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**News > Counties Waive Business Licence Fees For NYOTA Youth**


P. 8. Governors from Nyeri, Nyandarua, Kirinyaga, and Murang'a counties have announced a full-year business license fee waiver for beneficiaries of the National Youth Opportunities Towards Advancement (NYOTA) programme.



**News > ODM Touts Readiness For 2027 Elections, Signals Talks With UDA**

P. 12. The Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) has officially launched its preparations for the 2027 general elections, aiming not just to contest the vote but to form the next government.

# Ruto Defends 50K NYOTA Grants

 **President William Ruto has cautioned leaders against politicising government programmes aimed at transforming the lives of Kenyans. The President faulted those criticising the government's National Youth Opportunities Towards Advancement (NYOTA) programme for disbursing KSh50,000, an amount they say is little. He noted that those opposing the programme have no better alternatives, nor have they done anything to empower the youth in the many years they have served in government.**




President William Ruto

STORY ON PAGE 9

## NEXT GENERATION CLASSIFY

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"ALL BUSINESSES ONE PLATFORM"

# Ruto Rolls Out Major Education, Business, Infrastructure And Youth Empowerment Drive In Nyeri

By: MKT Reporter  
 @themtkenyatimes

*Some Of The Moments As Captured In Pictures*

President William Ruto yesterday outlined a broad package of investments in education, business, infrastructure and youth empowerment aimed at accelerating Kenya's national transformation, with Nyeri County among the key beneficiaries.

He said the government is expanding access to quality education through increased funding to schools, the hiring of 100,000 teachers and the construction of 23,000 classrooms and 1,600 laboratories across the country. In addition, funding has been provided for the promotion of 25,000 teachers to boost morale and improve service delivery.

Speaking during the official opening of a new tuition block at PCEA Nyamachaki Comprehensive School in Nyeri Town, the President announced a further KSh20 million for the expansion of the school's facilities to accommodate more learners.

On infrastructure, President Ruto inspected the 84-kilometre Kenol-Sagana-Marua road at the Marua Interchange, noting that it forms part of the Trans-African Highway and will improve safety, trade and regional integration. He said more than eight major roads worth KSh4 billion are being upgraded in Nyeri County this financial year, alongside plans to build a dual carriageway from Marua to Nyeri Town and extend it to Chaka in Kieni.

The President also commissioned the Karatina Marigiti Modern Market and launched the disbursement of KSh173.2 million in NYOTA business start-up capital to 6,982 young entrepreneurs from Nyeri, Murang'a, Nyandarua and Kirinyaga counties. He said the NYOTA programme targets 820,000 youth through business support, training, mentorship, recognition of prior learning and savings, as part of a wider effort to place young people at the centre of Kenya's development.



**Editor's Desk**

**The Mt Kenya Times**

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## NEWS IN BRIEF



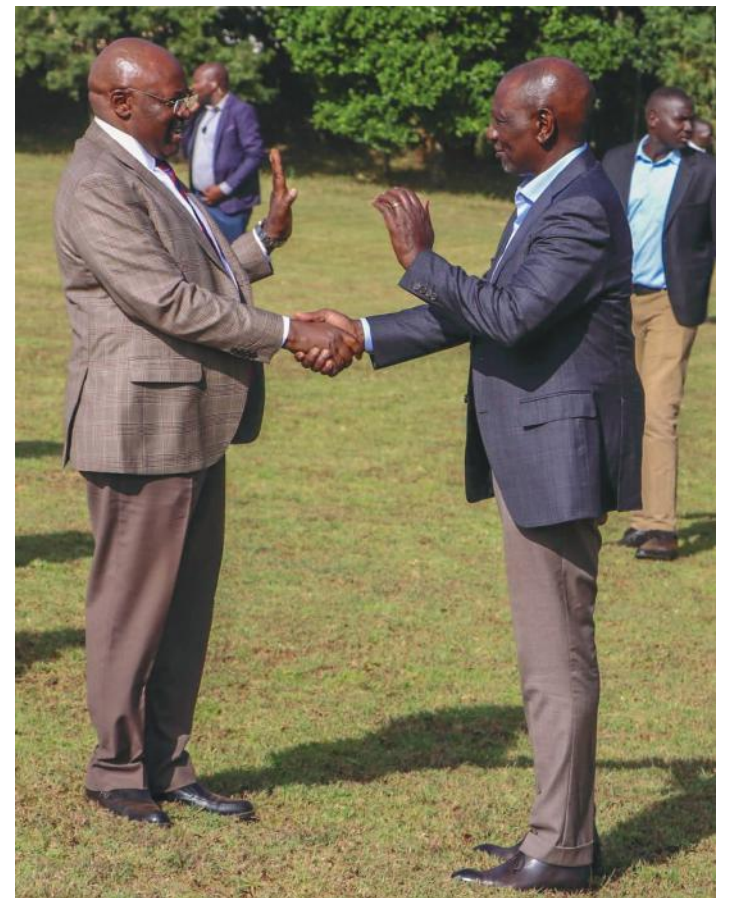
Chief Justice and President of the Supreme Court of Kenya, Lady Justice Martha Koome congratulating Mr. Ali Abdullahi Surraw following his swearing-in yesterday as the new Commission Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of the Salaries and Remuneration Commission (SRC). Mr. Surraw brings to the role nearly 20 years of experience in public service leadership, governance and strategic management, which is expected to strengthen the Commission's capacity to deliver on its mandate. The SRC welcomed his appointment and expressed confidence that his leadership will play a key role in advancing the Commission's constitutional responsibilities in setting and advising on the remuneration and benefits of state and public officers.



Thirty-six people were yesterday arraigned at the Gatundu Law Courts over a fracas that occurred at AIPCA Kiamuoria Church in Gatundu South in an event that was attended by several opposition leaders, led by former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua. All the accused denied the charges before Chief Magistrate Mbula Mosyoka. Eighteen of them were charged with preparation to commit a felony and released on a cash bail of KSh10,000 each. The other 18 face three counts of malicious damage to property and were freed on a cash bail of KSh20,000 each after pleading not guilty. The case will be heard on March 31 2026. A six-member defence team led by human rights lawyers Njomo John Murimi and Soyinka Lempaa representing the accused.



Kenya remains a welcoming and secure country, President William Ruto has said, noting that it has hosted tens of thousands of refugees and migrants over the decades while working closely with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for more than 40 years. Kenya has provided safety, dignity and a stable home to people fleeing conflict and instability in the region. President Ruto said the Government last year launched the Shirika Plan to integrate refugees into host communities through self-reliant settlements and socio-economic inclusion, moving them from dependency to self-reliance. He called on the international community to support the programme as it is rolled out. The President spoke after meeting UN High Commissioner for Refugees Barham Salih at State Lodge Sagana in Nyeri County.



Othaya MP Wambugu Wainaina (left) is seen bidding goodbye to President William Ruto after he hosted him at his Kanyange home near Othaya town on Sunday. The president, his deputy Kithure Kindiki and several other nations and county governments officials were in the constituency for a church service at ACK Kariki Church where the Head of State also commission a new plaza for the church before addressing an impromptu public meeting in the area. During the meeting, the MP hailed the Kenya Kwanza administration for fulfilling pledges it made to his constituents. He singled out rehabilitation of roads, power connectivity, provision of water, construction of Othaya stadium, three markets and equipping of Mwai Kibaki Referral Hospital. Locals residents applauded their MP for lobbying to have several development projects in the area.

Security agencies have intensified operations against the illegal production and sale of second-generation alcohol in Uasin Gishu County. Speaking at Eldoret Central Police Station, County Commissioner Dr. Eddyson Nyale said authorities will not tolerate the sale of unlicensed or adulterated liquor, especially as universities reopen and student numbers rise. He warned that outlets found flouting the law will have their licences revoked and premises shut down. Dr. Nyale said what traders display must be exactly what they sell. He added that the national and county governments are working together to enforce licensing and protect the public from harmful brews.

# Nairobi To Host Landmark Africa Forward Summit As France Shifts Global Engagement Strategy

By: MKT Reporter  
 @themkenyatimes

**Worth Noting:**

- The high-level meeting, scheduled for May, will be co-hosted by Kenya and France.
- It will be the first time the Africa Forward Summit is held outside France and the first time it takes place in a non-Francophone African country; an unmistakable signal that Paris wants to broaden and rebalance its partnerships with Africa.
- Announcing the decision, President Macron said the gathering would place Africa at the heart of global problem-solving rather than on the sidelines.
- Leaders and representatives from Africa, Europe and Asia are expected to attend, creating a wide platform for dialogue on some of the most urgent challenges facing the world.

French President Emmanuel Macron has named Nairobi as the venue for the 2026 Africa Forward Summit, marking a major turning point in how the international community engages with the African continent.

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Leaders and representatives from Africa, Europe and Asia are expected to attend, creating a wide platform for dialogue on some of the most urgent challenges facing the world.

The agenda will cover climate action, clean and affordable energy, artificial intelligence, industrial development, the blue economy, agriculture, health, and reforms to the international financial system.

The French President emphasized that African voices will drive the discussions, with the aim of building more equal and respectful partnerships instead of the traditional top-down approach.

In the past, France-Africa summits were largely hosted in French cities. One of the most notable was the 2021 Montpellier summit, which focused on youth, culture, education and entrepreneurship.

By moving the 2026 edition to Nairobi, France is deliberately breaking with tradition and signaling a readiness to share leadership with its African partners.

Kenya's selection as host reflects its rising profile on the regional and global stage.

The country has become increasingly active in diplomacy, peace mediation and economic integration, particularly within East Africa.

Nairobi has also been a strong advocate of the African Continental Free Trade Area, which seeks to boost trade within the continent.

As a city, Nairobi is already a major international hub, hosting numerous global and regional organizations, including several United Nations agencies.

Its modern conference facilities, hotels and transport infrastructure make it well suited for a large-scale international summit.



File image of President William Ruto with Emmanuel Macron.

Kenya and France enjoy a long-standing and diverse partnership that stretches back decades.

France was among the early European countries to establish strong diplomatic and economic links with Kenya after independence. Over the years, the two nations have worked closely on trade, security, education and environmental protection. French firms have invested heavily in Kenyan infrastructure, transport and renewable energy, including wind and solar projects that support Kenya's green energy transition.

Cultural and educational ties have also grown, with French institutions and language centers operating in Kenya and Kenyan students studying in France.

These people-to-people links have helped build mutual understanding and cooperation beyond government-to-government relations. Hosting the Africa Forward Summit

is expected to further strengthen these ties.

