



Beyond Call Of Duty: Huduma Centre Mombasa's 3rd Annual Awards Spotlight Stars Of Public Service
William James once quipped that the deepest craving of human nature is the need to be appreciated. This words seem true as when they were said. It is in line with this that Huduma Centre Mombasa held their 3rd Annual Awards Ceremony. To have some context, the centre Mombasa which is one of the cities in Kenya. Thousands seeks vital government services daily.

Page 18

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News>> Kenya Doesn't Have A Leadership Problem. It Has A Voter Problem; And That's Why Justice Terrifies Us

P. 8. There is a comforting lie societies tell themselves when they are unwilling to confront their own complicity in decline.



News>> All Set For Maina Njenga's Father Final Send-Off

P. 12. Preparations for the burial of the father to former Mungiki Sect chairman Maina Njenga have been finalised. Mzee Stephen Kamunya Njoroge, 101 will be buried tomorrow at his Ng'arua home in Laikipia West Sub-County, Laikipia County.

Kuria Rebukes Matiang'i Over Uhuru Onslaught



Politics in Kenya has never been short of drama, but the latest skirmish involving former President Uhuru Kenyatta, ODM heavyweights, and Moses Kuria's sharp rebuke of Fred Matiangi and Jeremiah Kioni reveals a deeper crisis of loyalty, silence, and shifting allegiances. Kuria, once a close economic adviser to Uhuru, took to social media to question why Matiangi and Kioni—figures long associated with the former president—have remained conspicuously quiet as ODM leaders launched a barrage of accusations against Kenyatta.



Former presidential economic adviser, Moses Kuria. Inset Fred Matiangi

STORY ON PAGE 9

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Christmas Celebrations In Photos



Deputy President Prof Kithure Kindiki hosted hundreds of Tharaka-Nithi County residents at Irunduni home where he gave them foodstuffs for Christmas.



Fisheries and Blue Economy PS Ms Betsy Muthoni Njagi (centre) give Christmas goodies to over 3000 vulnerable residents of Tharaka-Nithi County at Kathwana county commissioner's office. Photo/Alex Njeru



ic interests. The alliance includes tribal leaders, scholars, religious figures, youth, women, and persons with disabilities. Speaking at the launch, Ambassador Mwakwere urged the government to address historical land injustices and the menace of drug abuse while strengthening the coastal economy to curb insecurity linked to gang activities.

Former Cabinet Minister Chirau Ali Mwakwere accompanied by other Mijikenda leaders, was sworn in as the spokesperson of the Mijikenda Community Association during a ceremony at Vishakani in Kaloleni Constituency, Kilifi County. The event also marked the launch of a broad-based alliance uniting all nine Mijikenda tribes to strengthen unity and advance the community's socio-econom-



Prime Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs, Musalia Mudavadi, has called on the people of the Western Region; popularly known as the Mulembe Nation to unite in support of the government in order to unlock meaningful development for the region. Mudavadi emphasized that development thrives where citizens work closely with the government, urging leaders and residents alike to prioritize unity, peace, and constructive engagement.

Energy PS Alex Wachira hosted over 10,000 families from Kieni East Sub-County where through Alex Kamau Wa-Total Foundation, he gave out water tanks, and mattresses at Irigithathi primary school. In support of environmental conservation, he distributed gas cylinders to promote cleaner energy use and contribute to the reduction of carbon emissions. He also held extensive discussions on supporting development programs and aligning with the government's agenda to foster sustainable growth within the community.



Rescued members of street families were treated to a Christmas meal during a mentorship programme held at the Pentecostal Assemblies of God (PAG) Church in Kisii town. At least 500 beneficiaries received a free lunch at the event, which also featured life-skills training aimed at helping them cope with emerging challenges during the school holiday period.



Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times



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NEWS IN BRIEF



Public Health and Professional Standards Principal Secretary Mary Muthoni has emphasised the importance of routine screening for early disease detection. She noted that routine screening is one of the most effective ways to reduce deaths from non-communicable illnesses. The PS urged Kenyans to utilize the screening services available at public health facilities. She said regular and continuous screening saves lives. Diseases like cancer can be treated successfully if detected early and that prevention and early intervention are more effective and less costly than late treatment.



Cabinet Secretary for Tourism and Wildlife, Ms. Rebecca Miano, rallied Kenyans to continue supporting the government in order to realise meaningful development. She noted that the government was committed to the improvement of road infrastructure to ease transport, adding that rural electrification, among other projects, was underway to help uplift the living standards of local people. She spoke after hosting hundreds of residents and distributing Christmas gifts at her home in Gwa Kihara Village, Ndaragwa Constituency.



A group photo of the National Stamp Duty Module participants, led by Lands Secretary Sarah Maina (second from left), in Malindi County during training conducted ahead of the digital stamp duty processing system rollout. The new National Stamp Duty Module (NSDM) replaces the manual process, reducing delays, errors, and administrative inefficiencies while enhancing transparency, accountability, and anti-corruption measures. To support effective adoption, the State Department, in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the European Union (EU), conducted a comprehensive capacity-building programme targeting officers nationwide. The programme equipped officers with practical skills to operate and process transactions on the NSDM platform. Training sessions were held in Malindi, Isiolo, Uasin Gishu, Nakuru, Kisumu, Kajiado, Makueni, and Embu, bringing together counties within each region to promote harmonized learning and peer collaboration.



It was a joyous festive season for Othaya constituency residents as area Member of Parliament Wambugu Wainaina generously gifted them with edibles and investment initiatives. Thousands of locals received assorted foodstuffs for Christmas last week with hundreds of others getting month-old chicks for economic empowerment. Last week, the MP met and handed over the foodstuffs while yesterday, he sent his team, led by Macharia Joel. The MP took the opportunity to highlight some of the projects that the Kenya Kwanza administration has initiated in the constituency as he drummed up support for a second term of President William Ruto. In the top photo, the MP is addressing some of his constituents last week while the bottom on has Macharia handing over some of the chicks.



Former nominated senator Millicent Omanga has called on youth in Kisii to respect the elderly and avoid associating them with witchcraft. Omanga described the elderly as beacons of wisdom in society. She made the remarks over the weekend during a ceremony in Mayata Village, Getare Sub-location, Kiamokama Ward, Nyaribari Masaba Constituency, Kisii County, held in honour of 105-year-old widow Mama Agnes Moraa Ombaki. Omanga, a granddaughter of Mama Agnes, described her grandmother's long life as a blessing not only to the family but also to the wider community.



Kisumu Governor Prof. Anyang' Nyong'o watches a programmed robot trace a black line using light sensors at Kiwimbi Library in Amagoro, Teso North Sub-County last weekend. The facility offers community-based training in digital skills, including robotics and artificial intelligence, under the Kiwimbi Organisation founded by Prof. Olubayi Olubayi.





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Nakuru MPs Accuse Senator Keroche Of Political Theatrics, Neglecting County Interests

By: Suleiman Mbatiah

@themkenyaintimes

Worth Noting:

- Led by Nakuru Town East MP David Gikaria, the leaders claimed the senator has focused more on public rhetoric than substantive legislative work in the Senate. They accused her of making sensational statements at churches, funerals and press briefings instead of pursuing formal oversight and accountability mechanisms.

- The criticism follows recent remarks by Senator Keroche alleging that Nakuru Governor Susan Kihika diverted county funds to construct a planned six-star hotel on Kenya Railways Corporation land near State House, Nakuru.



A photo collage of Senator Tabitha and MP Gikaria

A section of Nakuru leaders has accused Nakuru Senator Tabitha Keroche of neglecting her constitutional responsibilities and engaging in what they term political theatrics that do not advance the county's development interests.

Led by Nakuru Town East MP David Gikaria, the leaders claimed the senator has focused more on public rhetoric than substantive legislative work in the Senate. They accused her of making sensational statements at churches, funerals and press briefings instead of pursuing formal oversight and accountability mechanisms.

The criticism follows recent remarks by Senator Keroche alleging that Nakuru Governor Susan Kihika diverted county funds to construct a planned

six-star hotel on Kenya Railways Corporation land near State House, Nakuru. Gikaria said such allegations were serious and should have been reported to the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission and raised formally in the Senate for investigation, rather than being aired publicly.

Gikaria, who disclosed that he leases land from Kenya Railways in Nakuru, explained that such arrangements are lawful leasehold agreements in which Kenya Railways retains ownership while investors receive usage rights for a specified period. He added that the hotel project belongs to Governor Kihika's spouse, businessman and philanthropist Sam Mburu, whom he described as having built his wealth through clearing, forwarding and

transport businesses.

The MP further accused the senator of failing to effectively represent Nakuru, citing her absence from joint lobbying efforts by county leaders seeking national government support for development projects. He referenced a recent presidential visit, noting that Senator Keroche attended the launch of the Rironi-Mau Summit superhighway in Kiambu County but failed to attend a separate engagement when President William Ruto visited Nakuru.

Nakuru Town West MP Samuel Arama criticised churches for giving the senator platforms, accusing her of spreading misinformation and deepening political divisions. He also questioned her repeated mention of Mburu,

noting that he is not an elected leader and has limited avenues to respond. Senator Keroche has declared interest in the Nakuru governorship in 2027.

Businessman Maina Wakabura accused the senator of prioritising political confrontations over legislation, oversight and advocacy for equitable resource allocation, arguing this has weakened Nakuru's influence in the Senate. He also cited unresolved employment disputes involving staff in her office.

In response, Senator Keroche defended her actions, saying she was exercising her oversight mandate and would not be intimidated, insisting her efforts were in the public interest.

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Kenya Doesn't Have A Leadership Problem. It Has A Voter Problem; And That's Why Justice Terrifies Us



By: Gitile Naituli
@themkenyetimes

Worth Noting:

- Kenya's political order survives by informal arrangements. Deals are struck in backrooms and sanctified at rallies. Corruption is not denied; it is normalized, rationalized, and ethnically laundered. Accountability is not rejected openly; it is postponed indefinitely. Leaders are forgiven in advance, on the promise that this time they will deliver. Within such a system, the truly dangerous figure is not the tyrant or the thief. It is the disciplinarian, the one who can not be managed, bargained with, or softened by praise.
- Every election cycle follows the same ritual. Citizens declare fatigue with corruption and demand change. Political elites repackage the same actors with fresher slogans. Voters, anxious about uncertainty, choose familiarity over reform.



