space In Kenya

The gaming industry in Kenya, has vowed to push for responsible gaming as it edges towards self regulation and better engagement with state authorities.

The industry, which contributed more than Ksh26 billion in taxes last year pledged to promote safe gaming for sustainability.

“Our mission is simple; to speak with one voice, to advocate for fair regulation, to address illegal gambling and to promote responsible gaming,” said the Association of Gaming Operators Kenya chairman, Sasa Krneta.

“Responsible gaming is a top priority for us. Through the Chukua Control campaign, training programs, better self-exclusion systems and public education, we are increasing our commitment to player safety and well-being,” he added.

Deputy Commissioner in the Large Taxpayers Office Weldon Ngeno applauded the gaming industry for increased tax collection.

He said taxes from the gaming operators have risen by 21% to date compared to the same time last year.

This coincides with the new tax regime which was championed by AGOK. Under the new method, the tax focuses on deposits and withdrawals as opposed to the stakes and winnings from a player’s wallet.

The new Gambling Regulatory Authority chairman Hon. Joseph Kirui Limo said the industry’s importance cannot be downplayed and pledged to work with the companies for a better operating environment.

He said the ushering in of the new authority will be helpful to the industry as it is now a fully fledged parastatal equivalent to the Kenya Revenue Authority.

“The industry is growing and it has to be supported. So it is the recognition by the government that you are a very



important stakeholder in this country. We are going to work together more than ever before,” Limo assured.

They spoke during the 20th anniversary celebrations by the Association of Gaming Operators Kenya held at the Safari Park Hotel on Friday night.

The National Treasury’s Michael Kagika who represented Cabinet Secretary Hon. John Mbadi at the event said there has been increased tax revenues from the sector as well as expanded digital consumption patterns.

He acknowledged AGOK’s contribution in resource mobilization and community investment initiatives.

“These revenues have supported innovative infrastructure financing models. Notably, the Government securitized future cash flows of the Sports Fund to mobilize resources for the construction of the Talanta Sports Stadium,” Kagika said.

The industry’s new law the Gambling Control Act, 2025 was signed on 7th August 2025 leading to the establishment of

the Gaming Regulatory Authority from the Betting Control and Licensing Board.

Kagika said the establishment of the GRA will promote orderly sector development and establish mechanisms for fair dispute resolution.

“As the Government and stakeholders develop comprehensive regulations under the new law, we count on AGOK’s continued support to ensure effective implementation and compliance,” said Kagika.

On its part, AGOK said it will pursue dialogue, clarity and compliance to serve its members better.

The association said it will continue working closely with GRA, Kenya Revenue Authority and the Financial Report Centre and other institutions to build a safe, fair and predictable environment for all licensed operators and for the millions of Kenyans who engage with our industry.

“With AGOK sponsoring the campaign, and in partnership with GRA, we are making Responsible Gaming stron-

ger and more visible across the country,” Krneta said.

AGOK launched the Chukua Control responsible gaming campaign in May in partnership with the government through the regulator.

The campaign, being rolled out in phases, features a multi-agency approach, including collaboration with the Ministry of Health through the Counselling Psychology and Addiction Services Board.

It will include enhanced counselling and referral networks, mental health support systems, widespread awareness programs and a toll-free helpline and an eight-hour support call centre.

The Chukua Control messages seeking to reach as many people as possible

nationwide will be rolled out this week on television and radio stations.

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GET THE BEST OF WORLD

**Sports >>** \*24 teams will battle in the month-long championship, with matches being staged in nine stadiums spread across six cities in Morocco.

# Royal Air Maroc Announces Discounted Airfares In A Bid To Woo Fans From Africa To Attend AFCON

In a bid aimed at wooing more fans from across Africa to attend matches at the 35th edition of the African Cup of Nations, slated for the 21st of next month till the 19th of January next year, Royal Air Morocco, the official airline in Morocco, has announced discounted rates for travelling from December.

The discounted airfare targets fans from 13 cities from 12 African cities and is aimed at making it easier and more affordable for football fans across Africa to attend the 2025 Africa Cup of Nations in Morocco.

The airline says the initiative is part of its commitment to ensuring that as many supporters as possible experience the excitement of AFCON 2025 live in Morocco's world-class stadiums.

Morocco is hosting the finals for the first time in 37 years and will also be in the hunt for their 2nd title after 49 years.