The event could attract new French and international investments while also boosting Kenya's local economy through tourism, hospitality, transport and other services linked to the summit.

The themes to be discussed mirror the pressing realities of today's world. Climate change continues to threaten food security and water resources. Energy remains central as countries look for cleaner and more reliable power. Artificial intelligence offers new opportunities in health, farming and education if applied responsibly. Industrial growth can create much-needed jobs, while the blue economy highlights the sustainable use of oceans and lakes. Reforms to the global financial system could also help African nations access fairer funding without sinking into unsustainable debt.

President Macron has described the Nairobi summit as an opportunity to rethink and reset relations between Africa, Europe and Asia. Kenyan President William Ruto has welcomed the plan, viewing it as a chance to advance more balanced and mutually beneficial cooperation on the global stage.

# CS Kagwe: Stop Voting In Anger, Start Investing In Power

By: WMW

@themtkenyatimes

## Worth Noting:

- Speaking at ACK St Paul's Church in Kariki, Othaya on Sunday where he joined President William Ruto and his deputy Kithure Kindiki, the CS urged residents to adopt a more strategic approach to leadership and elections, one that prioritises stability, experience and long-term development.
- He noted that Mount Kenya has built a reputation for frequently turning against its own leaders, often using elections to punish them rather than to strengthen their political standing. Kagwe said this habit undermines the region's bargaining power at the national level and denies it the benefits that come with seniority and continuity in leadership.

Agriculture and Livestock Development Cabinet Secretary Mutahi Kagwe has called on voters in the Mount Kenya region to abandon what he described as emotion-driven and protest-style politics, warning that it weakens the region's influence and limits its ability to benefit from national power.

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"Development does not come from tearing down leaders every few years. It comes when you give good leaders time to grow, to gain influence and to complete what they started," he said.

"Leadership is grown, not rented for one term and throw away," he said, comparing frequent leadership changes to uprooting crops before harvest as he further warned that no community can enjoy a meaningful harvest if it never allows its investments to bear fruit.

He added that other voting blocs across the country have gained political and economic strength precisely because they protect and nurture their leaders over time, allowing them to build networks, experience and leverage that eventually benefit their peo-



Agriculture and Livestock Development CS Mutahi Kagwe welcoming President William Ruto in Othaya last Sunday. Looking on is area MP Wambugu Wainaina. Photo/Courtesy.

ple.

Kagwe also urged Mount Kenya to think carefully about its place in national politics and to avoid choices driven by anger or resentment that end up isolating the region from government.

He praised President Ruto for what he described as political maturity and inclusivity, citing his own appointment to the powerful Agriculture and Livestock Development ministry despite having supported a different political

side in previous contests.

"That is leadership guided by wisdom, not revenge. It shows this government is focused on building a nation rather than settling old political scores," Kagwe said.

The CS called on church leaders to pray for wisdom among both voters and leaders, saying Kenya needs a culture of decision-making anchored on the future, not on bitterness or political retaliation.

He reaffirmed that he is firmly part of

the government and fully aligned with President Ruto's Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda, pledging to support the administration beyond the next general election.

"This is about continuity, stability and building institutions that last," Kagwe said.

"That is how Mount Kenya and the entire country will achieve lasting prosperity."

The

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The Mt Kenya Times



10th

*Anniversary  
Celebration*

# Counties Waive Business Licence Fees For NYOTA Youth

By: Wangari Mwangi and Samuel Maina  
 @themkenyatimes

**Worth Noting:**

- The move is aimed at reducing the cost of doing business, allowing more funds to be channelled into purchasing stock and improving the survival rate of youth-led businesses.
- Nyeri Governor Mutahi Kahiga explained that the counties' first priority is to provide space for youth to operate their businesses, followed by waiving business licenses for one year to help them "hit the ground running".
- Nyandarua Governor Dr. Kiarie Badilisha emphasised that the county will assist entrepreneurs in identifying and accessing markets for their products.
- He encouraged youth to adopt the slogan Buy Nyandarua, Build Nyandarua, promising that the county would act as a first consumer to support local businesses.
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Governors from Nyeri, Nyandarua, Kirinyaga, and Murang'a counties have announced a full-year business license fee waiver for beneficiaries of the National Youth Opportunities Towards Advancement (NYOTA) programme.

In addition to the waiver, the counties will provide business support training and capacity building to ensure that the youth are well-equipped to run their enterprises.

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He encouraged youth to adopt the slogan Buy Nyandarua, Build Nyandarua, promising that the county would act as a first consumer to support local businesses.

The announcement was made at the Kabiru-ini showground in Nyeri during the NYOTA start-up capital disbursement forum, presided over by President William Ruto.

During the event, approximately 6,000 youth from the four counties received Sh22,000 of the total Sh50,000 start-up capital to start their businesses.

Additionally, Sh3,000 was deposited into their National Social Security Fund (NSSF) savings accounts.

The NYOTA programme is a flagship youth empowerment initiative jointly funded by the government and the World Bank. The five-year programme is valued at Sh5 billion and is nationally targeting 820,000 vulnerable and unemployed youth from 1,450 wards. Eligible applicants are aged 18-29 years, with the age limit extended to 35 for people with disabilities.

The programme is structured around three main pillars. The first, On-the-Job Experience, will place 90,000 youth with employers and artisans to gain work experience while receiving a Sh6,000 monthly stipend for six months.

The second component, Recognition of Prior Learning, will allow 20,000 youth to receive formal acknowledgement of skills acquired through

informal training. In addition, 600,000 youth will be trained on how to participate in government procurement opportunities.

The third pillar, Business Support, aims to provide up to Sh50,000 in start-up capital to 100,000 youth to launch their own businesses.

The initiative also emphasises mentorship, business training, and market access support to improve business success rates.

Speaking at the forum, Youth, Creative Economy, and Sports Cabinet Secretary Salim Mvurya hailed the programme as a "game-changer" that addresses the unemployment crisis by offering financial support and policy incentives that promote self-employment and job creation.

Mvurya noted that, unlike previous youth initiatives, NYOTA has been redesigned to be transparent and technology-driven, making it easier to track and manage.

He congratulated the 6,000 beneficiaries from the four counties for taking the initiative to apply for the business support component, urging more youth to proactively take advantage of government opportunities.

"I want to assure the beneficiaries that all implementing agencies of the NYOTA programme are committed to ensuring accessibility so that youth can fully benefit. We will continue mobilising young people to participate in transforming Kenya into a first-world country," Mvurya said.

The programme's business waiver and support initiatives are expected



President William Ruto and his deputy Kithure Kindiki walking to the podium at Kabiru-ini ASK Grounds yesterday. Photos/Courtesy

to stimulate economic activity at the county level while fostering youth entrepreneurship.

By reducing start-up costs and providing market linkages, the counties aim to create a favourable business environment for young entrepreneurs.

The NYOTA programme, through its comprehensive approach of training, mentorship, and financial support, is designed to equip the youth with practical skills, access to capital, and opportunities to thrive in the formal

economy. Officials believe that this model can significantly reduce youth unemployment while promoting sustainable local enterprise growth.

The forum in Nyeri not only marked the disbursement of start-up capital but also underscored the government's commitment to youth empowerment, economic inclusion, and the development of a new generation of entrepreneurs capable of driving local and national growth.



# Ruto Defends 50K NYOTA Grants

By: PCS and WMW  
 @themkenyatimes



## Worth Noting:

- The President spoke yesterday during the launch of the disbursement of KSh173.2 million NYOTA business start-up capital to 6,982 young entrepreneurs from Nyeri, Murang'a, Nyandarua and Kirinyaga counties at Kabiru-ini ASK Grounds near Nyeri town.
- He was accompanied by Deputy President Kithure Kindiki, Governors Mutahi Kahiga (Nyeri) and Kiarie Badilisha (Nyandarua), Cabinet Secretaries Salim Mvurya (Sports), Alice Wahome (Lands), Mutahi Kagwe (Agriculture) and Alfred Mutua (Labour)
- National Assembly Majority Leader Kimani Ichung'wah, among other leaders.
- Nyeri leaders present included senator Wahome Wamatinga, Women Rep Rahab Mukami and MPs Maina Mathenge, Wambugu Wainaina, Eric Wamumbi and Njoroge Wainaina.
- Several Principal Secretaries also attended the ceremony that preceded other several engagements the President had in Nyeri Town and Mathira constituencies.

President William Ruto has cautioned leaders against politicising government programmes aimed at transforming the lives of Kenyans.

The President faulted those criticising the government's National Youth Opportunities Towards Advancement (NYOTA) programme for disbursing KSh50,000, an amount they say is little.

He noted that those opposing the programme have no better alternatives, nor have they done anything to empower the youth in the many years they have served in government.

He reminded them not to despise humble beginnings.

"If you think Ksh 50,000 is little money, it is little to you and your family because you are rich. With Kshs 50,000 you can begin a business," he said.

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Several Principal Secretaries also attended the ceremony that preceded other several engagements the President had in Nyeri Town and Mathira constituencies.

The President explained that the NYOTA programme is part of the wider plan by the government to expand opportunities for the youth.

The President said the NYOTA programme targets 820,000 young people in four key pillars: business support, recognition of prior learning, training and mentorship, and savings.

Other programmes he mentioned include the Affordable Housing Programme, jobs abroad and digital jobs that are giving young people real pathways to opportunity and enterprise.



President William Ruto launching NYOTA programme in Nyeri yesterday as Nyandarua governor Kiarie Badilisha looks on.

He said the Affordable Housing Programme has created over 500,000 job opportunities for the youth.

On jobs abroad, the President said 500,000 young people have secured jobs, increasing diaspora remittances by KSh130 billion in the past two years.

The President also said the government is revamping the country's digital infrastructure.

He said 30,000km of fibre optic cable have already been laid, with a target of 100,000km in the next few years.

He said this will enable one million young people to work in the digital economy. Already, 300,000 are earning livelihoods in the digital space today.

The goal, President Ruto explained, is to position young people at the centre of the country's national agenda and tap into their energy, skills, knowledge and expertise to drive the country's transformation.

He said the government has taken deliberate action not only to strengthen the country's education system.

He pointed out that Kenya's young, educated and skilled human capital is the most important asset the country possesses.

"We must get value for the KSh700 billion we spend on education by making sure that the young people completing school, college and university are placed in areas where they can contribute to the progress

of our nation," he said.

He added that the government has hired 100,000 teachers and built 23,000 classrooms and 1,600 laboratories across the country.

The President also said the government has provided the funding required for the promotion of 25,000 teachers to enhance their careers.