There is a comforting lie societies tell themselves when they are unwilling to confront their own complicity in decline. The lie is this: we would be better if only we had better leaders. It is a soothing narrative because it relocates responsibility upward, away from the citizens and toward the elite. But history is unkind to such self-deception. Nations do not get the leaders they wish for; they get the leaders they tolerate, excuse, and repeatedly elect. When justice frightens a people, they will dress fear as pragmatism and call surrender "realism." Martha Karua unsettles Kenya not because she is weak, unelectable, or out of touch. She unsettles Kenya because she is unyielding in the wrong currency. She does not trade in ethnic arithmetic, transactional loyalty, or emotional blackmail. She trades in rules. She insists that law must be superior to relationships, that institutions must matter more than personalities, and that consequences must follow conduct, even when that conduct belongs to the powerful. In a political culture built on negotiation with impunity, that is not merely inconvenient. It is terrifying.

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time they will deliver. Within such a system, the truly dangerous figure is not the tyrant or the thief. It is the disciplinarian, the one who can not be managed, bargained with, or softened by praise.

Every election cycle follows the same ritual. Citizens declare fatigue with corruption and demand change. Political elites repackage the same actors with fresher slogans. Voters, anxious about uncertainty, choose familiarity over reform. The country then slides further into debt, anger, and hopelessness. When the bill comes due, the public blames leadership again, conveniently forgetting the choice that made it inevitable. This is why Martha Karua is perpetually framed as "too rigid," "too hard," or "politically difficult."

Those are not neutral descriptions. They are coded admissions. What they really mean is that she can not be bent into the culture of accommodation. She will not protect thieves for the sake of stability. She will not suspend the principle to preserve coalitions. She will not weaponize the law selectively, harsh on enemies, and indulgent to allies. In a country where justice has long been negotiated rather than enforced, consistency itself becomes a threat.

Kenya's problem, then, is not the absence of reformist leadership. It is the electorate's ambivalence toward reform when it threatens comfort. We say we want accountability, but only for "the other side." We say we

want the rule of law, but not when it inconveniences our own. We celebrate anti-corruption rhetoric while quietly insisting that our "own" must be spared. Justice is welcomed as an idea and rejected as a practice.

This contradiction corrodes the republic. Public debt balloons not merely because leaders borrow recklessly, but because voters reward grand promises over sober discipline. Institutions weaken not only because executives interfere, but because citizens applaud shortcuts that favour them. Anger grows not just because of policy failure but because the social contract itself is dishonest. We demand outcomes without accepting the discipline required to achieve them.

There is a deeper moral failure here. A society that fears justice eventually loses the capacity for self-respect. When laws are seen as weapons rather than safeguards, citizens retreat into tribes, churches, and personalities. Politics becomes a theatre of emotions, not a forum for choices. In such an environment, a leader who insists on impersonal rules feels alien, almost cruel because she refuses to play the familiar game of exceptions. And yet, this is precisely the leadership Kenya claims to desire. We say we want institutions that work, courts that are respected, and public finance that is disciplined. But when a candidate embodies those values without apology, we recoil. We tell ourselves she is unelectable, forgetting that

electability is not a natural law. It is a collective decision.

The uncomfortable truth is that Kenya is not yet reconciled with the cost of justice. Justice demands that some people go to jail, that stolen wealth is recovered, that shortcuts are closed, and that favouritism ends. It demands patience because institutions rebuild slowly. It demands courage because the transition from impunity to accountability is always turbulent. Many voters sense this, intuitively, and choose avoidance over renewal.

So the mirror remains unwelcome. It is easier to mock the disciplinarian than to confront the disorder she exposes. It is easier to cycle through charismatic redeemers than to commit to structural repair. But mirrors do not lie. A nation that repeatedly rejects rule-bound leadership is announcing something about itself, not about the candidate. Kenya does not lack capable leaders. It lacks a voting culture willing to endure the discomfort of reform. Until citizens decide that justice is worth the price it demands, no election will save this country. The tragedy is not that Martha Karua is rejected. The tragedy is that, in rejecting her kind of leadership, Kenya keeps voting against its own future.

Prof. Gitile Naituli is a former commissioner with National Cohesion And Integration Commission

Kuria Faults Matiangi's Quiet As Uhuru Faces Ruto Camp Offensive

By: MKT Correspondent
@themkenyetimes

Worth Noting:

- The silence of Matiangi and Kioni, once vocal defenders of Uhuru, has become a political statement in itself. Kuria's criticism underscores the perception that allies who once stood firm beside Kenyatta are now retreating into the shadows, leaving the former president exposed to attacks from both ODM insiders and Ruto's allies. This silence raises uncomfortable questions: is it strategic caution, political fatigue, or quiet betrayal? In Kenya's unforgiving political terrain, silence is rarely neutral—it is often interpreted as complicity.
- ODM's internal battles are not new, but the scale of the current accusations marks a turning point. The party, founded two decades ago on ideals of reform and resistance, now finds itself fractured by suspicions of infiltration and external manipulation.



Fred Matiangi

Politics in Kenya has never been short of drama, but the latest skirmish involving former President Uhuru Kenyatta, ODM heavyweights, and Moses Kuria's sharp rebuke of Fred Matiangi and Jeremiah Kioni reveals a deeper crisis of loyalty, silence, and shifting allegiances. Kuria, once a close economic adviser to Uhuru, took to social media to question why Matiangi and Kioni—figures long associated with the former president—have remained conspicuously quiet as ODM leaders launched a barrage of accusations against Kenyatta. Gladys Wanga, John Mbadi, Peter Kaluma, and Junet Mohamed accused the retired president of meddling in ODM's internal affairs, alleging he was using “moles” to destabilize the party. Wanga's words were blunt: “We want to tell President Uhuru Kenyatta that we are friends, but we will not accept you using moles to destabilize the ODM party.” Junet Mohamed escalated the rhetoric further, warning of a looming “war” in January to purge rebels allegedly on Uhuru's payroll.

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tacks from both ODM insiders and Ruto's allies. This silence raises uncomfortable questions: is it strategic caution, political fatigue, or quiet betrayal? In Kenya's unforgiving political terrain, silence is rarely neutral—it is often interpreted as complicity.

ODM's internal battles are not new, but the scale of the current accusations marks a turning point. The party, founded two decades ago on ideals of reform and resistance, now finds itself fractured by suspicions of infiltration and external manipulation. The accusations against Kenyatta reflect not only ODM's internal insecurities but also the broader struggle for dominance in Kenya's opposition politics. Raila Odinga's long-standing influence is being tested by younger leaders eager to assert independence, while Kenyatta's lingering presence in national politics continues to provoke unease.

Meanwhile, Ruto's allies have seized the opportunity to amplify the narrative of Kenyatta's alleged meddling, portraying him as a destabilizing force unwilling to fully retire from politics. For Ruto, who has long positioned himself as the champion of hustlers against dynastic politics, the attacks on Kenyatta serve to reinforce his narrative of breaking away from the old order. Kuria's intervention, though direct-

ed at Matiangi and Kioni, indirectly strengthens Ruto's camp by highlighting fractures within Kenyatta's circle.

The broader context of Kenya's political battles reveals a pattern: alliances are fluid, loyalty is conditional, and silence can be weaponized. ODM's accusations against Kenyatta echo past tensions where retired leaders were accused of meddling in party affairs, from Daniel arap Moi's lingering influence after retirement to Mwai Kibaki's quiet but strategic interventions. Kenyatta's case, however, is complicated by his recent history of aligning with Raila Odinga in the handshake era, a move that reshaped Kenya's political landscape but left lingering mistrust among ODM loyalists.

The silence of Matiangi and Kioni also reflects the precarious position of leaders caught between loyalty to a retired president and survival in a political climate dominated by Ruto's administration. Speaking out in defense of Kenyatta could invite retaliation from Ruto's allies, while remaining silent risks alienating their former patron. It is a delicate balancing act, but one that Kuria has chosen to expose, perhaps to remind Kenyatta that silence from his allies is as damaging as open betrayal.

Kenya's political battles are rarely about ideology; they are about power, survival, and perception. The

accusations against Kenyatta, the silence of his allies, and Kuria's public rebuke all feed into a narrative of shifting sands where yesterday's allies become today's liabilities. ODM's internal war, Ruto's external pressure, and Kenyatta's contested legacy converge to create a volatile mix that could redefine opposition politics in 2025.

The real question is not whether Kenyatta is meddling in ODM, but whether ODM can withstand the pressures of internal division and external interference. If the party fractures further, it risks losing its credibility as a unified opposition force. For Kenyatta, the attacks serve as a reminder that retirement from the presidency does not guarantee immunity from political battles. For Matiangi and Kioni, silence may buy temporary safety, but it erodes trust and exposes them to accusations of cowardice.

In the end, Kenya's political theatre thrives on spectacle, but beneath the noise lies a sobering truth: silence can be as destructive as speech. Kuria's rebuke is not just about defending Kenyatta—it is about exposing the fragility of alliances and the dangers of retreating when loyalty is most needed.

In Kenya's politics, silence is never neutral—it is a verdict, a betrayal, and sometimes the loudest applause for the wrong side.

Fraud Without Borders: FBI Probe Exposes Minnesota Scandal With Kenyan Links

By: MKT Correspondent
@themtkenyatimes

The scandal unfolding in Minnesota is not just about stolen meals for hungry children—it is about the audacity of fraud that crosses oceans and undermines trust in public institutions. The FBI has intensified its investigation into what it calls one of the largest aid fraud schemes in recent memory, dismantling a \$250 million network tied to sham vendors, shell companies, and elaborate money laundering operations. FBI Director Kash Patel announced that resources have been surged into Minnesota, stressing that fraud which robs taxpayers and vulnerable children will remain a top priority nationwide.

The scale of the case is staggering: 78 indictments, 57 convictions, and charges ranging from wire fraud to conspiracy. In one brazen twist, defendants attempted to bribe a juror

with \$120,000, underscoring how far perpetrators were willing to go to subvert justice. Patel warned that what has been uncovered is only “the tip of a very large iceberg,” promising more prosecutions as investigators continue to follow the money trail.

The scandal has international dimensions. White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt recently alleged that Somali immigrants linked to nonprofits in Minnesota defrauded taxpayers of nearly \$1 billion, with proceeds funneled into luxury cars, property in Turkey, and real estate in Kenya. While Kenyan authorities have yet to respond to claims of local purchases tied to the fraud, the allegations have thrust Kenya into the spotlight, raising questions about cross border oversight and the vulnerability of global financial systems during the pandemic era.

The Feeding Our Future case is more than a courtroom drama; it is a cautionary tale about how aid meant to protect children can be hijacked by



greed and exploited through international networks. It highlights the urgent need for stronger cooperation between U.S. agencies and foreign governments to track illicit funds, close loopholes, and ensure accountability.

Fraud thrives in silence, but the FBI’s

aggressive pursuit of justice signals that silence will not be tolerated. For Kenya, the allegations serve as a reminder that reputational damage can be inflicted not only by domestic scandals but also by global schemes that touch its soil.

In the end, fraud may cross borders,

but accountability must cross them faster—because justice delayed is justice denied for the children who were robbed.



