

The

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Our Paper, Our Stand

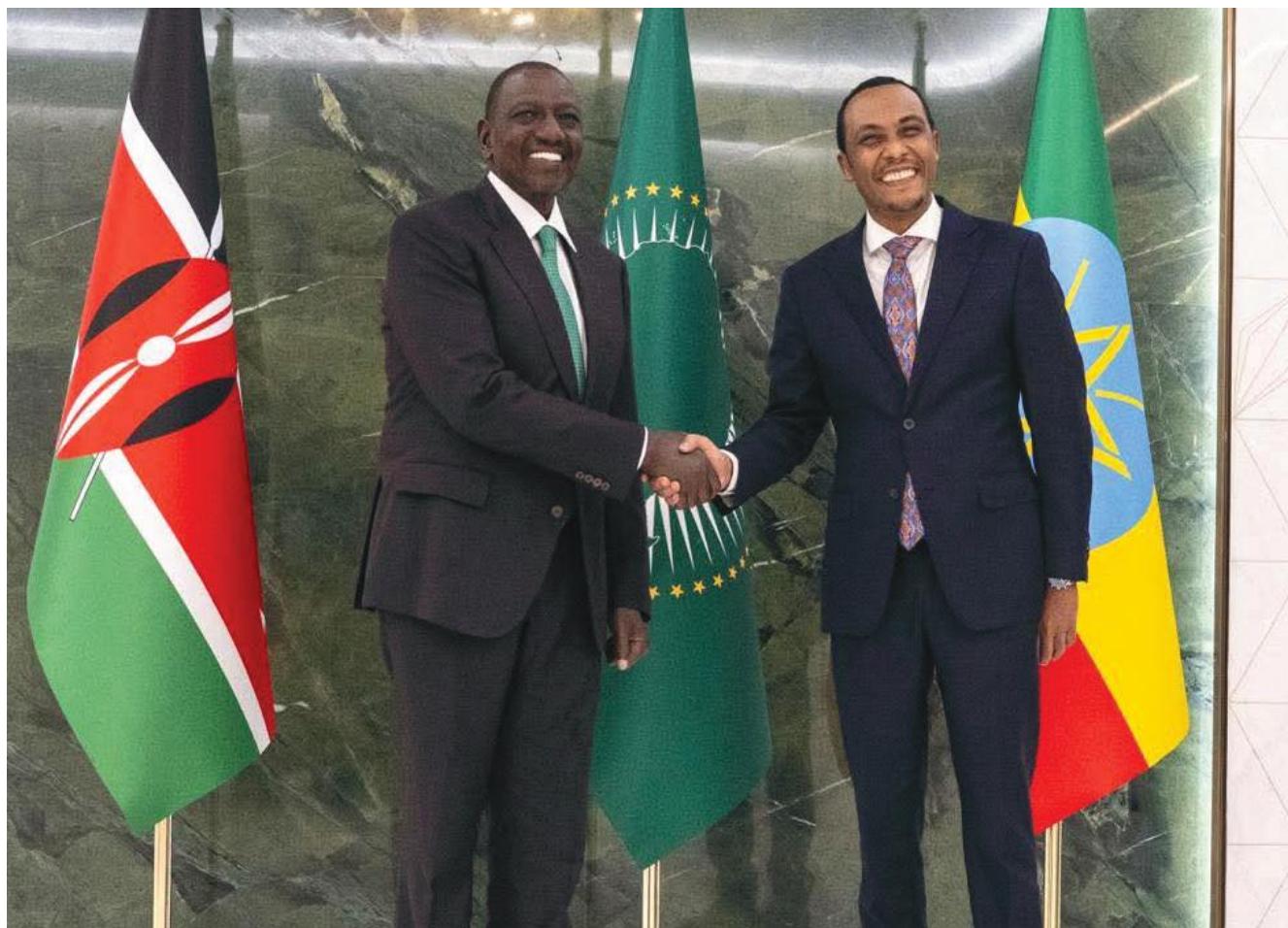
MT. KENYA TIMES

WEEKEND ePAPER

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Ruto Pushes Africa To Tap KSh299 Trillion Green Investment



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Gachagua, Oburu Surprise Senator Kavindu In Cross-Party Condolence Visit To Machakos Senator

By: MKT Correspondent
 @themtkenyatimes

Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, together with Wiper Patriotic Front party leader Kalonzo Musyoka on Friday paid a heartfelt condolence visit to Senator Agnes Kavindu at her home in Mua Hills, Machakos County, following the demise of her son, Moses Nduya. The visit took a surprising turn when the ODM party leader, Dr. Oburu Odinga, a political rival of Gachagua, appeared at the home-stead the same time, creating a rare moment of cross-party solidarity. Their unplanned meeting brought comfort to the grieving family and sent a powerful message that compassion can transcend political differences.