"Education is the single biggest empowerment we can give to the young people of our nation," he said.

The President appealed to the youth to take advantage of the opportunities created by the government.

Later, President Ruto opened a tuition block at PCEA Nyamachaki Comprehensive School in Nyeri Town. He said the government will provide another KSh20 million to the school for the expansion of facilities to accommodate more learners.

At the Marua Interchange in Nyeri, he inspected the ongoing construction of the 84km Kenol-Sagana-Marua road.

"In Nyeri County, more than eight major roads are being upgraded this financial year at a cost of KSh4 billion," he said.

He said the government will also build a dual carriageway from the Marua Interchange to Nyeri Town and extend it to Chaka trading centre in Kieni Constituency.

He also commissioned the Karatina Marigiti Modern Market and inspected the construction of the Karatina Affordable Housing Project.

Deputy President Kindiki told young people to invest the business

capital support wisely, noting that how finances are invested matters more than the amount invested.

"It is possible to start small and grow big," he said.

The DP said the government is keen on investing in and supporting young people differently, noting that not all youth are gifted in the same way.

Mr Mvurya said the NYOTA programme is targeting young entrepreneurs to uplift their hustles to become employers.

He said the programme has been implemented in an open and accountable manner devoid of human interference.

Mr Ichung'wah said the government is empowering the youth to be the next generation of business leaders, industrialists and captains of industry, who will take Kenya to a first world economy.

"Let me encourage young people. As you conduct your businesses, please save. We have been told by economists that investments are a function of savings," he added.

# Sealed For Success: How Oxygen-Free Fermentation Is Lifting Kenyan Coffee To New Heights



By: Henry Kinyua  
@themkenyatimes

Kenya's reputation for producing some of the world's most distinctive coffees has long rested on altitude, variety, and meticulous processing. Today, another layer is being added to that reputation as farmers and processors increasingly turn to controlled fermentation to deliberately shape flavour.

At the centre of this quiet revolution is anaerobic fermentation, a method that is redefining how Kenyan coffee tastes—and how it is valued in the specialty market.

Unlike traditional fermentation, which takes place in open tanks or

channels where oxygen is present, anaerobic fermentation relies on the complete exclusion of oxygen. Coffee cherries are placed in sealed containers designed to keep air out while allowing gases to escape through a one-way valve. Inside these airtight vessels, naturally occurring yeast begins to interact with sugars in the coffee fruit.

As fermentation progresses, carbon dioxide is released. The pressure created pushes out any remaining oxygen, creating a stable, oxygen-free environment that prevents oxidation. This level of control allows processors to guide fermentation with greater precision, typically over 24, 48, or 72 hours, depending on the flavour profile they aim to achieve.

The impact on the cup has been striking. Coffees produced through anaerobic fermentation are often described as intense and expressive, with pronounced fruit-forward notes, floral aromas, and bright, lively acidity.

For roasters and buyers operating in the specialty segment, these attributes

offer clear differentiation on the cupping table—and increasingly translate into price premiums at the market.

A growing number of progressive farmers in Kenya are experimenting with sealed fermentation systems, adapting the technique to local conditions and varieties. Among the most frequently cited success stories is Ngacha Farm in Kirinyaga County, where anaerobic fermentation has been used consistently to produce highly distinctive lots. These coffees have earned strong recognition within specialty circles, reinforcing the idea that innovation at farm level can unlock new value without compromising Kenya's core quality identity.

Anaerobic fermentation is giving Kenyan producers a powerful new tool—one where fermentation is no longer merely a routine step, but a deliberate craft that seals in flavour and elevates the final cup.

## ANAEROBIC FERMENTATION

Sealing in Flavour for Better Coffee Prices

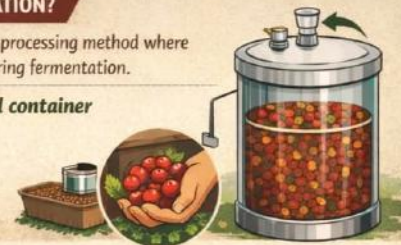
How controlled fermentation is creating premium Kenyan coffee

### WHAT IS ANAEROBIC FERMENTATION?

Anaerobic fermentation is a coffee processing method where oxygen is completely removed during fermentation.

Coffee cherries are placed in a sealed container with a one-way valve:

→ Gas out, no air in.



### HOW THE PROCESS WORKS:

- 1 Pick ripe cherries only
- 2 Seal the coffee in a tank or barrel
- 3 Oxygen is pushed out
- 4 Control fermentation time



Do NOT open the container during fermentation!

### WHAT FLAVOURS DOES IT CREATE?

- Fruit-forward Flavours
- Floral Aromas
- Bright Acidity
- Unique & Intense Cups



- ✓ Premium prices from buyers
- ✓ Coffee stands out in cupping
- ✓ Small lots, high profit
- ✓ Better market differentiation

The Mt. Kenya Times



# High-Profile Graft Cases Take Centre Stage In Courts This Week

By: MKT Correspondent  
 @themtkenyentimes

**Worth Noting:**

- **Leading the docket is the case against former Roads Permanent Secretary Engineer Michael Kamau, which will come up for mention at the Milimani Anti-Corruption Court on Friday.**
- **Kamau, alongside two co-accused, is charged with willful failure to comply with public finance management procedures. The charges stem from allegations that he disregarded a road design prepared by Engiconsult Consulting Engineers Limited at a cost of KSh33.3 million and instead signed a memorandum of understanding with a resident engineer to redesign the same project. Investigators say the move violated established procurement and financial guidelines, exposing public funds to loss.**
- **Next in focus is the case involving former Nairobi Governor Mike Mbuvi Sonko, who will appear in court today together with 21 others.**

Several high-profile corruption and economic crimes cases will be before Kenyan courts this week as the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) intensifies its crackdown on graft and abuse of public office.

Leading the docket is the case against former Roads Permanent Secretary Engineer Michael Kamau, which will come up for mention at the Milimani Anti-Corruption Court on Friday.

Kamau, alongside two co-accused, is charged with willful failure to comply with public finance management procedures. The charges stem from allegations that he disregarded a road design prepared by Engiconsult Consulting Engineers Limited at a cost of KSh33.3 million and instead signed a memorandum of understanding with a resident engineer to redesign the same project. Investigators say the move violated established procurement and financial guidelines, exposing public funds to loss.

Next in focus is the case involving former Nairobi Governor Mike Mbuvi Sonko, who will appear in court today together with 21 others.

They face charges of conflict of interest in connection with the alleged embezzlement of KSh24.1 million from the Nairobi County Government. The EACC alleges that Sonko and his co-accused abused their positions to influence county contracts for personal benefit, resulting in the diversion of public money meant for service delivery.

Another major case scheduled for mention today is that of Benjamin Obuya Njoga, the former Deputy Commissioner General of Prisons, and 13 co-accused.

They are charged with abuse of office, fraudulent acquisition of public property and money laundering. According to investigators, senior officers at the State Department for Correctional Services conspired with sole proprietors to fraudulently acquire KSh302 million from the department through a complex scheme involving fictitious or inflated payments.

In the energy sector, judgment is expected on Friday in the case of Silas Masinde Simiyu and eight others before the Milimani Anti-Corruption Court.

The accused are charged with willful failure to comply with procurement laws over the irregular award of the Rig Move Services tender at the Geothermal Development Company (GDC), which was allegedly priced at KSh42.7 million per move.

The ruling is expected to determine responsibility for what prosecutors



Eng. Michael Kamau

describe as a grossly inflated and unlawful contract.

Two other cases will be heard at the Kitui Law Courts on the same day. Philip Muithya Yumbya is facing charges of receiving a bribe of KSh5,000 to issue a letter preserving the status quo in a land dispute pending investigations. Prosecutors say the payment was intended to improperly influence official action in

the sensitive land matter.

In a separate Kitui case, Richard Muthoka and five others will be heard on charges of willful failure to comply with procurement laws relating to the irregular supply of digital and mobile machines to the Kitui County Government's Ministry of Health and Sanitation.

The EACC said the cases demonstrate its sustained focus on pro-

urement fraud, abuse of office, bribery and financial crimes, which continue to drain public resources and undermine service delivery. The Commission reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring that all suspects are prosecuted and that public funds lost through corruption are recovered as the cases proceed through the courts.



Mike Mbuvi Sonko

# ODM Touts Readiness For 2027 Elections, Signals Talks With UDA

By: MKT Correspondent  
 @themkenyatimes

The Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) has officially launched its preparations for the 2027 general elections, aiming not just to contest the vote but to form the next government.

Speaking after the party's Central Committee meeting in Kilifi County, Party Leader Dr. Oburu Odinga said the party is moving early to position itself for victory. The meeting came shortly after ODM's successful 20th anniversary celebrations, which drew broad national participation and showcased the party's enduring relevance in Kenya's political landscape.

The party also celebrated its strong showing in the November 2025 by-elections, winning all three parliamentary seats it contested. The Central Committee described the victories as a clear demonstration of voter confidence in ODM candidates.

Acknowledging that time is of the essence, the party has already directed



Dr Oburu Odinga briefing journalists yesterday..

that preparations for next year's elections begin immediately. These include policy development, candidate readiness, organizational strengthening, and coalition building.

On the Ten-Point Agenda, the party reaffirmed its commitment to compen-

sating victims of public protests, with any funds to be channeled through recognized institutions, specifically the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR), after courts ruled the initially proposed panel unlawful.



Members of ODM Central Committee during yesterday's meeting. Photos/Courtesy.

Signaling its coalition strategy, ODM has mandated its leadership to initiate structured negotiations with other political formations, starting with the ruling United Democratic Alliance (UDA). These talks will run alongside consultations with party members, culminating in the National Delegates Convention.

The party also highlighted its clean financial record, marking twenty con-

secutive years of compliance with the Political Parties Act, earning recognition from both the Auditor General and the Registrar of Political Parties.

The Kilifi meeting underscored that ODM is fully mobilized, strategically focused, and ready to play a leading role in shaping Kenya's political future as the 2027 elections approach.

# Six Iranians Plead Guilty To KSh8.2 billion Meth Haul

By: MKT Correspondent  
 @themkenyatimes

Six Iranian nationals yesterday admitted in a Mombasa court to trafficking more than one tonne of methamphetamine valued at KSh8.2 billion that was seized on the high seas.

The suspects; Jaseem Darzadeh Nia, Nadeem Jadgeal, Hassan Baloch, Raheem Baksh, Imran Baloch and Imtiyaz Daryay pleaded guilty before Chief Magistrate Anthony Mwicigi at the Shanzu Law Courts.