The new rates will see fans travelling from Abidjan ,Ivory Coast pay Ksh 68,000 for a round trip Ksh 76,500 for those from Dakar, Senegal while those from Angola's capital Luanda will be charged Ksh 163,500.

Those travelling from Ouagadougou,Burkina Faso will pay Ksh 81,600,as those from Lagos,Nigeria will part with Ksh 110,500, for a round trip air ticket.

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Those travelling from Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, will pay Ksh 81,600, as those from Lagos, Nigeria, will part with Ksh 110,500 for a round-trip air ticket.

For the first time in the history of the biennial football tournament, purchasing of tickets for fans will strictly be through an app known



as the Yalla App, with all ticket holders being exempted from pre-travelling visas.

24 teams will battle in the month-long championship, with matches being staged in nine stadiums spread across six cities in Morocco.

The tournament is bringing together 12 past champions, among them record winners Egypt with 7 trophies, 5-time champions Cameroon, and 4-time champions Ghana, as well as Nigeria, who have won it thrice.

Other nations include Algeria and defending champions Ivory Coast, who have bagged trophies apiece. to woo more fans from Africa to attend AFCON.

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Other nations include Algeria,DR Congo and defending champions Ivory Coast, who have bagged two trophies apiece.

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## The Radiance Within: Anastasia Mason's Reign Of Purpose



By: Ayesha Talib  
@themtkenyatimes

### Worth Noting:

- The woman who emerged from this crucible didn't just reclaim her confidence; she channeled her transformation into a global mission. Today, Anastasia is the Executive Director of Universe International®, overseeing Mrs., Ms., and Miss Teen Universe® titles.
- She is orchestrating a complete overhaul of the organization, aiming to create a platform where purpose matters as much as appearance. Her vision is radical: to redefine the crown not as a symbol of perfection, but as a recognition of inherent worth and resilience, where faith and fierceness not only coexist but amplify each other.

Anastasia Mason, the reigning Ms. Universe® 2025, is a testament to the fact that true beauty is forged in the fire of adversity. Her journey from a devastating accident that stole her smile to becoming a global executive director and empowerment advocate is not just a pageant success story—it's a blueprint for transforming tragedy into tenacious, purpose-driven leadership.

### The Accident That Unleashed Her Power

Anastasia's life was dramatically reshaped three years ago by a hoverboard accident that resulted in severe head trauma and dental injury, leaving her unable to drive and profoundly changing her physical appearance. The woman who had previously found inspiration watching her model mother and trained in Art Education and Psychology suddenly found herself facing the complete reconstruction of her smile and her self-perception.

"There were days I couldn't bear to look at my reflection," she admits with striking candor. Yet, out of that emotional darkness, a profound spiritual awakening occurred. She made a conscious decision to refuse to be defined by what was lost, realizing that the accident had "absolutely demolished everything superficial... to reveal what genuine strength and beauty actually look like." With unwavering faith and the support of key mentors, her painful reconstruction became the painstaking journey toward self-discovery.

### Reimagining the Crown

The woman who emerged from this crucible didn't just reclaim her confidence; she channeled her transformation into a global mission. Today, Anastasia is the Executive Director of Universe International®, overseeing Mrs., Ms., and Miss Teen Universe® titles.

She is orchestrating a complete overhaul of the organization, aiming to create a platform where purpose matters as much as appearance. Her vision is radical: to redefine the crown not as a symbol of perfection, but as a recognition of inherent worth and resilience, where faith and fierceness not only coexist but

amplify each other.

### The Ministry of Self-Worth

Anastasia's core work operates through her empowerment brand, Positively You™, and her signature program, Beauty From Ashes©. This program is her ultimate offering, designed to help women transform their trauma into powerful testimony. She connects with women on the deepest level, encouraging them to "rise from the ashes of their struggles" and understand that success is found in peace, authenticity, and purpose.

Her message is unapologetically spiritual and deeply authentic, moving beyond sanitized corporate slogans. Recognized by New York Weekly as one of the Top 30 Influential Women of 2025, Anastasia is using her global platform to champion domestic violence awareness and promote her signature motto: "Beauty is Universal™."

Ultimately, her legacy will not be measured by the titles she holds, but by the countless women who, through her example, find the courage to stand taller. She teaches that the scar doesn't write the final chapter; the rise does. Anastasia Mason shows the world that wearing a crown is most powerful when it is worn alongside one's scars, demonstrating that both can and should exist simultaneously.



Anastasia Mason