The County Secretary: Devolution's Best Idea That No One Talks About



By: Koinange Wahome

@themkenyentimes



Worth Noting:

- The Constitution created political legitimacy, but it did not create administrative machinery. Elections confer mandate, not operational capacity. Counties required a non-elective office whose authority derived from law rather than popularity—an institutional anchor capable of converting political direction into administratively lawful action. The County Secretary was designed to be that anchor.
- Devolution also multiplied complexity at a speed politics alone could not manage. County governments became responsible for procurement systems, payrolls, human resource administration, service delivery contracts, and intergovernmental coordination—all within an environment of intense political pressure. These are not campaign functions; they are systems functions. The County Secretary emerged as the professional centre through which this complexity could be organised, coordinated, and stabilised.

When Kenyans adopted the Constitution of 2010, they undertook an ambitious redesign of the state. Power was devolved, political authority dispersed, and democratic legitimacy carefully anchored in elected office. Governors, deputies, county assemblies and executive committees were constitutionally created to reflect the will of the people at the local level.

But constitutions are not operating manuals. They define who holds authority, not how authority is translated into day-to-day governance. That task was deliberately left to legislation. It is in this space that the County Governments Act of 2012 quietly introduced one of the most consequential—yet least understood—offices in Kenya's governance architecture: the County Secretary.

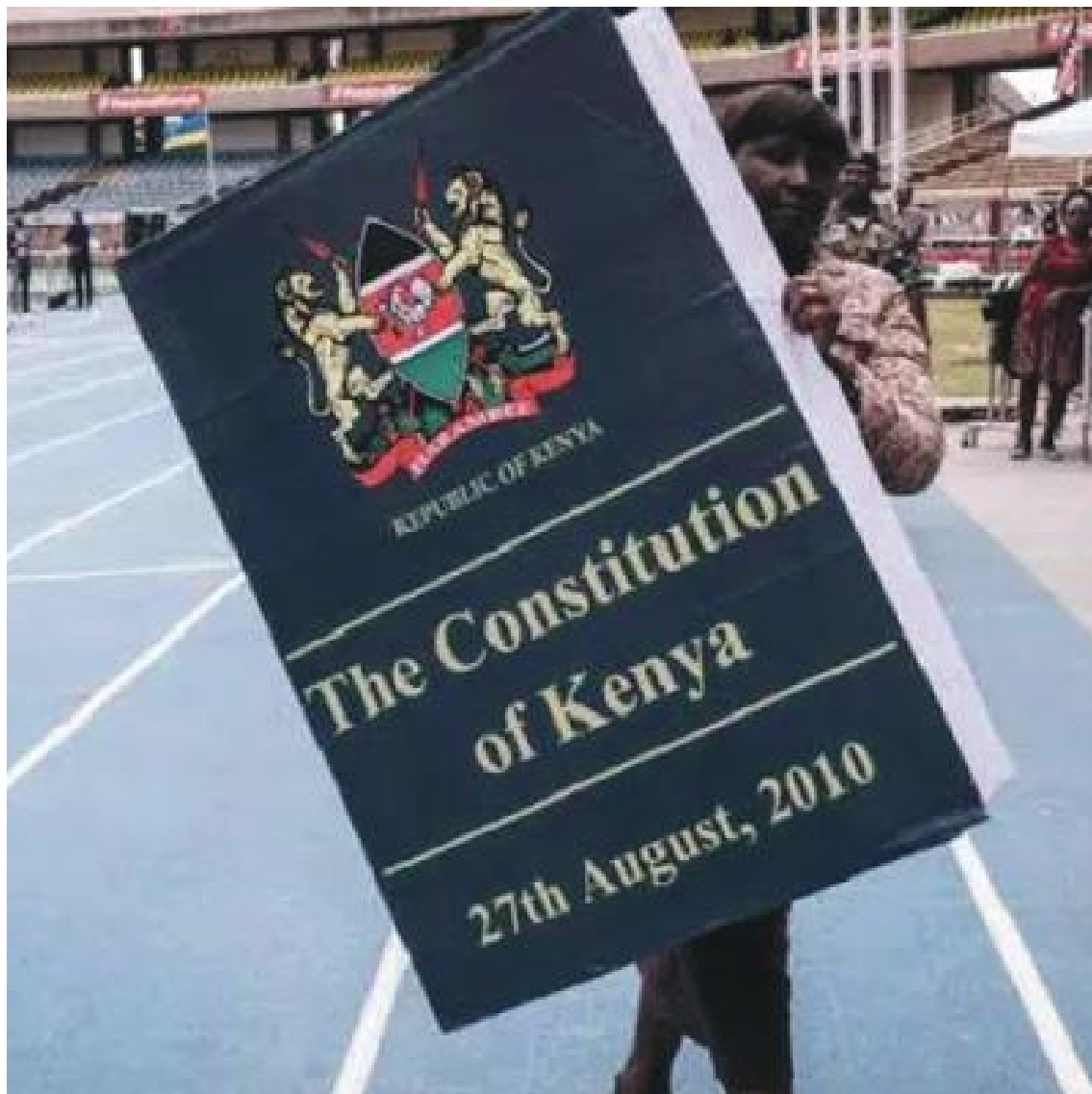
The office did not emerge as an afterthought. It emerged as a response to gaps that only became visible once devolution moved from theory to execution.

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Continuity posed another unresolved challenge. Political offices are cyclical by design; public administration cannot be. Counties needed an office that could absorb electoral transitions without institutional paralysis. As head of the county public service and secretary to the county executive committee, the County Secretary became the custodian of institutional memory—ensuring that county government is not reinvented every five years.

Yet it is precisely this positioning—at the intersection of politics,



administration, and law—that has exposed the office to public misunderstanding.

County Secretaries frequently come under criticism for “implementing” policies that attract public controversy. This criticism often overlooks a crucial reality of Kenya's governance structure. The County Secretary is not a political decision-maker, nor a legal originator of policy. The office oversees the implementation of decisions that have already passed through multiple legitimacy and compliance filters: county executive committees, county assemblies exercising oversight and representation, and national regulatory or supervisory agencies where applicable.

As secretary to the cabinet, the County Secretary operationalises what is, in effect, a whole-of-government directive. In doing so, the office sometimes becomes the most visible administrative face of decisions that are politically owned elsewhere and legally sanctioned through established governance channels. This creates an awkward—but structurally unavoidable—posture: accountability without authorship, visibility

without discretion.

It is important to state this plainly. The County Secretary is not a legal practitioner issuing policy judgments, nor a political actor crafting public mandates. The office exists to ensure that once policy has been lawfully adopted, it is implemented consistently, procedurally, and within the bounds of public service norms. To refuse implementation on the basis of personal discomfort would itself constitute administrative failure.

This tension is not a flaw in the system; it is a feature of mature governance. In advanced democracies, senior public servants routinely execute lawful but contested decisions, precisely because governance depends on institutional discipline rather than individual preference. The alternative—administrative veto by unelected officials—would be neither democratic nor stable.

What the County Governments Act understood, perhaps more clearly than public discourse admits, is that government does not fail because politics exists. It fails when politics displaces administration, or when administration is mistaken for poli-

tics.

The County Secretary is therefore neither a political shield nor a convenient scapegoat. The office is the chief integrator of county government: head of public service, custodian of procedure, and guarantor of lawful continuity. Its strength lies not in public visibility, but in institutional restraint. Not in policy authorship, but in coherence.

Kenya's devolution experiment will ultimately be judged not by the sharpness of political rhetoric, but by the quiet competence of its institutions. The framers of the County Governments Act recognised this and filled what the Constitution intentionally left open.

In that sense, the County Secretary may be devolution's most important insurance policy—rarely celebrated, frequently misunderstood, but indispensable to the everyday functioning of county government.

And perhaps that is the highest compliment any governance institution can earn.

Koinange Wahome is the County Secretary, Laikipia

All Set For Maina Njenga’s Father Final Send-Off

By: MKT Reporter
@themkenyetimes

Worth Noting:

- Mzee Stephen Kamunya Njoroge, 101 will be buried tomorrow at his Ng’arua home in Laikipia West Sub-County, Laikipia County.
- Last evening, Maina invited Kenyans, their religious or political inclination not withstanding to their homestead for the final send-off, of the former freedom fighter.
- Speaking at his Kitengela residence in Kajiado County, Maina said all preparations had finalised and thanked Kenyans for trooping in their homes to condole with them.
- He said thousands of mourners are expected to attend and witness the final journey of the late Kamunya who died early this month.
- Njenga spoke in the company of dozens of former freedom fighters and their descendants who had visited to condole him.



Maina Njenga with members of MMV Associates CLG at his Kitengela home.

Preparations for the burial of the father to former Mungiki Sect chairman Maina Njenga have been finalised. Mzee Stephen Kamunya Njoroge, 101 will be buried tomorrow at his Ng’arua home in Laikipia West Sub-County, Laikipia County. Last evening, Maina invited Kenyans, their religious or political inclination not withstanding to their homestead for the final send-off, of the former freedom fighter. Speaking at his Kitengela residence in Kajiado County, Maina said

all preparations had finalised and thanked Kenyans for trooping in their homes to condole with them. He said thousands of mourners are expected to attend and witness the final journey of the late Kamunya who died early this month. Njenga spoke in the company of dozens of former freedom fighters and their descendants who had visited to condole him. “All is set and we have prepared everything. Let’s give our father and former freedom fighter a befitting

send-off,” he said, remarks that were followed by heavy downpours in the usually dry area. The team, led by Mzee Munyao who represented MMV Associates CLG director James Njuguna Mahuria said thousands of their members will be attending the burial. Njenga thanked the team saying he hoped that the government will speed up their compensation process. Earlier, Njenga had hosted various political leaders led by Kiambu Women Representative Ann Muratha.

Addressing mourners, the MP urged them to support the government saying there was no point of abandoning a system they toiled to put in power. She said it would be foolhardy to leave the government over issues of one person and join the opposition. Dozens of mourners including senior government and opposition figures have been flocking Njenga’s home since the passing on of his father.



Maina Njenga with his father Mzee Kamunya Njoroge in a past photo.