They were accused of jointly trafficking 1,036 kilogrammes of the highly addictive drug, in an incident that marked one of Kenya's largest maritime drug busts in recent years.

According to court documents, the crime took place between October 17 and 20, 2025, about 350 nautical miles east of the Port of Mombasa, in international waters.

The drugs were discovered hidden aboard a vessel identified as

Mashaallah, which prosecutors said was operating without nationality; a method frequently used by global criminal networks to avoid maritime law enforcement and prosecution.

The six were arrested on October 25, 2025, after security agencies intercepted the vessel and carried out detailed searches.

They were produced in court yesterday following lengthy investigations involving several agencies.

After recording the guilty pleas, the prosecution requested a two-week adjournment to compile the full facts of the case and prepare sentencing submissions.

The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions also asked that the next hearing be held on January 30, 2026, at the Kenya Navy base in Mtongwé, where the intercepted ship and the massive drug haul are currently being kept.

The court was further urged to remand the accused at Shimo La Tewa Prison until the matter is heard.

The court granted the requests.



The Iranian nationals in the Shanzu court yesterday. Photo/Courtesy.

# Kenya Steps Up Push For Local Vaccine Manufacturing As BioVax Enters Critical Phase

By: MKT Correspondent

@themtkenyatimes

**Worth Noting:**

- Duale said the COVID-19 pandemic had exposed the vulnerability of countries that rely heavily on imported vaccines and essential medicines, with global supply chains quickly breaking down at the height of the crisis.
- He noted that Kenya BioVax was therefore established as a strategic national asset to close this gap and secure the country's long-term health and pharmaceutical needs.
- The Cabinet Secretary was briefed on key milestones already achieved. Phase I of the vaccine manufacturing facility; fully funded by the Government has been completed, marking a major infrastructure and readiness milestone.
- The project has now entered Phase II, which will focus on integrating systems and installing critical equipment, including advanced fill-and-finish lines and high-level quality-control laboratories required for vaccine and biologics production.

Kenya has taken a major step towards vaccine self-reliance and stronger national health security following high-level talks between Health Cabinet Secretary Aden Duale and the leadership of the Kenya BioVax Institute at its Embakasi facility in Nairobi.

During his first official visit to the Institute, CS Duale met the Board, senior management and staff of BioVax to review progress and reaffirm the Government's commitment to local vaccine manufacturing as a central pillar of Universal Health Coverage (UHC), pandemic preparedness and industrial growth.

Duale said the COVID-19 pandemic had exposed the vulnerability of countries that rely heavily on imported vaccines and essential medicines, with global supply chains quickly breaking down at the height of the crisis.

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BioVax also outlined its roadmap towards producing Kenya's first trial batch of locally manufactured vaccines by the end of 2027, a development expected to significantly reduce reliance on imports while positioning the country as a pharmaceutical manufacturing hub for the region.

A major regulatory milestone was also highlighted: Kenya's attainment of World Health Organization (WHO) Maturity Level 3, achieved through the work of the Pharmacy and Poisons Board and the National Quality Control Laboratory. The status confirms that Kenya's regulatory systems meet internationally recognised standards, boosting confidence in locally manufactured medicines and vaccines while enhancing the country's attractiveness to global health and pharmaceutical partners.

The Institute is also set to benefit from financing and technical support through the World Bank-supported Health Emergency Preparedness, Response and Resilience (HEPRR)



A staff at Kenya BioVax Institute taking Health CS and his team through vaccine manufacturing process. Photos/Courtesy.

Programme, which is designed to strengthen Kenya's capacity to respond to public health emergencies and scale up pharmaceutical production.

Duale said the BioVax project is closely aligned with Kenya's Vision 2030 development blueprint, the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA) and Africa CDC's push for Africa-led vaccine manu-

facturing. Beyond health security, he noted, the initiative will support industrialisation, create skilled jobs and contribute to economic growth.

In his engagement with staff, the CS emphasised the importance of integrity, accountability and transparency in public service, saying these values, anchored in Article 232 of the Constitution, are critical to delivering people-centred and effective healthcare.

The Cabinet Secretary was hosted by BioVax Board Chairperson Dr Charles Githinji and Chief Executive Officer Dr Wesley Ronoh. He was accompanied by among others, Principal Secretary for Medical Services Dr Ouma Oluga, Director-General for Health Dr Patrick Amoth and World Bank representative Dr Bernard Olayo.



During the consultative meeting.

## There Is Nothing Wrong In Bending To Help Someone



This is a godly gesture one can do to help others  
If we bend for others' sake  
We don't lose anything, we raise higher and higher

Let's be flexible in many ways  
Bending to help is a sign of courage and strength  
Not weakness and low  
Let's bend boldly, lend a helping hand to all  
Be a strong support

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

There is nothing wrong in bending to help someone

We don't lose anything by bending  
To do good and to help others

All members will hold a special place in their heart  
If you lend a helping hand

## Fences And Freedoms



Norman Mwale [The PenPusher]

They fence our land, our lives divide and rule, the colonial game we fight for scraps, crumbs

Our ancestors' spirits roam wild and free, while we're trapped in mental colonies, cased in glass

We trespass, seeking space to breathe, to be, to belong but fences follow us, everywhere.

## Every Master Was Once A Beginner



Practice fueled the fire 🔥 they'd build,  
Mistakes were lessons, skills started to spill.  
They rose with grit, they learned with time 🧡,  
From beginner to master, they climbed the prime.

Your turn now, where will you start? 🚀

SRIPRIYA R  
BT ENGLISH GHSS KOLAPAKKAM  
KANCHIPURAM DISTRICT TAMILNADU  
INDIA

Beginnings hold the spark of might ✨,  
Every master started with a first light.  
Steps were shaky, hands were raw 😊,  
But dreams were big, and hearts were in awe.

## It Is Better To Forget Ungrateful People On A Good Day



Forgiving and forgetting is humanity  
Stinging to others is a scorpion's nature.  
Rescuing the scorpion from the water  
Was the tendency of a mature man.

Sticking with past bad things is not good.  
Forgetting ungrateful things makes the day into good.

Having generous thoughts on others  
Makes the day into the heart of mother's.

Looking for mistakes in others is not good,  
Finding good on others as fatherhood!  
Finding a small quantity of juice in a jar  
Is wiser than seeing empty space.

Rajesh Kanna B N

RAJESH KANNA. B N  
M.Sc., M.A., M.A., B.Ed., PGD G&C, CELT.,  
BT Asst  
GMHSCHOOL,  
TIRUR,  
TIRUVALLUR DISTRICT.

## Why Is Reading Among Young People Declining?



First of all, I think that the opportunities that parents create for their children and the ability to bring them to maturity are among the ideas mentioned. Because, because of their parents, talented young people in most families cannot show their talents, can aspire to great heights, but cannot achieve them. Therefore, the opinion and support of parents are in the first place.

Secondly, there is the issue of social networks. You tube, Instagram, Telegram, Snapchat, Twitter... There are not enough fingers to count them, and they lead young people to mischief and waste time. Do you think that a child who watches videos on his phone for 4 hours a day will become Thomas Edison? Or would a child who plays PUBG for 2-3 hours and is on his phone all day long become Einstein? No, such young people will not benefit their families or society. If we use less of the Internet networks that have made us dependent on them, we can certainly develop reading and contribute to the development of our country. After all, as the head of our state said: "Our children must be stronger, more educated and, of course, braver than us."

Ismatova Gulsevar Akobir  
Bukhara State University  
1st year student, Faculty of Philology

The development of society, the prosperity of the state, of course, depends on the potential and knowledge of its youth. Knowledge, thinking and a set of mature thoughts are embodied in books. However, in recent years, the culture of reading among young people has been declining. What is the reason for this? Is it social networks that are dragging us into their trap? Or is it living on the money of parents? Maybe it is the idea that "You cannot achieve progress and happiness with books"?

The fact is that all this depends on a person's way of thinking, his social background. There is a proverb among Tajiks: "Peshi dek shini dek meshi, Peshi bek shini bek meshi". This can be understood in such a way that the society and atmosphere in which a person lives can encourage him to read books or make him a slave to books.

## Silent Storm



Though it may wound, though it may bend,  
I remain myself until the end.

When the battle fades, I breathe in peace,  
I brush my heart, let the struggles cease.  
Through every storm, I remain whole,  
A human still, with a steadfast soul.

Munavvar Tlewbaeva was born on June 6, 2005, in Chimboy District of the Republic of Karakalpakstan. She graduated from the academic lyceum of NMPI with a specialization in social and humanitarian sciences. Currently, she is a third-year student at the Chimboy Faculty of Berdakh Karakalpak State University, majoring in Philology and Language Teaching (Karakalpak language).

She is fluent in Karakalpak, Uzbek, and Turkish. She has a strong interest in creative writing, enjoys writing poems and short stories, and is actively engaged in translation.

Inside me rages a silent storm,  
I long to win, to rise, to transform.  
I laugh outside, hide the pain,  
Yet inside, it fights again and again.

It whispers : Do, lie, cry or deceive,  
I choose with patience, truth to achieve.

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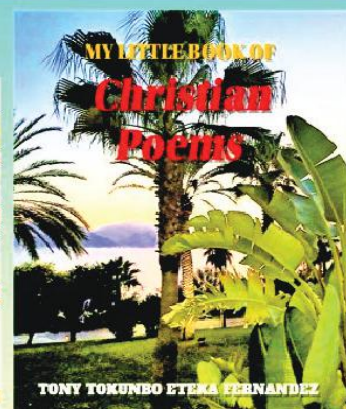
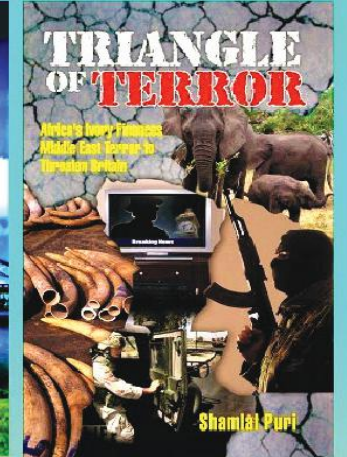
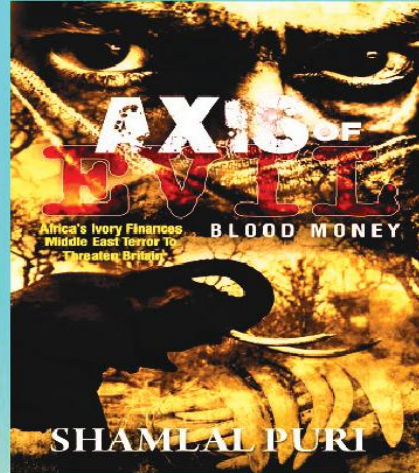
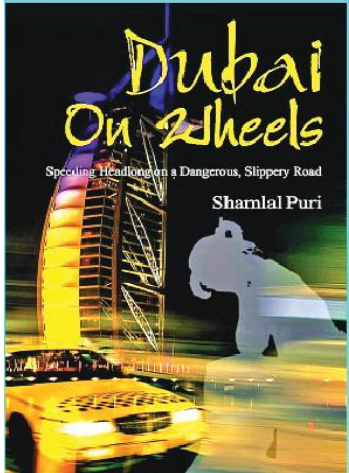
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## BUSINESS

# High Hopes, Broken Homes: Buyers Cry Fraud As Asali Estate Project Stalls

By: John Kamau  
 @themtkenyatimes

## Worth Noting:

- The real estate sector, long viewed as a pillar of Kenya's economic growth, has increasingly come under scrutiny as complaints of fraud, non-disclosure and breach of contract continue to surface.
- Regulators, consumer groups and courts are grappling with disputes pitting individual buyers against powerful developers, exposing gaps in oversight and accountability within the industry.
- Josephat Ndambo and Evelyn Kimani had high hopes when they committed their savings to Unit 24 at Asali Estate, a housing project developed by Mizizi Africa Homes in Machakos County.
- Like many off-plan buyers, they believed they were buying not just a house, but peace of mind.