The condolence gathering attracted several leaders, including Robert Mbui, Patrick Makau, Edith Nyenze, Jessica Mbalu, Kivasu Nzioka, Joshua Kimilu, Senator Dan Maanzo, Stephen Mule, Julius Mawathe, Senator Joe Nyutu, Senator Karungo Wa Thang'wa, Wiper Party Deputy Organising Secretary Muriuki Ndwiga, and MCAs from Kitui and Machakos counties.

Gachagua extended his deepest sympathies, saying, "At this difficult moment, I pray to Almighty God to give you strength to cope with this loss."

Leaders collectively prayed for Moses Nduya's eternal rest, while the unexpected presence of Gachagua and Oburu highlighted that humanity and solidarity can overcome political divides.

Some Of The Moments As Captured In Pictures



The Mt. Kenya Times



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NEWS IN BRIEF



Kiambu Governor Kimani Wamatangi presiding over the launch of the cabro production unit at the Juja Farm Vocational Training Centre. The cabro production units are set to transform walkways, roads, and public parks across Kiambu County by providing durable, affordable paving solutions.



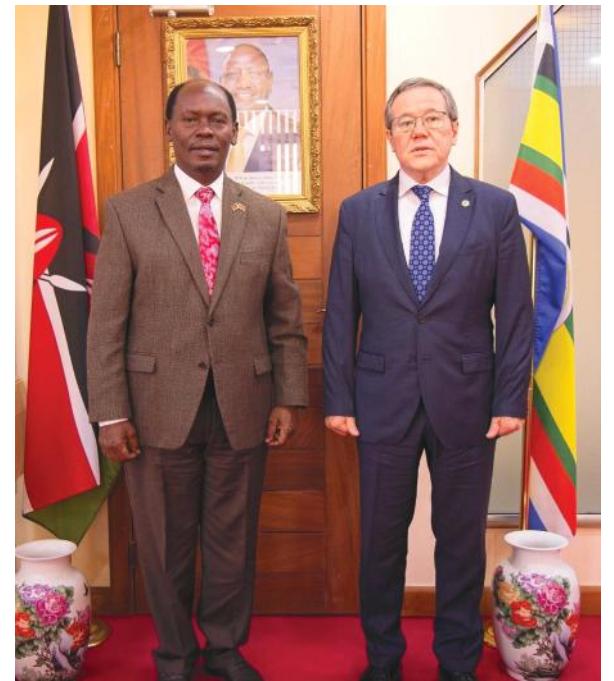
The National Authority for the Campaign Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA) Nyamira chapter is marking National Substance Use Prevention Week with countywide sensitisation forums. Coordinator George Kasera warned that drug use now begins as early as six years, citing a 2022 survey. He said substance abuse leads to health problems, financial strain and social breakdown, prompting early intervention strategies targeting youth. NACADA has trained community groups to detect new tactics where drugs are hidden in snacks sold to children. Nyamira South Deputy County Commissioner Florence Obunga pledged crackdowns on illicit brews. The week, themed "Empowered communities, brighter futures," will end with a roadshow in Nyamira town.



The Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC), in partnership with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the United States Embassy and the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), has commissioned phase two of modern interview facilities at its South Rift Regional Office in Nakuru. The upgrade makes Nakuru the first regional office to benefit from the initiative after a similar enhancement at Integrity Centre headquarters. Speaking for CEO Abdi Mohamud, Director Jackson Mue thanked partners for strengthening investigative capacity. FBI Legal Attaché Shandra Harris reaffirmed continued support, citing improved facilities and training as key to boosting anti-corruption efforts.



Public Service CS Geoffrey Ruku (in a hat) distributing relief food and other supplies to traders who lost property when a fire gutted their premises in Shauri Market in Embu Town on Monday night.



William Kabogo, the Cabinet Secretary for the Ministry of Information, Communications and the Digital Economy, held a meeting with Barlybay Sadykov, Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan to Kenya, during a courtesy call at the Ministry Headquarters. The discussions focused on strengthening cooperation between Kenya and Kazakhstan, with particular emphasis on the digital sector. Kazakhstan has made significant strides in Artificial Intelligence, E-Government, and the digital economy, while Kenya remains a regional leader in digital transformation and innovation. The meeting explored opportunities for knowledge exchange, sharing expertise, and collaboration in emerging technologies to benefit both nations.



Dozens of women and girls in West Pokot County have benefited from free fistula repair surgeries at Kapenguria County Referral Hospital during a medical camp held from February 9–13. The initiative was supported by the M-Pesa Foundation, Amref Health Africa, The Flying Doctors Society of Africa, Royal Media Services, Beyond Zero Campaign and the West Pokot County Government. So far, 35 successful surgeries have been performed, with more patients awaiting procedures. Governor Simon Kachapin said 71 women were admitted, linking cases to home births, early marriages and FGM. Partners pledged continued collaboration to make the hospital a permanent fistula treatment centre and restore affected women's dignity.