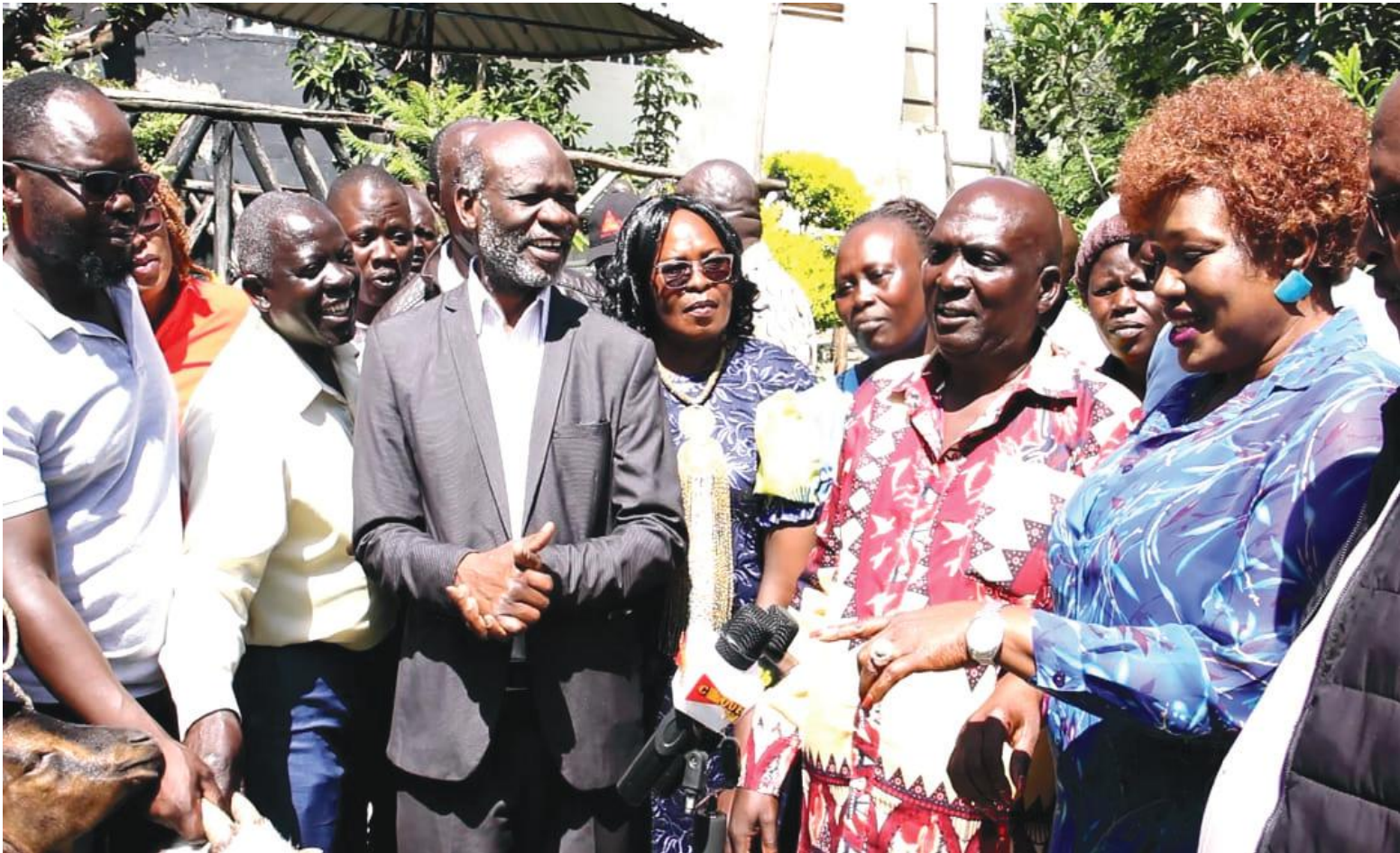
Maina Njenga with Kiambu County MP Ann Muratha at his Kitengela home yesterday. Photos/Courtesy.

Luo Community In Nakuru Backs Governor Kihika’s Re-election Bid

By: Suleiman Mbatiah
@themtkenyentimes

Worth Noting:

- Through its leadership, the community said the Governor had demonstrated a true spirit of devolution and upheld the principles of national unity, fostering inclusion, equitable development, and shared progress, in sharp contrast to her predecessors’ leadership approaches and governance records.
- “You have shown us that Nakuru is a county where merit knows no ethnic boundaries and where every community has a seat at the high table of governance,” said Dr Oga-da Omondi, the secretary general of the Luo Council of Elders – Nakuru Chapter.
- The leadership particularly took note of the appointment of Ms Elga Riaga as the Minister for Sports, Youth, and Gender saying the Governor did not just fill a vacancy but identified a technocrat of high integrity and a leader whose work ethic mirrors her own.



Luo Council of Elders – Nakuru Chapter officials and community members during the press conference at Vienna Hotel in Nakuru City. Photo/Suleiman Mbatiah

The Luo community living in Nakuru County has declared its support for Governor Susan Kihika’s reelection bid, praising her strong development track record and an inclusive leadership style that ‘has ensured fair representation and equal opportunities for all communities.’

Through its leadership, the community said the Governor had demonstrated a true spirit of devolution and upheld the principles of national unity, fostering inclusion, equitable development, and shared progress, in sharp contrast to her predecessors’ leadership approaches and governance records.

“You have shown us that Nakuru is a county where merit knows no ethnic boundaries and where every community has a seat at the high table of governance,” said Dr Oga-da Omondi, the secretary general of the Luo Council of Elders – Nakuru Chapter.

The leadership particularly took note of the appointment of Ms Elga Riaga as the Minister for Sports, Youth, and Gender saying the Governor did not just fill a vacancy but identified a technocrat of high integrity and a leader whose work ethic mirrors her own.

Dr Oga-da highlighted that through this appointment, the Governor had demonstrated that her administration

is a rich mix of different cultures and that Nakuru is a county where merit knows no ethnic boundaries and where every community has a seat at the high table of governance.

Dr Eliud Garry, a council member added that the Luo community recognizes in the Governor a development impetus, a leader who is restless and progressive in matters of the county development which mirrors in the National ecosystem.

He said the community had witnessed the transformation of the county’s infrastructure ecosystem, the revitalization of urban centers, and a renewed sense of hope in the county’s youth, gender and sports sector, citing it as a blueprint for how a cosmopolitan county should be governed.

“You have fostered an ecosystem where we can trade, thrive, and build together in peace and sustainability. This social ecosystem stability is the bedrock upon which the economic prosperity of our County is being built, and for this, we are truly grateful,” he stated.

On her part, Governor Kihika said the Luo community remains an important part of Nakuru County’s diverse and cosmopolitan character, contributing to its growth, unity, and peaceful coexistence.

“I appreciate your gesture and look forward to our continued collaboration as we build a prosperous Nakuru for all,” she stated while thanking the council and the community for the continued support.

Former Kivumbini Councilor Risper Atieno said Governor Kihika had implemented the broad-based government concept long before President William Ruto and former Prime Minister the late Raila Odinga when she picked Ms Josephine Achieng, Ms Elga’s predecessor.

She added that the Luo community is a minority in Nakuru County but with a very strong voting bloc that no politician can dare ignore in the hunt for votes. She pleaded with the Governor to pick more from the community and confirmed those already serving under contract terms.

“Our former Chairman of Luo Council of Elders, the late Kerr Riaga Ogallo, must be very happy in his grave for you having his daughter in top management level in your administration,” she stated while asking Ms Elga to work diligently.

Ms Elga said Governor Kihika’s leadership continued to be tested and affirmed by her courage to champion inclusivity, particularly through fair and representative appointments. She thanked the Governor for believing in

her capabilities.

Accountant and politician, Mr Hezron Okiki appreciated the Governor for picking Ms Elga and advised her to be consulting and making important communications to the community through the established structure. He decried the proliferation of brokers, some even outside the Luo community.

“Luo community is an entity which is independent. That is to say, in case she may require engagement of the Luo community, let her not pass through any proxy. We can gather together, present and address our issues as a community,” he advised.

As a gesture of appreciation, the community presented two goats to the Governor and her family for the festive season. They also thanked her for foodstuffs and monetary donations to needy families during Christmas and New Year celebrations over the years.

A Poet Who Never Called Himself One



The traces of my childhood still live in my mind.
I walked those days carefree, pure and kind.
He comes to me in dreams if only in my sight.
A poet father lived in me, though not in name.

Not a poet by title, yet he moved the pen.
He lit my soul with fire, taught me verse back then.
His honest deeds made many hearts awake.
A poet father lived in me, though not in name.

A loving heart yes that was truly you.
You said, "My child, never be a poet too."

Then why did you place your pen into my hand?
A poet father lived in me, though not in name.

With pain in heart, I write sometimes in silence deep.
Who now will read these verses that I keep?
Tears fall from my eyes, slow and dim.
A poet father lived in me, though not in name.

He passed unaware of sorrow's heavy weight.
With poetry he filled what life left incomplete.
I'll make his name known, my father, to my friends.
A poet father lived in me, though not in name.

Jahongir Murodov
Uzbekistan

Arosat



Thundering inside you like a clatter of cotton,
You cannot find a place to settle yourself.
Your voice can be heard across the world,
Even in its murmur, no one knows.
Silence...

You want to shout from the high mountains,
Let the skies and seas hear it all.
Within the world, from your tiny heart,
Tightening is felt as time passes.
Silence...

Tears stream drop by drop from your eyes,
You cannot find meaning in any of your words.
Your pillow is wet, yet you do not feel it,
Something is seeping down from your face.

Silence...

You want to turn away from everything then,
Like volcanoes inside your heart.
You know, there is no use in any 'remedy',
You seek measures wherever possible.
Silence...

Let the winds blow your thoughts,
Clinging ivy to the branches of trees.
Rocks crush as if your head,
Thorns mercilessly tear at your body.
Silence...

Listen to every sound within,
Even the silence of words, heed it.
If the pen suddenly stops on the paper,
Understand that your path has ended.
Silence...

Uktamova Sevinch Uktam daughter is 2nd student at the Faculty of International Law and Comparative Jurisprudence at Tashkent State University of Law.

We Are Humans



We are humans
We supposed to build relationships with humans not meta humans
Not animals
Not aliens

We supposed to bring peace in the harmonious world we live
But everyday i see
A woman hugging a cat or dog
Feed them
Bath them

While babies are throwing to the centrer

Men talk to their dogs about their problems and prefer to stay with them
Instead to Go out and meet a human being

What is going with this society of screening

We are becoming clones of ourselves
Without emotion
Without feelings

We celebrate and congratulate only our people.... our tribe
What about the others.. people..that THEy

are doing so much about what we call
Good

We must say silent
We must not celebrate their achievements?

Humans need recognition
Individuals need assistance in every level due to the COVID test and everything that follows this experiment

But do you think
Having only relationships with cats and dogs
Is that healthy???

I wonder exactly in what kind of society we are leaving

We don't even speak to eachother
And when we do
We have hate

We have negative thoughts
We have too much inside our hearts
Too much dark and fear

So i tell you now
Get rid of those toxic feelings

Start reading
Start writing
Start dancing
Start laughing

Life is short
EVA Petropoulou Lianou.