A section of the project in Donyo Sabuk, Machakos County.

For many Kenyans, owning a home is the ultimate marker of stability and success.

In recent years, off-plan housing developments have promised to make that dream attainable, offering modern homes at relatively affordable prices.

But beneath the glossy brochures and artist impressions, a growing number of buyers are discovering a darker reality of missed deadlines, stalled projects and elusive title deeds.

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Josephat Ndambo and Evelyn Kimani had high hopes when they committed their savings to Unit 24 at Asali Estate, a housing project developed by Mizizi Africa Homes in Machakos

County.

Like many off-plan buyers, they believed they were buying not just a house, but peace of mind.

Instead, they now say the developer failed to deliver the home as agreed, forcing them to construct it themselves.

Documents seen by the writer show that the complainants entered into a sale agreement with Mizizi Africa Homes on November 20, 2023.

Under the agreement, the developer was to construct a three-bedroom, all-en-suite bungalow on a portion of land identified as Donyo Sabuk/Komarock/1/20788, following subdivision, and to issue the purchasers with a freehold title together with one share in Asali Estate Management Company.

The purchase price for the unit was set at KSh 4.25 million, exclusive of legal and title transfer charges.

Receipts indicate that by April 25, 2024, Ndambo and Kimani had paid a total of KSh 2.5 million through various transactions, including an initial deposit of KSh 2,040,000 acknowledged in the agreement.

Despite these payments, the complainants allege that Mizizi Africa Homes did not deliver the house as promised.

They further claim that repeated efforts to obtain their title deed have been unsuccessful, raising fears over the security of their investment.

Their concerns deepened after a recent search at the lands registry reportedly revealed that the property is subject to a caution linked to a longstanding court dispute at the Milimani Law Courts, an issue they say was never disclosed to them at the time of purchase.

The case mirrors a growing pattern in the real estate sector, where buyers discover encumbrances on land only after committing substantial sums of money.

Industry analysts warn that such practices, if left unchecked, amount to fraud and threaten to erode public confidence in off-plan developments.

Mizizi Africa Homes has, however, pushed back against the allegations.

In a statement, the company's chief executive officer George Mburu attributed the stalled project to what he

described as the purchasers' failure to honour agreed payment arrangements.

"As rightfully indicated by the clientele, failure to honour their pledge to finance the project directly via the company account as per the contractual obligation has stifled the company resources, leading to stalling of the said project," Mburu said.

He added that delays have been exacerbated by rising material and labour costs over time, making it necessary to re-evaluate the project.

Mburu described off-plan construction as inherently volatile and called for goodwill and dialogue between all parties to bring the matter to a close.

Even as the parties trade blame, the dispute underscores broader challenges facing Kenya's real estate industry of weak consumer protection, limited disclosure and the imbalance of power between developers and individual buyers.

# Mararo Applauds KJSEA, KCSE Stars, Champions Skills-Based Education As Key To Kenya's Future

By: MKT Reporter  
 @themkenyaintimes

Youthful entrepreneur and philanthropist Nick Mararo has sent a message of congratulations to the 2025 KCSE candidates who posted outstanding results, as well as KJSEA learners preparing to move into senior school, urging them to see education as a gateway to opportunity rather than a finish line.

In a statement issued after the release of the national results, Mararo singled out students from his home county of Nyeri and the wider Mount Kenya region, praising them for their determination and consistency in an education system that is undergoing rapid change. He said the region has continued to produce disciplined and competitive learners and encouraged all students across the country to remain focused, bold and open to new possibilities.

The Base Yetu Chief Executive Officer said Kenya must prioritize full transition to senior school while at the same time strengthening technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions.

He argued that in today's economy, practical skills and adaptability often matter more than academic papers alone, especially in a world where Kenyan youth can compete for jobs far beyond the country's borders.

Mararo called on both government and private sector players to invest heavily in modern training centers that equip young people with real-world, marketable skills.

He noted that industries such as construction, renewable energy, information technology, manufacturing and automotive engineering are struggling to find enough qualified workers, even as thousands of young people remain unemployed.

According to him, the solution lies in upgrading TVET colleges, aligning their curricula with international standards, and ensuring that students gain hands-on experience through structured attachments and partnerships with industry. "When training is practical and relevant, young people become job creators and global competitors," he said.

Beyond advocacy, Mararo has been actively supporting youth through initiatives run under the Base Yetu brand.

These include enterprise incubation programs for young entrepreneurs, community sports projects aimed at talent development, and digital skills training that prepares youth for the online economy.

He also founded Lipalikes, a technology-driven platform designed to make payments easier and more flexible, especially for small businesses



Nick Mararo addressing a youth forum in Nyeri in the past. Photo/Courtesy.

## Worth Noting:

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and young traders entering the market.

Mararo believes that blending entrepreneurship, technology and sports offers a powerful pathway for transforming young lives. He has often described the three as a "growth engine" capable of unlocking income, confidence and opportunity far faster than traditional approaches alone.

Widely regarded as one of the region's rising business figures, Mararo has built his reputation around youth

empowerment, innovation and grassroots engagement.

His philanthropic work has included sponsoring sports tournaments, supporting school programs and helping young startups access training and mentorship.

Looking ahead to the 2027 General Election, Mararo is preparing to contest the Nyeri senatorial seat.

He has been presenting himself as a new-generation leader focused on development, transparency and eco-

nomie opportunity. Education, job creation and the modernization of county institutions form the backbone of his political message as he seeks to connect with young voters and working families.

By linking academic success with practical skills and entrepreneurship, Mararo says Kenya can turn its large youth population into its greatest economic strength rather than a growing challenge.

# Echoes Of 2027: Why The LSK Elections Could Foreshadow Kenya's Political Future



By: Odhiambo Jerameel Kevins Owuor  
@themkenyatimes

The Law Society of Kenya (LSK) declared several key leadership positions vacant last year, paving the way for elections on February 19, 2026, to elect a new President, Vice-President, and representatives to the Council, including general membership seats. This follows the announcement made in November 2025, in compliance with the Law Society of Kenya Act, which require formal notice of vacancies at least three months before the polls. Incumbent President Faith Odhiambo, who assumed office in March 2024 after a competitive victory, is constitutionally barred from seeking re-election due to the society's two-year, non-renewable term limit for the presidency. Her deputy, Mwaura Kabata, along with prominent challengers such as Senior Counsel Charles Kanjama and legal strategist Peter Wanyama, have already declared their intentions to contest the top seat, signaling a highly anticipated and potentially divisive race.

This structured transition arrives at a pivotal moment when many within the bar express growing disillusionment with the LSK Council's direction in recent cycles. A recurring critique is that the society has increasingly functioned as a personal platform for ambition rather than a robust defender of the profession's collective interests. Some long-serving or recurring figures are seen as treating Council positions as a "breeding ground" to revive waning careers or leverage networks for financial and influential gains perceptions that have fueled widespread calls for accountability and ethical renewal among ordinary advocates.

A telling sign of shifting tides is the apparent reluctance of most current Council members to pursue re-election for the 2026–2028 term. While the full slate of nominees continues to emerge as the nomination window progresses (with deadlines in early January 2026), the limited visibility of incumbents stepping forward suggests deep-seated fatigue with prolonged tenure and entrenched leadership. This mass stepping aside

echoes broader frustrations: many advocates argue that successive terms often two or even three breed complacency, entrench networks, and divert focus from core mandates like member welfare, continuing legal education, and fearless advocacy on national issues.

In Kenya's democratic framework, lawyers hold an indispensable role as custodians of the Constitution, frontline defenders against executive overreach, and architects of justice in a nation frequently tested by governance crises, corruption scandals, and threats to the rule of law. When the LSK itself grapples with accusations of self-perpetuation and opportunism, it risks eroding its credibility to hold national leaders accountable. The February 2026 elections thus transcend internal bar politics; they serve as a critical rehearsal for the 2027 general elections, testing the depth of public and professional appetite for genuine change over recycled leadership.

The demand for "fresh blood" resonates powerfully across the membership, particularly among younger advocates who form a significant voting bloc. There is a strong consensus that term limits should be more rigorously enforced or culturally normalized to prevent the Council from becoming a lifelong pursuit. Advocates emphasize a fundamental truth: there is far more to a distinguished legal career than perpetual service in LSK governance time spent in private practice, pro bono work, scholarship, or even national service often yields greater impact. This generational push seeks leaders unburdened by past baggage, capable of injecting innovation, transparency, and member-centric reforms into an institution that must remain agile amid evolving challenges.

These internal dynamics strikingly parallel the anti-incumbency sentiments building nationally as Kenya approaches 2027. Economic pressures, persistent corruption allegations, youth unemployment, and demands for accountable governance have eroded trust in long-serving politicians who appear more focused on self-preservation than public service. Just as ordinary Kenyans increasingly reject familiar faces tied to the status quo, LSK members seem ready to favor candidates promising independence, integrity, and tangible improvements whether in welfare support for junior lawyers or staunch defense of constitutional values over those perceived as insiders prolonging the old order.