It Is Easy To Judge Others Difficult To Realise Our Mistake



It is very easy to judge others
To blame or find fault, thinking we are too perfect

If we point one finger to others
Remember there are three more to point towards us

No one is perfect, so no need to judge anyone
Others' mistakes look too great
self-mistake is considered simple and ignored
Judge not others blindly, just pause a

moment

Wait for sometime,
think of own mistakes and try to rectify
Who are we to judge others?
Just do your work and get along

Even if there are some mistakes,
just let us forget and forgive
Then only we are real human
Let's focus on our own path,
and move forward with love and kindness

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

A Negative Mind Will Never Give You A Positive Future



Your mindset decides your destiny
A negative mindset blocks the brightness
A dark mind cannot build a bright life.
A hopeful mind opens doors to a better

tomorrow.
A healthy mind builds a healthy future.
Positive thoughts create positive outcomes.
A weak mindset weakens the future.
Bright future begins with bright thoughts.
Positivity is the seed of progress.
Hope in the mind creates light in life.

V.RANJANI VEERA
CREATIVE WRITER
GRADUATE TEACHER (English)
PONDICHERRY district
INDIA.

The Magic Wand In My Hand



If the magic wand in my hand
I can abolish the followings
The hungry of the poor
The angry of the clever
The tears of the farmer.
The fears of the scholars.
The suicide of the youngsters
The sexual harassment of the sisters.

If the magic wand in my hand
I will eradicate the followings....
The communal disputes

The blame of inputs
The fake news menace
The bribe of furnace

If the magic wand in my hand
I will weed the followings....

The corrupting person
The inhumanity creations
The political arrogance
The personal vengeance.

If the magic wand in my hand
I will create a new word.
That's other than the heaven

R. Mumtaj begam
BT Assistant
Trichy district
Tamil Nadu, India

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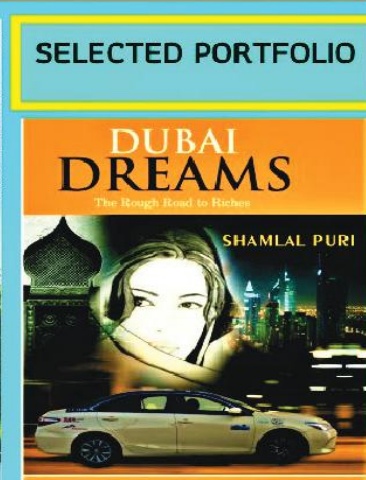
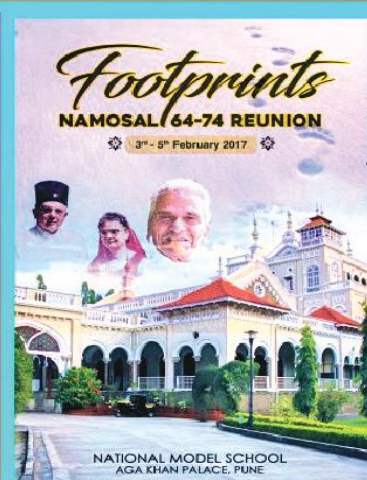
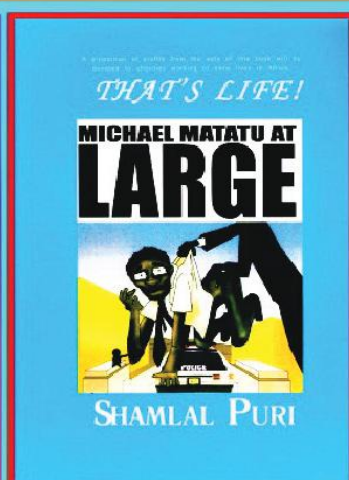
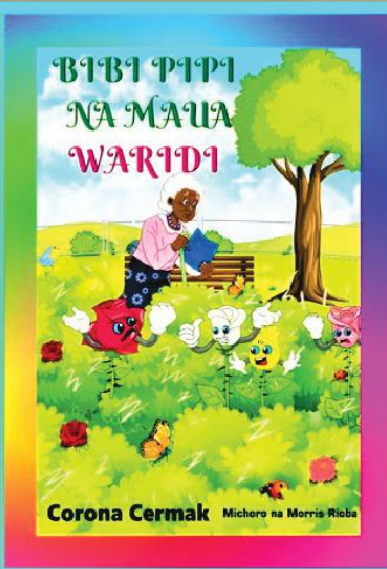
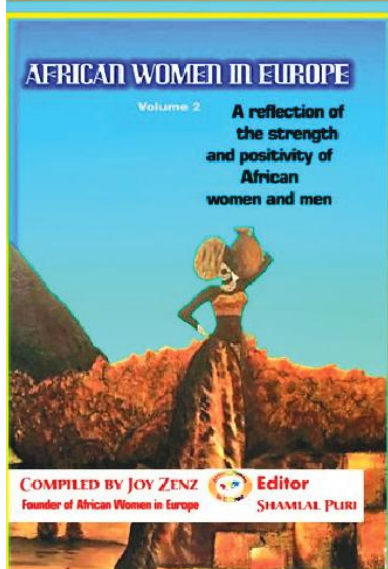
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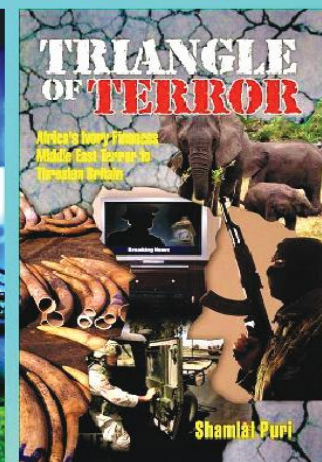
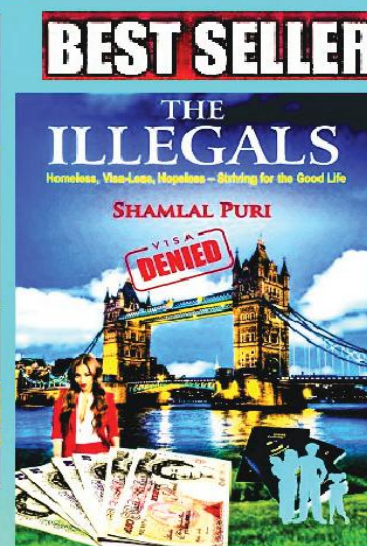
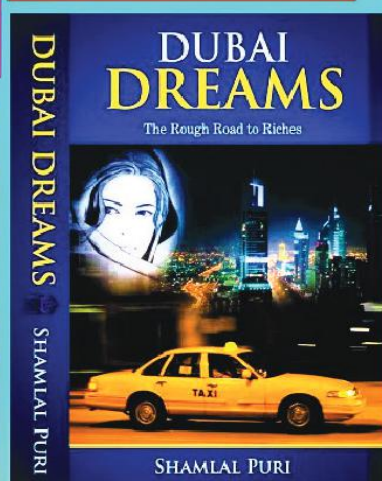
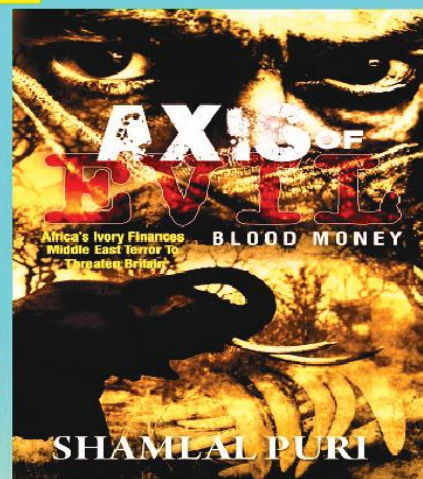
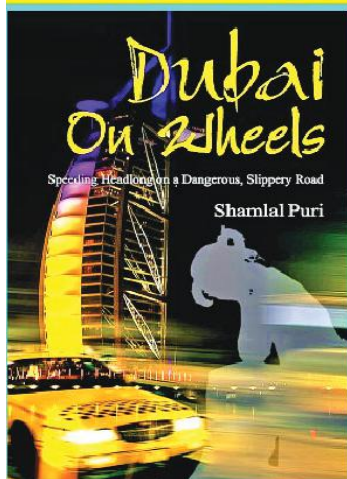
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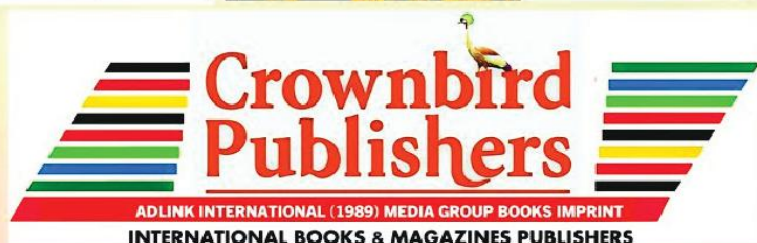
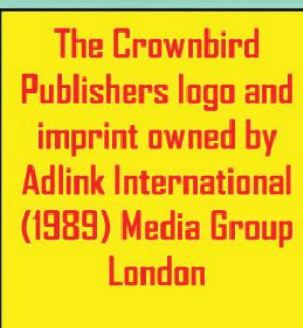
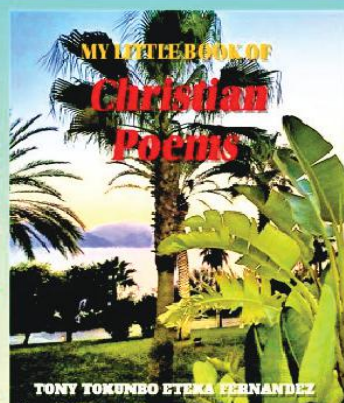
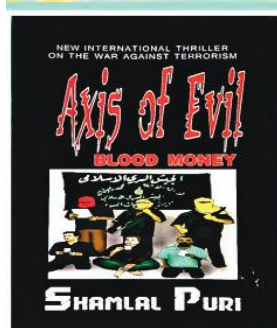
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OPINION

People's Economy First: A Call For Economic Liberation, Dignity And A New Social Compact For Kenya In 2026



By: Ndung'u Wainaina
@themkenyaintimes

Worth Noting:

- Key social sectors—especially education and health—were left in tatters. Our democracy faced persistent assault and regression, leaving Kenya an unequal and only partially free country.
- It has been proven beyond reasonable doubt that President William Ruto has become the greatest existential threat to our Constitution, democracy, and economy. He ferociously abhors dissent, criticism, and independent thought, presiding over a one-man show governance system.
- The so-called Hustler Economy narrative is irrevocably dead. It was a grand political lie. Hustlers have been betrayed, abandoned, and crushed. President Ruto has relapsed into old, dubious politics marked by unhinged and endless promises.

First, I wish all sovereign people of Kenya a healthy, safe, humane, and dignified New Year 2026.