The financial undertones add a layer of poignancy to the narrative. Whispers persist that some Council positions have been monetized through access to lucrative contracts, influence in legal tenders, or networking perks, mirroring the national scandals that have plagued Kenyan politics and fueled public outrage. For an institution charged with upholding the highest standards of transparency and ethics, such perceptions are particularly damaging; they could ignite a similar voter backlash in February 2026 as the one anticipated in 2027 against elites who treat public (or professional) office as a personal enterprise.

Should the February polls result in a decisive triumph for newcomers and bold reform agendas, it would mark a powerful affirmation of democratic self-correction proof that institutions can renew themselves from within and prioritize vitality, merit, and ethical leadership over stagnation. Such an outcome could embolden national voters, signaling that 2027 might bring sweeping change where outsiders challenge entrenched dynasties. Conversely, if familiar figures or insiders dominate despite the clamor for freshness, it might deepen cynicism, suggesting that even the legal vanguard struggles to embrace the transformation it so readily demands from the political class.

As the campaign season for the Law Society of Kenya (LSK) elections in February 2026 gains momentum, candidates are energetically traversing various branches across the country, engaging directly with members at grassroots levels, and making deliberate efforts to court the junior bar, the emerging generation of advocates eager for representation that

resonates with their realities. These aspirants are articulating compelling visions centered on transforming the LSK into an institution that is truly brave in confronting systemic challenges, bold in championing reforms, and boundless in its ambition to elevate the legal profession's role in society.

Such vigorous outreach, from consultative forums in regional hubs like Mombasa to targeted interactions with young lawyers, signals a deepening democratization within the bar, where leadership is no longer assumed but vigorously contested through ideas, accessibility, and member-centric promises. This phase of intense mobilization reflects not only personal ambitions but a collective hunger among advocates for a Society that actively safeguards professional welfare, upholds ethical standards, and positions itself as an unyielding defender of justice amid Kenya's evolving socio-political landscape.

In this tightly contested electoral arena, the forthcoming February 2026 polls emerge as far more than an internal bar exercise; they serve as a critical microcosm and revealing barometer of Kenya's wider democratic health and political maturity. The decisions made by thousands of advocates seasoned seniors, mid-career practitioners, and the swelling ranks of juniors will carry prophetic weight, offering early and telling clues about the national mood ahead of the pivotal 2027 general elections.

A resounding endorsement of candidates who prioritize principled independence, innovative reforms, and courageous leadership could signal that Kenyans, even within the structured confines of profession-

al bodies, are increasingly inclined toward genuine renewal rather than the perpetuation of entrenched patterns of compromise, patronage, or inertia. Conversely, a preference for familiar dynamics or cautious continuity might foreshadow a broader reluctance to embrace transformative change at the national level. Thus, the LSK contest becomes a litmus test, encapsulating in miniature the very tensions between tradition and progress, expediency and integrity that animate the country's larger political discourse.

Ultimately, the verdict delivered by the bar in these elections will illuminate whether Kenyan democracy has gathered sufficient resolve to emerge from the lingering shadows of institutional decline, eroded public trust, and leadership fatigue. Should members choose leaders committed to a brave, bold, and boundless LSK one that fearlessly defends the rule of law, dynamically addresses members' aspirations, and expansively reimagines the profession's societal contribution it would herald an era of principled, energetic stewardship capable of inspiring confidence beyond legal circles.

Such an outcome would affirm that the foundations for authentic democratic renewal remain intact, demonstrating that institutions like the LSK can still summon the courage to model the kind of forward-looking, accountable governance that the nation urgently needs as it approaches 2027 and beyond. The bar's choice, therefore, transcends professional boundaries, carrying profound implications for the trajectory of Kenya's constitutional promise.

*The writer is a legal researcher and social commentator*



## The Neglected Boy Child: A Crisis We Cannot Ignore

Society has poured immense energy into uplifting the girl child—and rightly so. But in the rush to correct historical injustices, the boy child has been quietly abandoned. His struggles are less visible, less discussed, and far too often dismissed. This imbalance is breeding a silent crisis that threatens the very foundation of equality we claim to pursue.

From the earliest years, boys are conditioned to suppress emotion. Vulnerability is treated as weakness, and strength is demanded at all times. The result is a generation of young men who grow up without emotional guidance, left to wrestle with depression, anxiety, and anger in silence. Unlike girls, who are encouraged to seek help, boys are told to “man up”—a toxic mantra that leaves scars long after childhood.

Education tells a similar story. Scholarships and empowerment programs overwhelmingly target



girls, while boys who falter academically are left adrift. Dropout rates among boys are climbing, and without mentorship or role models, many drift into crime, drugs, or hopelessness. The neglect is not deliberate, but its consequences are undeniable.

This is not a call to roll back gains for girls. It is a demand for balance. True empowerment must be inclusive, ensuring that

boys, too, receive support, guidance, and opportunity. Ignoring their plight undermines the very progress we celebrate.

The boy child is not asking for privilege—only parity. A society that uplifts both genders secures its future. A society that forgets its sons risks losing it.

*By Alex Mutisya, Laikipia University*

## Climate Change: The Unrelenting Threat To Our Environment

The planet is sounding the alarm, and climate change is the siren we can no longer ignore. Rising temperatures, record breaking heatwaves, and devastating storms—they are today’s reality. Human activity, from burning fossil fuels to deforestation, has driven global temperatures up by more than 1°C since the late 1800s, unleashing consequences that touch every corner of life.

The past decade was the hottest ever recorded, with 2023 setting a new global high. Europe’s 2022 heatwave killed over 60,000 people, Africa’s Sahel region continues to endure crippling droughts, and Category 4 and 5 hurricanes batter coastal communities with increasing frequency. These are not isolated events; they are symptoms of a planet under siege.

Biodiversity is collapsing at alarming rates. Polar bears lose habitat as sea ice melts, coral reefs bleach under rising ocean



temperatures, and insect populations decline, threatening pollination and food systems. Water scarcity worsens as glaciers shrink and sea levels rise, leaving millions vulnerable to flooding and saltwater intrusion. Agriculture, too, is reeling—yields are falling, growing seasons are shifting, and fisheries are destabilized by warming seas.

Kenya is living this crisis firsthand, from erratic rainfall to food insecurity. Yet solutions

exist: investing in renewable energy, reforesting degraded lands, and embedding sustainability in agriculture, industry, and daily life.

The clock is ticking. Climate change is not tomorrow’s problem—it is today’s fight. Act now, or surrender the future.

*By Agnes Otieno, Laikipia University*

## Asumbi Girls National School Shines In KCSE Performance

By: Pascal Okoth

Asumbi Girls National School has once again affirmed its status as one of Kenya’s top-performing girls’ schools following its impressive performance in the recent Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examinations. The results not only reflect academic excellence but also place the institution competitively among leading schools nationwide.

In the examination, Asumbi Girls posted a strong mean score of about 9.7–9.8, translating to a solid B+ average. Over 900 candidates sat for the exams, and remarkably, the school achieved a 100 per cent transition rate to university, with all candidates scoring C+ and above. This achievement underscores consistent teaching standards, disciplined learners, and effective academic management.

The grade distribution was equally impressive, with a notable number of students attaining A and A- grades, while the majority scored within the B+ to B range. Only a negligible number



fell at the minimum university entry grade, and no candidate scored below that threshold. Such results highlight depth in performance, not just excellence at the top.

When compared with other schools, Asumbi Girls emerged as one of the best-performing schools in Homa Bay County and the wider Nyanza region, outperforming many county and extra-county schools. Nationally, the school ranked among the strong national schools, although it trailed slightly behind long-established academic giants such as Alliance High School, Alli-

ance Girls, and Moi High School Kabarak, which traditionally post mean scores above 10. Nonetheless, Asumbi’s results placed it well above the national average and ahead of numerous other national schools.

Overall, Asumbi Girls National School’s KCSE performance reflects a culture of hard work, academic discipline, and effective leadership. The results not only bring pride to the school community but also strengthen its reputation as a centre of academic excellence and a reliable pathway to university education for girls across the country.

## Why Celebrities Must Reconsider Simplicity Over Pride

Fame can be blinding. Surrounded by flashing lights, luxury, and layers of security, many celebrities drift into pride and detachment, forgetting that humility is the true currency of influence. Yet every so often, a star emerges to remind the world that simplicity is not weakness—it is power.

Digital sensation Ishowspeed, barely 20, has become that reminder. Unlike the aloof figures who keep fans at arm’s length, he thrives on relatability. His humor, openness, and willingness to engage across generations have built not just a following but a community. In his world, stardom is not about distance—it is about connection.

His ongoing Africa tour underscores this point. By embracing local culture, cooking ugali, riding matatus, and interacting with everyday people, Ishowspeed is dismantling stereotypes that have long shadowed the continent. He shows millions of viewers that Africa is vibrant,



creative, and rich in spirit. In doing so, his humility achieves what polished speeches and staged campaigns often fail to deliver: authenticity.

Simplicity in celebrities fosters trust, unity, and positive influence. It humanizes them, transforming icons into role models whose character matters as much as their talent. Pride isolates; humility bridges.

In an age where egos domi-

nate headlines, celebrities must rethink their roles—not as untouchable idols but as people with the power to uplift. Choosing humility does not diminish fame; it magnifies impact. The brightest stars are not those who shine alone, but those who illuminate others.

*By Erick Otieno, Laikipia University*

# Celebrating 70 Years Of Diplomatic Ties, China, Africa Boost Cooperation In Advancing Modernization

By: Xinhua News Agency  
@themkenyatimes

**Worth Noting:**

- Over the decades, China-Africa cooperation has been firmly anchored in shared development. Guided by the principles of sincerity, real results, amity and good faith, as well as the pursuit of greater good and shared interests, bilateral cooperation has steadily advanced toward higher quality and greater sustainability. At the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in 2024, China established or upgraded strategic partnerships with 30 African countries.
- As a result, China has established a strategic partnership with all 53 African countries with which it has diplomatic relations. Both sides agreed to jointly advance modernization in six aspects and implement 10 partnership actions, opening a new chapter in building an all-weather China-Africa community with a shared future for the new era.

This year marks the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations between China and Africa.

At this milestone, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi is making his first overseas trip of the year to Africa, continuing a diplomatic tradition maintained for 36 consecutive years.

During the trip, Wang, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, attended the launch ceremony of the China-Africa Year of People-to-People Exchanges at the headquarters of the African Union (AU) on Thursday. The long-standing practice sends a consistent message: regardless of changes in the international or regional landscape, China remains Africa's most reliable friend, its most steadfast partner in pursuing development and revitalization, and the strongest supporter of Africa on the global stage.