The year 2025 was one of the most difficult periods for the majority of Kenyans. Economic and financial life became deeply traumatizing, painful, and filled with tears. More than 87% of Kenyans were unable to meet their basic needs and financial obligations.

Key social sectors—especially education and health—were left in tatters. Our democracy faced persistent assault and regression, leaving Kenya an unequal and only partially free country.

It has been proven beyond reasonable doubt that President William Ruto has become the greatest existential threat to our Constitution, democracy, and economy. He ferociously abhors dissent, criticism, and independent thought, presiding over a one-man show governance system.

The so-called Hustler Economy narrative is irrevocably dead. It was a grand political lie. Hustlers have been betrayed, abandoned, and crushed. President Ruto has relapsed into old, dubious politics marked by unhinged and endless promises.

Yet Kenya is home to hardworking, industrious, and entrepreneurial people. Kenyans do not give up easily. They turn turbulence into resilience. Their hope is not passive—it is faith in action. This is what continues to sustain the nation.

The country faces enormous challenges: fiscal pressure, economic strain, inequality, bad governance, and limited job opportunities. While macroeconomic indicators suggest stability, the reality on the ground tells a very different story. Microeconomics is dead—crippled by recession and stagflation.

Families and businesses are economically devastated. Incomes, jobs, and livelihoods have not merely been constrained; they have been destroyed.

Kenya is now at high risk of debt distress, with more than 70% of national revenue consumed by unscrupulous debt servicing. The fiscal deficit remains high. Private sector investment has declined sharply. Industries have lost momentum, with many shutting down. Critical sectors—agriculture, construction, and services—are slowing, with further deceleration looming. The so-called Bottom-Up Economic Model has degenerated into a political hoax defined by pain and misery.



Kenya is experiencing growth without broad-based economic transformation. Many citizens are demanding a new direction—one rooted in inclusive, responsive, and people-centered economic growth.

The current growth model—state-led, debt-financed, and hostile to private enterprise—must end.

This is the moment for fundamental economic liberation. Political freedoms are hollow without economic freedoms. Kenya needs a bold Economic Bill of Rights to spark a true economic revolution and establish a new social compact fit for the 21st century.

A different economy is possible. People's Economy First is a new economic and fiscal compact built on debt-free development, human capital, strong institutions, innovation, and entrepreneurial energy.

This is an economy driven by investment in people, productivity, and enterprise—where citizens can earn, save, and prosper under a credible government that enjoys legitimacy and trust. You cannot grow an econo-

my by taxing poverty. Taxation must be the result of value creation, not extraction.

Kenya must undergo a decisive transformation. We have a progressive constitutional order undermined by a rotten political system. This is a pivotal generational, demographic, and political moment—one that must deliver human and economic freedoms beyond survival mode.

The country needs a new economic model anchored on high productivity, skilled and healthy human capital, competitiveness, and innovation. Smarter public spending and efficient capital allocation are essential. Revenue must be mobilized fairly, with lower taxes and minimal regulatory burdens.

The private sector must be empowered by ending excessive government domestic borrowing, removing unnecessary regulations, and reducing the cost of credit. Education and training must be accessible, affordable, and of high quality to build a skilled workforce.

Kenya must position itself as a con-

necting country—leveraging its strategic location, its people, and the emerging multipolar global order—to unlock a new era of economic dignity and limitless possibilities.

Energy costs must fall drastically by dismantling cartel-driven pricing structures and addressing capacity inefficiencies. Strategic investment in green energy and the green economy will be central to the new economic model.

Finally, clean governance and a strong rule of law are the bedrock of the new economy. Kenya requires bold, principled, and unchained political leadership with foresight and courage.

Kenya's future remains bright—but only if we choose people over politics and dignity over deception.

Ndung'u Wainaina is Human Rights Advocate at Africa Council on Human Security. He can be reached on Nwainaina@icpcafrica.org or +254 787707161

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Beyond Call Of Duty: Huduma Centre Mombasa's 3rd Annual Awards Spotlight Stars Of Public Service



By: Odhiambo Jerameel Kevins Owuor
@themkenyentimes



Worth Noting:

- The ceremony is designed to recognize, reward, and celebrate exceptional performance, dedication, and professionalism among its staff throughout the year. The event underscored the Centre's unwavering commitment to fostering a culture of excellence, teamwork, and accountability in public service delivery, setting a benchmark for government institutions across the Coast region and nationwide.
- The awards process was notably inclusive and participatory, with employees themselves nominating and voting for their peers across various categories, reflecting mutual respect and appreciation within the workplace.
- To uphold integrity and transparency, an independent panel was tasked with reviewing and validating the nominations before finalizing the recipients. This democratic approach not only ensured fairness but also strengthened the bonds of camaraderie among staff members, creating an environment where excellence is both recognized and celebrated by those who witness it firsthand.

William James once quipped that the deepest craving of human nature is the need to be appreciated. This words seem true as when they were said. It is in line with this that Huduma Centre Mombasa held their 3rd Annual Awards Ceremony. To have some context, the centre Mombasa which is one of the cities in Kenya. Thousands seeks vital government services on a day to day basis be it a driving license, registering for pension, identity card application name it. Despite the demands a culture of excellence is taking root at Huduma Centre Mombasa. It has to go on record that the Centre was ranked the best in the previous financial year among other Huduma Centres in the country. The award was given to the Centre Manager by the then Cabinet Secretary Bedan Muturi. This was courtesy of strategic leadership, customer centric service and responsiveness to the citizens who seek services in the centre.

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Speaking during the ceremony, Centre Manager Mr. Harison Yogo emphasized that the annual awards initiative serves as a strategic tool for motivating employees and enhancing performance. He noted that recognizing and rewarding exemplary service does not only boost staff morale but also inspires a healthy spirit of competition, innovation, and continuous improvement. Mr. Yogo further stated that when employees feel valued and



appreciated, they are more likely to go above and beyond in their duties, approaching their work with professionalism, efficiency, and integrity. His words resonated throughout the hall, reminding everyone present that exceptional service begins with exceptional recognition.

The ceremony honored outstanding performers across twenty-six categories, each representing a critical facet of service delivery at Huduma Centre Mombasa. Onesmus Makalo from the AGPO desk was crowned Employee of the Year, while the Service Desk of the Year award went to the DCI

desk. The Customer Service Week Service Desk of the Year was claimed by CAS, and the Service Excellence

Beyond Call Of Duty: Huduma Centre Mombasa’s 3rd Annual Awards Spotlight Stars Of Public Service

Contd from page 18

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Award was presented to ICT. Joseph Katana Lela from ICT received the PIT Chair of the Year award, demonstrating leadership in employee welfare and representation.

Rebecca Wausi Mbuva from DCI was recognized with the Leadership Excellence Award for her exemplary guidance and commitment to service delivery. The Collaboration and Partnership Award went to Simeon Mkala Mzame from the Pensions desk, while NRB received the Most Improved Award for their desk’s remarkable transformation. KEPHIS was honored with the Collaboration and Partnership Award for desks, and David Onger, a Centre Assistant, was named Customer Service Champion for his unwavering dedication to client satisfaction. Titus Omudi Vusaka from DCI took home the Huduma Standards Award, while Jamila Mzee Mohamed from NSSF was celebrated with the Integrity and Ethics Award.

Innovation and creativity found their champion in Ruth Deche from SHG, who won the Innovation and Creativity Award. Ruth Bonaneri Asimba from the Information desk was also recognized in this category. Kelvin Kalama Mwatsuma from NRB was named Smartest and Best Groomed Male, while Fridah Mutanu Mutisya, a Centre Assistant, claimed the female category. Boniface Muchangi Ndigwa from the Cyber desk received the Continuous Improvement Award, and Nawwar Mohammed from KUCCPS was honored as Huduma Ambassador of the Year. Laurent Ahsantey from Affirmative won the Climate Champion Award, while Onesmus Muhumwa from CRS took home the Talent Award for Creativity.

Dennis Ngala Chome from NRB was celebrated as the Rising Star, and Chief Inspector Dr. Rhodah Kithuku received the Leadership in Security Affairs award for her exceptional crowd management and investigative skills. Anthony Githinji from Mwalimu AP was recognized for Reliability in Service Excellence. The Awards for Deputy CM Leadership went to Patience Neema Sirya from NRB, Rebecca Wausi Mbuva from DCI, and Onesmus Makalo from AGPO. Panelist Awards were distributed among Dorcas Luvuno from Customer Service, Chesire Noah Kampala from Health, William Matano, Emanuel Okeno Otieno, Florence Waithira Maluti, and Anthony Furaha Karisa. The CM’s Award for exceptional support went to Tawadud Musa

Juma and Dickson Kaingu, both Centre Assistants.

Behind these awards lie powerful stories of transformation and impact. Chief Inspector Dr. Rhodah Kithuku, awarded Leadership in Security Affairs, shared a defining moment from her year when the President declared free IDs, resulting in overwhelming crowds at the centre. “I was called upon, went and talked to them, and they calmed down. Members of the public applauded me for my leadership qualities,” she recalled. Her biggest challenge remains helping clients understand system downtimes, yet the award has given her renewed motivation to continue performing her duties with excellence. Dr. Kithuku’s advice to new staff is simple yet profound: understand your roles and responsibilities and perform them well. Her commitment to customer satisfaction drives her daily, exemplified when she used CCTV footage to investigate and recover a stolen phone for a distressed client.

Nawwar Hammad Mohamed, KUCPS Service Desk officer and Huduma Ambassador of the Year 2025, has witnessed remarkable transformation in how students respond to higher education opportunities. “The response to students showing up at Huduma Centre Mombasa who want to transition into Higher Education is taking a very positive note,” she noted. Her most treasured moments include serving a visually impaired leader and traveling to Kwale School for the Deaf to deliver career talks with her colleague Olivia. As the only KUCCPS officer in the Coast Region, Nawwar has learned creative ways of working smart and enhanced her stakeholder engagement. Her philosophy is deeply rooted in service: “We at Huduma Centre Mombasa are a blessed team who get the opportunity to serve humanity, hence serving Allah in return. So seek happiness in doing that, because the happiness you build in yourself daily will be the happiness you share.”

Rebecca Wausi Mbuva, recipient of both Service Desk of the Year and Leadership Excellence Award, exemplifies the spirit of going beyond the call of duty. She recalls helping a client whose lost ID was critical for accessing medication services. “I wisely handled it by printing a copy and writing a document which later helped her travel for medication. She came back and appreciated me,” Rebecca shared. Her greatest challenge



has been dealing with rude clients while maintaining composure and professionalism. The awards have energized and motivated her tremendously, and she takes immense satisfaction in her work environment, which fuels her pursuit of excellence. One of her proudest achievements was processing a client’s Police Clearance Certificate within the expected time, which secured him employment, a reminder that timely service can transform lives.

The ceremony concluded on an optimistic note, with renewed commitment from staff and management to sustain high standards of service delivery. Mr. Yogo, the Centre Man-

ager, expressed confidence that the recognition accorded to outstanding employees would translate into increased productivity, stronger teamwork, and improved service outcomes in the coming year, reaffirming Huduma Centre Mombasa’s dedication to public service excellence and citizen satisfaction. As the applause faded and staff returned to their desks, one truth remained crystal clear: when you honor those who serve, you elevate the very essence of service itself, creating a ripple effect that touches every citizen who walks through those doors seeking help, hope, and humanity.

The Sacred and The Simple: A Portrait of Francis Atwoli

By: Fr Kongowea
@themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- The first surprise is the rosary. Worn smooth by a lifetime of devotion, its beads are a silent testament to a journey that began not at a union podium, but at a church altar. He speaks of being a Mass server, a boy in a surplice learning the rhythms of reverence.
- That early service seems to have laid a foundation for a different kind of servanthood—one translated from the sanctuary to the societal. The server of the Eucharist became the servant of humanity, his battleground shifting from spiritual to systemic, yet his underlying mission remaining curiously aligned: the elevation of human dignity.
- The rosary, he confides, never departs from him. It is his compass in chaos, his whispered dialogue amidst the shouts of the world.

To sit beside Francis Atwoli, the titan of Kenyan trade unionism, is to prepare for a storm. One expects the thunderous rhetoric of workers’ rights, the lightning bolts of political commentary, the formidable presence of “Bwana” Atwoli, a name that evokes images of packed negotiation rooms and historic strikes. Yet, in a quiet moment, the tempest subsides, revealing not a cleared battlefield, but a cultivated garden—a space of profound faith, gentle humor, and disarming simplicity. It is here, in this intimate landscape, that one discovers the soul of the man, anchored not in power, but in prayer; defined not by title, but by tenderness.

The first surprise is the rosary. Worn smooth by a lifetime of devotion, its beads are a silent testament to a journey that began not at a union podium, but at a church altar. He speaks of being a Mass server, a boy in a surplice learning the rhythms of reverence. That early service seems to have laid a foundation for a different kind of servanthood—one translated from the sanctuary to the societal. The server of the Eucharist became the servant of humanity, his battleground shifting from spiritual to systemic, yet his underlying mission remaining curiously aligned: the elevation of human dignity. The rosary, he confides, never departs from him. It is his compass in chaos, his whispered dialogue amidst the shouts of the world. To bless this object, so intimate and worn, feels less like a ritual and more like honoring the very wellspring of his strength—a sacred spring hidden beneath the volcanic rock of his public persona.

Then comes the story that frames his horizon. He recounts a period of grave illness, a journey to the threshold where life trembles. In that liminal space, he describes a “trounce into heaven,” a phrase both startling and beautiful—a forceful, perhaps unanticipated, glimpse of the eternal. He does not dwell on fanfare or fantastical detail, but on the seismic shift it wrought within. That experience, he says, turned his faith “all heavenly.” It is the key that unlocks his perspective. The fierce negotiations, the political maneuvers, the very earthly struggles he champions are now viewed sub specie aeternitatis—under the aspect of eternity. His fight for better wages, safer conditions, and social justice is not merely a political act; it is a spiritual obligation, a down-payment on a celestial justice. The man who fights so passionately for the here-and-now does



Francis Atwoli with Fr Kongowea

so with his eyes fixed on a hereafter that has, for him, been intimately glimpsed.

This heavenly orientation, paradoxically, grounds him in the most earthly of joys. Speak of his family, and the formidable leader melts. His eyes, so often sharp with analysis, soften with a light that speaks of a different kind of wealth. He is a man unabashedly in love with his wife and devoted to his children, proudly sharing their dedication to ministry, painting a picture of a domestic church that runs parallel to his public cathedral. His simplicity in this realm is indeed enviable. It is not the simplicity of lack, but of clarity—knowing what truly matters. The same man who can command a room of thousands finds his greatest

contentment in the unscripted laughter around a family table, in the quiet rhythms of home. This duality is his balance: the roar of COTU and the rosary’s whisper; the strategist for millions and the patriarch of one small, cherished circle.

And underpinning it all is a great, rumbling humor. He laughs easily, often at himself, disarming tension with a well-timed joke or a self-deprecating anecdote. This humor is the hallmark of a man at peace with his contradictions, who need not wear his power heavily because his worth is secured elsewhere. It is the simplicity of a soul unburdened by the need for pretense.

To understand Francis Atwoli, then, one must hold these two images together: the public champion

with the worn rosary in his pocket; the visionary who saw heaven and therefore fights for a better earth; the lion of labor who is, at heart, a devoted family man. He is a living tapestry woven with threads of sacred commitment and secular crusade, of celestial vision and earthly love. He reminds us that true strength often resides in vulnerability, that the loudest voice can be guided by the quietest prayer, and that the most impactful life on the public stage is often built upon the silent, steadfast altar of home and heaven. In his simplicity lies his complexity, and in his faith, we find the unexpected, beating heart of the struggle.



New Ways Of Celebrating Christmas In A Changing World

Christmas is no longer just about crowded halls, endless feasts, and glittering lights—it is about finding meaning in a world that refuses to stand still. Tradition still anchors the season, but modern life, technology, and global realities are reshaping how we celebrate, forcing us to blend old customs with new rhythms.

The most striking change is the move toward smaller, intimate gatherings. Families now choose closeness over spectacle, preferring quiet dinners at home to noisy parties. This shift has made celebrations more personal, allowing people to treasure shared conversations and simple rituals rather than exhausting preparations.

Technology has become the invisible guest at every table. Video calls bridge continents, online church services unite congregations, and digital greetings replace paper cards. Even when distance separates loved ones, the spirit of Christmas finds a



way to connect.

Gift-giving, too, has evolved. The frenzy of malls is giving way to thoughtful gestures—subscriptions, handmade crafts, or donations in someone’s name. Online shopping has reduced the frantic December rush, making the season calmer and more deliberate.

Equally important is a growing sense of responsibility. Communities are rallying around food drives, charitable causes, and sustainable practices. Reused

decorations, eco-friendly wrapping, and reduced waste reflect a new awareness that generosity must extend to the planet as well.

Yet amid these changes, the essence of Christmas endures. Love, hope, and kindness remain its heartbeat. The world may change, but Christmas reminds us that true celebration is not in the glitter—it is in the grace we share.

By Silas Kipnetich Tenai, Laikipia University

Mental Health Awareness: Breaking The Silence



Mental health is not a luxury—it is the invisible foundation holding our lives together. Yet in Kenya and across the world, it remains one of the most misunderstood aspects of human well-being. Too often, communities dismiss mental struggles as weakness or label those affected as “crazy,” reinforcing stigma that drives silence instead of support.

Mental health is more than the absence of illness; it is the balance of emotional, psychological, and social well-being. Today, countless people battle pressures from unemployment, trauma, and daily stress. Lacking awareness and access

to help, many turn to drugs, alcohol, or destructive coping mechanisms. The consequences are devastating: global reports estimate eight million deaths annually linked to mental disorders, with more than 700,000 attributed to suicide. Behind each statistic is a life cut short, a family broken, and a society diminished.

The path forward demands urgency. Kenya must prioritize mental health as a public health issue, not a private burden. This means investing in counseling services, integrating mental health into primary care, and dismantling harmful stereotypes. But solutions also begin

at home—with families checking in on one another, friends offering support, and individuals practicing self-care through meditation, creativity, or simply unplugging from digital noise.

World Mental Health Day, marked every October 10, reminds us that awareness is the first step toward healing. When we accept that “it is okay not to be okay,” we create space for compassion, resilience, and survival. Silence kills; awareness saves.

By James Saitoti, Laikipia University

Reasons Behind The Rise Of Crime Rate In Kenya



Crime in Kenya is no longer a distant headline—it is a daily reality gnawing at the nation’s conscience. From petty theft to violent robberies, the surge in criminal activity reflects deeper social fractures that demand urgent attention.

At the heart of the crisis lies unemployment and economic hardship. A generation of young people, locked out of stable jobs, is increasingly vulnerable to the lure of crime. The soaring cost of living only compounds desperation, pushing many into theft, drug trafficking, and other illicit activities as survival strategies.

Drug and substance abuse further fuels the fire. Alcohol,

binge, and hard drugs impair judgment and embolden violence, with communities awash in narcotics often recording spikes in assault and domestic disputes.

Institutional weaknesses magnify the problem. Corruption, delayed investigations, and sluggish court processes erode public trust while emboldening offenders. Inadequate policing, particularly in informal settlements and rural areas, leaves citizens exposed and criminals unchecked.

Family breakdown adds another layer of vulnerability. Poor parenting, domestic strife, and the absence of positive role models leave many young people adrift,

susceptible to negative influences that normalize crime.

Addressing this crisis requires more than rhetoric. Kenya must invest in job creation, strengthen law enforcement, empower youth, and build community-driven prevention programs. Crime thrives where hope dies—and restoring hope is the surest weapon against lawlessness.

The nation cannot afford complacency; tackling crime is not just about safety, it is about safeguarding Kenya’s future.

By Deborah Soi, Laikipia University

The Curse Of Being Good And Unknown



In a world obsessed with noise, quiet competence has become its own punishment. Those who show up early, work diligently, and refine their craft in silence often find themselves overlooked—not because they lack talent, but because they lack visibility.

Society loudly praises merit yet privately rewards familiarity. Skill is celebrated in speeches, but shortcuts and connections open doors faster than discipline ever could. Being good at what you do is admirable; being known by the right people is profitable. And so, capable individuals wait as opportunities

speed past them, hijacked by louder, less prepared voices.

Talent should speak for itself, but in reality it whispers in rooms where volume matters more than value. Those who broadcast every minor achievement are mistaken for trailblazers, while those who quietly deliver results are asked why they remain invisible. The irony is cruel: we are told to trust the process, only to watch the process bend for others.

This culture teaches a dangerous lesson—that packaging beats substance, that visibility outweighs value. Patience begins to feel like naivety, and

integrity like a self-imposed handicap. Yet many still choose excellence, not because the system is fair, but because abandoning it feels like a deeper betrayal of self.

Being unknown does not mean being unworthy. History has a way of correcting imbalances, though not always on our timeline. Trends fade, noise dies, but skill endures. And when preparation finally meets opportunity, it does not shout—it simply arrives.