### Shared development

Over the decades, China-Africa cooperation has been firmly anchored in shared development. Guided by the principles of sincerity, real results, amity and good faith, as well as the pursuit of greater good and shared interests, bilateral cooperation has steadily advanced toward higher quality and greater sustainability. At the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in 2024, China established or upgraded strategic partnerships with 30 African countries.

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Through practical cooperation, the two sides have aligned China's development experience with Africa's development needs, promoting shared growth through mutual benefit. China has applied zero tariffs to all African countries with diplomatic ties, and supported the construction or upgrading of nearly 100,000 km of roads, over 10,000 km of railways, nearly 1,000 bridges and close to 100 ports on the continent, contributing to Africa's modernization and coordinated economic development.

Take the Nairobi Expressway and the Mombasa-Nairobi Standard Gauge Railway. Kenyan President

William Ruto told Xinhua that they stand as testaments to the vitality and mutual benefits of the Kenya-China partnership, which has improved the domestic connectivity and promoted the regional integration in East Africa.

According to the outcomes list of follow-up actions from the Beijing Summit, China has been actively advancing nearly 600 "small and beautiful" projects, covering connectivity, poverty alleviation for the benefit of farmers, health, green development, digital economy, and people-to-people exchanges, benefiting almost all African nations. At the G20 Johannesburg Summit last November, China and host country South Africa jointly launched the Initiative on Cooperation Supporting Modernization in Africa, reaffirming support for African countries to explore development paths suited to their national conditions and pursue sustainable growth.

Peter Kagwanja, chief executive of the Africa Policy Institute, a Nairobi-based pan-African think tank, said China's modernization drive has become an inspiration for Global South countries, many in Africa, with China's success in poverty alleviation and grassroots governance inspiring African nations in their quest to chart homegrown development pathways.

### People-to-people bonds

Over the years, people-to-people exchanges have provided enduring support for China-Africa relations. The two sides have agreed to designate 2026 as the China-Africa Year of People-to-People Exchanges. During the year, China and Africa are set to host a series of people-to-people exchange activities aimed at promoting exchanges and mutual learning among the Chinese and African civilizations and strengthening people-to-people bonds, amity and cooperation, thus solidifying public support for China-Africa friendship. Addressing the launching ceremony of the year of exchanges in the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa, Wang highlighted the fruitful results and strong vitality of cultural and people-to-people exchanges between China and Africa. "Facts have proven that people-to-people exchanges are the most solid foundation of China-Africa friendship, while mutual learning between civilizations serves as the most powerful driving force behind China-Africa cooperation," he said. Citing progress in



China-Africa vocational education cooperation, Wang noted that China has established 17 Luban Workshops in 15 African countries and trained tens of thousands of professionals, providing strong intellectual support for Africa's development.

Madagascar's Foreign Minister Rafaravavitafika Rasata said that Chinese institutions such as the Luban Workshop and the Confucius Institute have enabled young Madagascans to improve their technical skills and Chinese language proficiency. "Partnership with China is fruitful and brings tangible results," she said. Together, China and Africa account for one-third of the world's population. Without their modernization, there will be no global modernization. Their shared pursuit of

modernization is not only vital to their own development but also to global progress. Looking ahead, the two sides will continue to advance together on the path to modernization, contributing to unity among Global South countries and to the building of a community with a shared future for humanity. South African President Cyril Ramaphosa said during the 2024 Beijing Summit of FOCAC that the 10 partnership action plans proposed by China are fully aligned with the AU's Agenda 2063. "The Beijing Summit reflects our shared desire for modernization, development and progress on the African continent," he said.



# Collective Wellbeing And Self-Care Of Activists Amidst The Uganda Election Period

By: **Twongirwe Ireen**  
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CEO - WoGEM Uganda

Its only 3 days remaining for Ugandan to decide choosing new leaders starting from the president to the member of parliaments.

During 2021 elections we witnessed young people who are patriots shed blood and die because of the violence, misuse of law and conflict of interest. Uganda is a democratic country where every citizen who owns a national ID is allowed to vote and decide on his or her own. However, it's unfortunate that even with the laws in place, people still oppose and do what they want to do and this results into danger to the normal Ugandans.

To my fellow country men and women, don't you think it's high time to have peaceful elections this time? Let's look back in the last election period, some lost their loved ones, others were traumatized,

tortured, arrested, kidnapped and up to date other activists are still in cells.

It's important to know that all the chaos we create affects us and our families not the contested leaders. Last month, as an organizer, feminist who protects and defends the environmental, land and human rights of the marginalized communities, I facilitated a session with the youth activists and encouraged them to take their of themselves and mind about their wellbeing amidst and post elections because they still have another life to live after this period.

During my session, youth showed how there are patriotic and how they love their country, which is very good and interesting, however I shared with them that if they die they will die for their family not for Uganda. The country will continue moving forward and their dreams, goals will be shattered. I too bring this message to the whole nation and encourage them to respect the law so that the law also respects us. It's very possible that we can have

a peace election that will not shed blood of innocent citizens.

To our leaders both the contestant and old regime, as we choose you this year we expect to see positive change in our country. We expect leaders who are not self-centered, corrupt, leaders who will protect and defend our environment from any factors that contribute climate crisis such as fossil fuels, Leaders who will prioritize investments in Green Economic Alternatives such as Renewable Energy, fishing, tourism, agriculture and forestry. These alternatives are in position to boost the country's GDP amidst the USA sanctions on Funding cuts.

We expect to see leaders who protects Environmental Women Human Right Defenders (EWHRD) and defends their principals of non-discrimination and equality, independence, and non-violence. We want leaders who prioritize environmental protection and recognize that climate change does not affect every one equally, and that everyone especially marginalized women, rural



women, youth elderly and children are often hit first, hardest even though they contribute least to the problem. Leaders who will address systems like patriarchy, colonialism, racisms and exploitation that intersects limiting people's lives and support marginalized women, youth and men to speak for themselves and make decisions about their lives.

Lastly, leaders who will work hand in hand with communities, activists, CSOs to promote Gender and Climate Justice, those who will say NO to fossil fuels (EACOP) and Yes to

Renewables to end energy poverty in our country.

In conclusion, as we decide, let's remember that valuing care work, emotional labor, healing and collective wellbeing is as essential not invisible during elections and post elections.

*For God and my Country*  
Ireen Twongirwe  
Executive Director  
Women for Green Economy Movement Uganda  
www.wogemuganda.org

# And I Grew Fond Of The Village And Its People

By: **Pierre T. Makusha**  
@themtkenyatimes

From the calm caress of a gentle breeze during solitary walks at any time of the day, across the ruwares stretching endlessly through the village, to the sweet waft of fresh air rising from lush vegetation and distant mountains; from the quiet rhythm of nature to the sight of people living as one extended family—such a culmination of settling moments proved worthy of a sabbatical from the hubbub of city life and the unrelenting buzz of social media.

The writer hails from Masvingo, but Makoni is where his life first took root. Towards the close of 2025, I returned to where it all began, seeking to reminisce and reconnect with earlier years. Born in Makoni District, Rusape, and with my mother raised in Tsikwa Village of the same district, familiarity with the place has been woven into my life from a tender age. Yet returning now—older, more mature, and perhaps more reflective—the experience revealed itself in a different light. It felt warmer, gentler, and profoundly settling to my spirit,

prompting the penning of this article.

It was in the simplicity of daily movement through the village that the experience took shape. Solitary walks at different hours of the day revealed ruwares stretching endlessly across the land, accompanied by a gentle breeze that seemed to slow both thought and time. Fresh air drifted from lush vegetation and distant mountains, carrying with it a quiet reassurance rarely found in urban spaces. In these moments, nature spoke softly yet convincingly.

Makoni's natural beauty is neither loud nor boastful; it is quiet, patient, and deeply reassuring. The wide-open plains roll gently into the horizon, meeting mountainous silhouettes that rise with ancient dignity. These mountains stand like silent guardians of the land, bearing witness to generations past. At dawn and dusk, they drape themselves in mist and soft golden light, while birds usher in each morning with melodies untainted by engines or alarms. Trees of many kinds breathe life into the soil, and the land itself feels alive and generous.

This visit coincided with the farming season. The earth had been softened by early rains, and the village moved with purpose and quiet determina-

tion. Men and women prepared their fields, ox-drawn ploughs carving through the soil with familiar rhythm. Conversations revolved around rainfall patterns, seed varieties, and the promise of a good harvest. It was a season marked by labor, hope, and faith in the land.

Tsikwa Village falls under the leadership of Headman Tsikwa and the broader traditional authority of Chief Dzvairo. Here, communal life remains orderly and respectful of tradition. I recall when government farming inputs such as maize seed and fertilizers arrived in the area, to be collected by several villages at Muziti Primary School. I went there on behalf of Tsikwa Village. We brought the inputs back, and the following morning they were distributed among the people. Elders oversaw proceedings to ensure order and fairness, making sure each household received its share and that the elderly and vulnerable were not overlooked. The process reflected a strong sense of unity and equity. I felt part of the community.

In Tsikwa, the village is more than a collection of homesteads; it is a living family. The quiet rhythm of nature is matched by the rhythm of human connection, where people re-



late as one extended household. In the village, almost everyone is your relative—muzukuru wakadini. In times of joy and sorrow alike, villagers gather instinctively. Children are raised collectively, respect for elders is practiced naturally, and hospitality is extended without hesitation. Whether during funerals, weddings, or communal work, unity is not merely spoken of—it is lived.

As I walked along dusty village paths, greeted by both familiar and unfamiliar faces and warm smiles, I realised that the settling moments I had encountered—from the breeze-filled walks to the shared sense of family—were more than a temporary

escape. They formed a necessary retreat from the hubbub of city life and the constant buzz of social media, offering instead a quieter, more grounded way of being.

Indeed, I grew fond of the village and its people—not because it is flawless, but because it is genuine, rooted in humanity, nature, and unity. In returning to Makoni, to Tsikwa Village under Chief Dzvairo, I did not merely visit a place; I rediscovered a part of myself.

*Pierre T. Makusha writes in his personal capacity. Thoughts run deep; Words flow slow*

# SPORTS NEWS

PHOTOS  
SCORES  
OPINIONS  
STATISTICS  
SCHEDULES  
BREAKING NEWS



**Sports >>** \*Eighty two golfers from 10 African countries will tee it up this week from January 14-16 at Thika Greens Golf Resort as the Sunshine Development Tour

## Kibugu Leads Kenyan Charge As 10 African Countries Converge At Thika Greens For Sunshine Development Tour

Eighty two golfers from 10 African countries will tee it up this week from January 14-16 at Thika Greens Golf Resort as the Sunshine Development Tour – East Africa Swing stages the ninth leg of the season.

The field brings together 62 professionals and 20 elite amateurs, with Kenya providing the largest contingent at 55 players.

Uganda will field 10 players, followed by Rwanda with five, Nigeria with four, Tanzania and Zimbabwe with two each, while Malawi, Burundi, Ghana and Senegal will each be represented by one player.

Kenya's challenge will be spearheaded by Njoroge Kibugu, the current Sunshine Development Tour Order of Merit leader, who has already secured a Sunshine Tour card after winning three legs this season at Thika Greens, Nyali Golf Club and VetLab Sports Club.

He will be joined by a strong home contingent of experienced professionals and elite amateurs including seasoned professionals Dismas Indiza and Greg Snow, both former tour winners on the East Africa Swing, alongside season elite amateurs John Lejirima, and Michael Karanga.

Uganda's challenge will be spearheaded by Ronald Rugumayo, one of the country's most experienced professionals and a regular on the Big Easy Tour in South Africa. Rugumayo recently finished joint second at Big Easy Tour 8 at Killarney Country Club and arrives in Thika in strong form.

He is joined by a solid Ugandan contingent that includes David Kamulindwa, Ronald Otile, Phillip Kasozi, Grace Kasango, among others.

From Rwanda, Celestin Nsanuwera will be among the players to watch. Nsanuwera has been one of the most consistent performers on the Sunshine



*Njoroge Kibugu tees off at the Royal Nairobi Golf Club during the second round of the Johnnie Walker Classic, the sixth leg of the Sunshine Development Tour - East Africa Swing*

Development Tour, with wins at the Q-School, Diani and Kigali and including strong finishes in Diani, Nyali, VetLab and Limuru. He currently sits second on the Order of Merit.

Tanzania's hopes rest on Nuru Molllel, Fadhyl Nkya, Isaac Wanyeche, Isiaka Dunia, and Angel Eaton, all of whom have consistently featured in the Tour's inaugural season.

From West Africa, Nigeria will be represented by Sunday Olapade, who has become a familiar face on the East Africa Swing. Olapade has previously competed on tours across Africa and has openly stated his ambition of progressing to major tours. He will be joined by his fellow countrymen Gift Willy, Kamalu Bako, and Ajayi Tajudeen.

Zimbabwe will field two professionals including Visitor Mapwaya and Liberty Gumisa, while Ghana, Malawi, Burundi and Senegal will each field one

player.

The tournament also features five female golfers competing in the mixed field, led by Kenya's Naom Wafula, who has made seven cuts this season and is the highest ranked female on the Tour.

Her consistency has already earned her a Sunshine Ladies Tour card, courtesy of a newly created African Affiliate category, which will allow her access onto the Sunshine Ladies Tour next season.

Others include Angel Eaton, Joyce Wanjiru of Kiambu Golf Club who recently turned professional, Margret Njoki and Diana Njue.

Tournament Director David Kihara said preparations for the Absa Invitational series were complete and the team was ready to deliver a high quality event.

"We are fully prepared for this leg of the Sunshine Development Tour and the course is in excel-

lent condition. The response from players across the region has been very encouraging and it shows the growing confidence in the Tour," said Kihara.

He added that the regional spread of players reflects the Tour's wider mission.

"Having golfers from across East and West Africa competing in the same field is exactly what this Tour was created for. It is about giving players meaningful competition, exposure and a pathway beyond their home countries. We expect three very competitive days of golf as players push for results at this important stage of the season."

The event forms part of the Sunshine Development Tour East Africa Swing, which offers Official World Golf Ranking and World Amateur Golf Ranking points.

*Capital Sport*

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

**Sports >>** \*Harambee Stars midfielder Timothy Ouma has been relegated to the reserve team of his Polish club, Lech Poznan.

# Trouble For Harambee Stars Midfielder As Polish Giants Demote Him To Reserve Team



Timothy Ouma in a past match for Lech Poznan. PHOTO/LECH POZNAN X.

Harambee Stars midfielder Timothy Ouma has been relegated to the reserve team of his Polish club, Lech Poznan. In a statement, the club's head coach Niels Fredericksen said the former Nairobi City Stars player will not join the rest of the first team in their training camp in Abu Dhabi due to his disciplinary issues. "Timothy behaved contrary to the rules of the team, so we decided not to include him in the squad for the camp in Abu Dhabi. He

will stay in the country and will prepare for the spring round with the reserves and it depends only on his attitude what future awaits him in our first team," the Dane explained in his matchday notes. The latest setback puts Ouma's future in jeopardy following his struggles with Czech giants Slavia Prague, for who he only played once. The 21-year-old joined Lech Poznan on loan midway last year after struggling for playtime at Slavia Prague.

For the Polish giants he has thus far played 12 times with no goals but his performances were enough to earn a call-up to Harambee Stars under head coach Benni McCarthy. His last match in the red-and-white of Kenya was the 8-0 drubbing by Senegal in an international friendly in Turkey on November 18 last year. With a plethora of options at McCarthy's disposal, Ouma might struggle to find his way back to Kenya's midfield if his club situ-

ation does not improve.

*Capital Sport*

# SPORTS NEWS



PHOTOS  
SCORES  
OPINIONS  
STATISTICS  
SCHEDULES  
BREAKING NEWS





## Owen SP Sanchez: A Living Legacy Of Resilience, Vision, And Empowered Leadership



By: Anila Bukhari  
@themkenyatimes

Owen SP Sanchez's life story reads like a modern epic—one shaped by courage, discipline, and an unshakeable belief in purpose. Hers is not merely a tale of professional success, but a profound narrative of resilience and reinvention, where grace meets grit and ambition is guided by integrity. From foundational roots and formative beginnings to the highest tiers of global leadership, Owen has emerged as a symbol of empowerment, inspiring countless individuals across cultures, industries, and generations.

From the very start, Owen demonstrated a rare determination to rise beyond limitations. Breaking free from traditional expectations and societal constraints, she charted her own path with quiet confidence and unwavering resolve. Her journey reflects the strength of a woman who dared to dream boldly, pursued excellence relentlessly, and transformed challenges into stepping stones toward greatness. Every chapter of her life bears the unmistakable mark of perseverance and self-belief.

Academically, Owen's achievements are nothing short of extraordinary. She earned her Bachelor's degree in Travel and Tourism Management from the University of Santo Tomas—the oldest pontifical university in Asia—specializing in International Studies and Law, graduating Cum Laude. Her pursuit of knowledge did not stop there. She went on to complete her MBA in Human Resources Management at Orlando University in the United States, graduating Magna Cum Laude. Further elevating her academic profile, Owen became a Stanford University graduate with

Departmental Honors, an INSEAD GEMBA alumna, and a holder of multiple professional certifications across diverse disciplines. Her academic journey reflects not only intellectual brilliance but a lifelong commitment to growth, learning, and mastery.

Professionally, Owen's career spans some of the most respected multinational organizations in the world. She has held pivotal roles in US Fortune 500 and Fortune 400 companies, including McDermott and Abbott, as well as leading global aviation and healthcare organizations such as Emirates, dnata, Airbus, MedAire, and International SOS. Across these roles, she consistently demonstrated exceptional leadership acumen, strategic insight, and an innate ability to navigate complex, multicultural environments. Her expertise in human resources, organizational development, and leadership strategy positioned her as a trusted leader and a transformative force within every institution she served.

In her current role as Senior Vice President – Brand Strategist and Chief Growth Officer for DIEZ MNC Clients' Project, Owen continues to redefine excellence. She brings a powerful blend of strategic intelligence, storytelling finesse, and a deep understanding of brand reputation, stakeholder engagement, and crisis management. Her leadership is marked by data-driven decision-making, visionary growth strategies, and an unwavering commitment to safeguarding and elevating organizational identity. With remarkable versatility, she seamlessly bridges corporate leadership with media presence, including television anchoring, further amplifying her influence and reach.

Owen's impact has been widely recognized on the global stage. She has been honored as one of the "FWN 100 Most Influential Women in the World" and awarded the prestigious APEC Gold Medal. Her accolades continue to grow, including recognition as one of the

"Top 50 Most Influential Women in the UAE," "Top 24 Most Empowered Women in the GCC," "Top 25 Global Women of Influence in Asia," and inclusion among the "Top 100 Women Leaders in the Middle East." These honors are not merely titles; they are reflections of her tireless dedication to leadership, empowerment, and excellence.

Her recent recognitions further cement her legacy. She was awarded "The Crowned Media & Broadcast Maven" at the Emirates Business Awards 2025, named the "Face of WOHA Icon for UAE," and honored as "Outstanding Corporate Executive in Brand Innovation & Growth Leadership." She also received distinctions as a "World Class Achiever & Pinnacle Woman on Executive Board" and was accorded an Honorary Award by the GIA Global Image Award under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Salama Tahnoon Al Nahyan. Her recognition at the Women Entrepreneurial Arabia Awards during WomenpreneurX for "Excellence in Global Brand Strategy & Leadership" stands as yet another testament to her far-reaching influence.

Beyond accolades and titles, what truly defines Owen SP Sanchez is her heart for service and her commitment to uplifting others. She is a passionate advocate for education, gender equality, and community empowerment. Through her philanthropic initiatives, she actively supports underprivileged communities and champions opportunities for those who dare to dream but lack resources. Her leadership style is inclusive and compassionate, fostering cultures of respect, collaboration, and shared purpose across global teams.

Owen's story is often likened to a modern-day Cinderella narrative—not because of fantasy, but because of transformation. She rose through resilience, not rescue; through effort, not entitlement. Her life stands as proof that success is not defined by where one starts, but by the courage to persist and the willingness to



Owen SP Sanchez

evolve.

As her journey continues to unfold, Owen SP Sanchez's influence only grows stronger. She leaves an indelible mark on the corporate world, the media landscape, and the lives of those she touches through mentorship and advocacy. Her legacy is one of strength, vision, and unwavering determination—a beacon for anyone striving to turn purpose into impact.

And as the final chapter of this story lingers in the mind, one truth resonates with unmistakable clarity: Owen SP Sanchez does not merely walk into rooms of power—she transforms them. Her presence redefines possibility, her voice reshapes narratives, and her leader-

ship ignites belief. She stands as living proof that when purpose meets courage and vision is fueled by integrity, greatness does not whisper—it echoes. Long after the applause fades, her legacy continues to rise, inspiring the world to believe, to lead, and to become more than it ever imagined possible.