By Levi's Wangamati

SPORTS
NEWSPHOTOS
SCORES
OPINIONS
STATISTICS
SCHEDULES
BREAKING NEWS

Sports >> *Riyad Mahrez has emerged as the early scoring leader at the 2025 CAF Africa Cup of Nations in Morocco, while Nigeria have underlined their title credentials by becoming the tournament's most productive attacking side

Nigeria Set The Pace As Mahrez Leads The Way After Two AFCON 2025 Group Rounds



By Agencies

Riyad Mahrez has emerged as the early scoring leader at the 2025 CAF Africa Cup of Nations in Morocco, while Nigeria have underlined their title credentials by becoming the tournament's most productive attacking side after two rounds of group-stage matches.

Mahrez, the Algerian captain, tops the scoring chart with three goals, continuing his reputation as a decisive figure on the continental stage.

His clinical finishing has helped Algeria secure maximum points from their opening two games, placing them firmly among the early qualifiers for the knockout phase.

Close behind Mahrez is a tightly packed chasing group on two goals, featuring players from across the continent.

Nigeria's Ademola Lookman, Egypt's Mohamed Salah, Morocco's Brahim Díaz, Tunisia's Elias Achouri, Mali's Lassine Sinayoko and Côte d'Ivoire's Amad Diallo have all made decisive contributions, reflecting the spread of attacking influence at this year's tournament.

Collectively, the competition has produced 53 goals in 24 matches, an average of 2.21 goals per game, striking a balance between attacking ambition and tactical discipline.

That balance is perhaps best illustrated by Nigeria, who lead the attacking metrics with five goals, 12 shots on target and an average 61% possession, the highest recorded so far.

Nigeria's efficiency has translated into results, with the Super Eagles joining Egypt and Algeria as the only teams to confirm qualification for the Round of 16

after two matches.

Their attacking cohesion has been matched by creativity, with Lookman and Alex Iwobi each registering two assists, alongside Tunisia's Hannibal Mejbri.

At the opposite end of the scale, Botswana's struggles have been stark. They have conceded four goals, failed to score, managed only three shots on target, and averaged 32% possession, underlining the fine margins that separate competitiveness from elimination at this level.

Discipline has also been a defining feature of the group stage so far. Referees have issued 83 yellow cards and three red cards, a reflection of the physical intensity and emotional stakes that rise as qualification scenarios tighten.

Suspensions and cautions could yet play a significant role in shaping the final group standings.

As the tournament moves into its final round of group fixtures, the statistics provide a revealing backdrop rather than a conclusion.

While some teams have already secured safe passage, many others remain locked in battles for automatic qualification or a place among the best third-placed finishers.

With goals flowing, creative players influencing matches and discipline becoming increasingly important, the numbers suggest a final round driven as much by control and composure as by flair — a familiar AFCON pattern where the margins only grow finer as the knockout stage approaches.

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >>> *Uganda and Tanzania will co-host the 2027 Africa Cup of Nations with neighbours Kenya and the countries are getting a sense of how much progress they must still make on the pitch at the ongoing edition in Morocco.

Uganda, Tanzania Measure Progress To Be Made Before Hosting 2027 AFCON



Uganda's midfielder Allan Okello reacts after missing a penalty during the Africa Cup of Nations (CAN) Group C football match between Uganda and Tanzania at Al Medina Stadium in Rabat on December 27, 2025. (Photo by SEBASTIEN BOZON / AFP).

By AFP

Uganda and Tanzania will co-host the 2027 Africa Cup of Nations with neighbours Kenya and the countries are getting a sense of how much progress they must still make on the pitch at the ongoing edition in Morocco.

The East African nations have long struggled to compete with the major continental powers and both face early elimination from this AFCON in decisive group games on Tuesday.

Uganda face Nigeria and Tanzania meet Tunisia with both the Cranes and the Taifa Stars almost certainly need wins to have a chance of making the last 16.

Uganda have recorded just one victory in nine matches across three separate AFCON tournaments since reaching the 1978 final. Tanzania are appearing at just their fourth Cup of Nations and

have never won a game.

The sides drew 1-1 in Rabat on Saturday, with Uganda equalizing and then missing a late penalty.

"I told the players we are the fourth-weakest team in the Africa Cup of Nations but we have played two games on another level," Tanzania coach Miguel Angel Gamondi told AFP.

The Argentinian was appointed on the eve of the tournament, arriving from Tanzanian club Singida Black Stars.

Tanzania sit 112th in the FIFA rankings and 27th in Africa despite an estimated population of more than 70 million which is the fourth-largest on the continent. They began their AFCON with a narrow loss to Nigeria.

- 'Change the mentality' -

"My goal is to change the mentality, show we can compete, put a winning mindset in these players,

and if we are 112 now then I hope in a short time we can be lower than 100," Gamondi said.

There were signs of progress in World Cup qualifying as Tanzania finished third in their group, but Gamondi knows improvements must be made.

"One of the problems in Tanzania is that clubs can field 12 foreign players," added Gamondi, saying that is why Dar es Salaam giants Young Africans and Simba are among the continent's top sides.

"Infrastructure is also a big problem. There are no good quality pitches. But for me, the biggest problem is the lack of youth development.

"What we need in Tanzania is to produce good players who can go to Europe and compete and develop there, because in the local league...there's no competition and players cannot grow up."

Tanzania's biggest star is Ally

Samatta, the France-based ex-Aston Villa striker. Most of their AFCON squad plays at home while they also have players from the English fourth and fifth tiers.

Uganda rank a significantly higher. They are 17th in Africa and 85th in the world, but their squad also lacks elite experience.

"We have a very young team and my responsibility is to build a team for 2027 so I'm giving them the chance to get more experience," said Uganda's Belgian coach Paul Put.

"For 2027 we have to be in good shape with good players."

At least they are here gaining that experience — 113th-ranked Kenya have failed to qualify for the last three AFCON tournaments.

SPORTS NEWS



PHOTOS
SCORES
OPINIONS
STATISTICS
SCHEDULES
BREAKING NEWS





The Only Award At The International Literature Festival In Turkey Was Given To An Azerbaijani Scientist And Poet

Tarana Turan Rahimli, a poet, literary critic, educator and journalist, Doctor of Philology, Associate Professor, who holds a unique place in the scientific and literary environment of Azerbaijan, has been awarded the 2025 International Turkish Language Service Award by KIBATEK - Cyprus, Iraq, Balkans, Eurasia Turkish Literatures Association, one of the influential international literary organizations of the Turkic world. This award is presented to scientists and artists who have been working long-term, systematically and consistently to promote the Turkish language, Turkic world literatures and pan-Turkic cultural values on an international scale.

KIBATEK's 50th International Literature Festival took place in Izmir and Aydin, Turkey, on December 12-14, 2025. On the first day of the festival, December 12, at an official ceremony held at the Culture and Arts Factory under the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Turkey, Assoc. Prof. Tarana Turan Rahimli was awarded the 2025 Turkish Language Service Award. The fact that the award was presented on the eve of December 15 - World Turkic Language Family Day made this award even more meaningful and symbolic. The award, which expresses the unifying power of the Turkish language, its being a bearer of common memory and cultural identity, is considered a high international award for the poet-scientist's many years of scientific and literary activity.

According to the official statement of the KIBATEK Board of Directors, Doctor of Philology, Assoc. Prof. Tarana Turan Rahimli was awarded this highest award for her fundamental scientific research in the field of Turkic World literatures, the strong literary and scientific ties she established between Azerbaijani and Turkish literatures, and her consistent activity aimed at developing relations between the Turkic World and world literatures. Her scientific and artistic works, published in more than 60 countries in Asia, Europe, America and Africa, were evaluated as a significant contribution to the global promotion of the

Turkish language and literature. At the same time, her continuous support for the international scientific, literary and cultural projects of the organization as an active member of the KIBATEK family for many years was also emphasized.

In the official "Award Statement" presented together with the 2025 International Turkish Language Service Award, the organization's leadership noted that it was proud to present this award to Doctor of Philology, Associate Professor Tarana Turan Rahimli, and that it believed that her intensive contributions to the Turkish language, Turkic world literature and Turkology would continue.

During the festival days, poets, writers and scholars representing Turkey, Azerbaijan, Moldova (Gagauzia), Bulgaria, Kosovo, Romania, Northern Cyprus, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iraq and Iran came together and demonstrated the unifying mission of poetry, literature and culture.

In this sense, the 50th KIBATEK International Literature Festival was remembered as an important cultural platform covering the vast geography of the Turkic world.

Sharing her thoughts on the award, Tarana Turan Rahimli said that she accepted this award with great pride and responsibility: "It was a great honor for me to be awarded the Service Award for the Turkish Language on the first day of the 50th International Literature Festival of KIBATEK, on December 12, at the Culture and Arts Factory of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Turkey. I experienced the joy of the festival with its double grandeur. The fact that this award was presented on the eve of the World Turkic Language Family Day on December 15 increased its moral value even more. I express my endless gratitude to everyone who contributed to this process, especially the honorary president of the Cyprus, Iraq, Balkans, Eurasian Turkish Literatures Association, Fayyaz Saglam. May our path be clear to justify this great trust given on behalf of 50 countries with more extensive scientific and literary works."



Tarana Turan Rahimli (left) was awarded the 2025 Turkish Language Service Award

The Azerbaijani people longed for their second homeland, Turkey, for 70 years during the Soviet era. Therefore, after Azerbaijan gained its independence in the 90s, we immediately aspired to reunite with our second homeland. And first of all, we established literary and cultural relations with Turkey. We heard about the research of our teacher Fayyaz Saglam on the literature of the Western Thracian Turks and the Balkan Turks in general in 1998. In 1999, I wrote my first article on the literary and scientific activities of Fayyaz Saglam in the newspaper "Azerbaijan Mubazirleri" in 1999 and published it in the newspaper "Azerbaijan Mubazirleri" where I was the editor. I was invited to the Turkish Embassy in connection with that article, and the responsible employee of the embassy, Umit

Yardim bey, encouraged me for my research article on the devoted researcher of Western Thracian literature and Balkan literature, Fayyaz Saglam.

In 2008, I participated in the KIBATEK poetry festival held in Baku at the Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University, where I was a teacher. Since then, I have been regularly invited to KIBATEK events and I have participated with great pride.

KIBATEK has been serving an important mission of promoting and introducing Turkish literature and our great Turkish language all over the world for 27 years. Its path to success covers a vast geography from Turkey to the Caucasus, Russia, the Balkans, Europe, and faraway Australia. How happy we are if, as members of KIBATEK, we have made a small contribution

to the Turkic world, its culture and literature on this long and honorable path! Among the international awards I have received from up to 60 countries around the world, the KIBATEK award has a different place."

The awarding of the Turkish Language Service Award to Doctor of Philology, Associate Professor Tarana Turan Rahimli by KIBATEK is not only a personal achievement of a scientist and poet, but also an indicator of the international prestige of Azerbaijani science and literature. This award once again confirms that the work done to preserve, develop and pass on the Turkish language to future generations is recognized at a high international level.