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State Intensifies Drive to Return to Phase Out Children's Homes

By: KNA
[@themtkenyatimes](https://twitter.com/themtkenyatimes)

Worth Noting:

- State Department for Children Services Principal Secretary Carren Ageng'o said the reforms are anchored in the Children's Act 2022, which introduced sweeping changes to child protection laws and formally outlawed long-term institutionalisation.
- The 10-year care reform strategy (2022-2032), she said, outlines a phased approach to reintegration, prioritising family tracing and reunification.

The government has stepped up implementation of a nationwide programme to transition children from institutional care to family-based care. State Department for Children Services Principal Secretary Carren Ageng'o said the reforms are anchored in the Children's Act 2022, which introduced sweeping changes to child protection laws and formally outlawed long-term institutionalisation.

The 10-year care reform strategy (2022-2032), she said, outlines a phased approach to reintegration, prioritising family tracing and reunification.

Children's officers are collaborating with institutions, community leaders, and relatives to locate biological parents or extended family members, aiming to reintegrate children into safe home environments.

"Evidence shows that children who grow up in institutions face developmental challenges, identity gaps and confidence issues because they lack a stable family structure," the PS said.

The Department of Children Services, she said, was in the process of mapping out all children living in institutions across the country to determine the scale of the transition.

"We have already concluded the exercise in the Rift Valley region where we have identified 13,000 children who are currently in institutional care," she said.

The PS said the government, together with development partners has costed the programme and determined what is required to reintegrate all the children back into the family setup.

"Some children have already been successfully reunited with their families under the phased rollout. We shall



continue with the exercise to ensure that by the year 2032 all the children are reintegrated back to their families," she said.

Children who are abandoned or rescued, she said, will only be allowed to stay in charitable children's institutions for a maximum of six months.

Within that period, she said, authorities must either trace their families or secure alternative family-based care.

The PS added that for children whose biological relatives cannot be traced, the State Department was promoting foster care and adoption under alternative family care arrangements.

Prospective foster parents, she said, will undergo mandatory training and vetting before placement, while adoption procedures will be managed under the department's supervision to

safeguard children's rights.

"Our goal is to ensure children grow up in stable family environments where they can develop fully and confidently," she said, expressing optimism that by 2032 only minimal cases will require institutional placement.

Ageng'o said collaboration with county governments was central to the success of the reform agenda, particularly in strengthening grassroots child protection systems and improving coordination between national and devolved units.

She encouraged counties to develop comprehensive child protection policies to align with the national framework.

"Kisumu County has committed to finalising its child protection policy within three months. I am appealing

to the other county governments to do the same so that collectively we can safeguard our children," she said.

The PS spoke in Kisumu on Friday during a visit to Mama Ngina Children's Home following a fire that destroyed part of a dormitory last week.

During the visit, she delivered mattresses, blankets, bedding and food supplies to support affected children and assessed safety measures within the facility.

The children, she said, have since been relocated to a safe section of the compound as reconstruction of the damaged dormitory continues.

She thanked well-wishers supporting the rebuilding efforts but emphasised that emergency interventions in institutions must complement the broader reform agenda.

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The Mt Kenya Times

10

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Kenya's Gulf Energy Affirms Its Commitment To Invest US\$ 6 billion And Maintain World-Class Standards In The Turkana Oil Production Journey

By: MKT Reporter
[@themtkenyatimes](https://twitter.com/themtkenyatimes)

Worth Noting:

- Appearing at a Joint Parliamentary Committee of Energy meeting, Gulf Energy E&P BV Chairman Mr Francis Njogu, while describing the project as the single most significant private-sector-driven upstream petroleum investment in Kenya's history, said the firm will maintain world-class standards with a target to produce crude oil by 1st December this year.

While updating Members of the National Assembly and the Senate, in a session jointly chaired by National Assembly's Departmental Committee on Energy Chairman David Gikaria and the Senate Standing Committee on Energy, Vice Chairperson Senator William Kisang, who are undertaking a public participation exercise ahead of the project's Field Development Plan (FDP) ratification, Njogu said the firm is set to invest nearly US\$6 billion in the project.



Gulf Energy Group CEO Paul Limoh (left) with Gulf Energy Chairman Francis Njogu and Country Manager Franklin Juma appearing at a Joint Parliamentary Committees of Energy meeting.

A local petroleum exploration and production firm has pledged to maintain international best practice in the production of crude oil resources in Turkana County.

Appearing at a Joint Parliamentary Committee of Energy meeting, Gulf Energy E&P BV Chairman Mr Francis Njogu, while describing the project as the single most significant private-sector-driven upstream petroleum investment in Kenya's history, said the firm will maintain world-class standards with a target to produce crude oil by 1st December this year.

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Both the Gulf Energy E&P BV (GEBV) Field Development Plan (FDP) and the Production Sharing Agreements, he said, place strong emphasis on local content, community and related stakeholders' engagement, and alignment of mutual benefits.

Flanked by the firm's Group CEO, Mr Paul Limoh, and Country Manager, Franklin Juma, among other officials, these commitments, Njogu said, are reinforced through social investments and strict adherence to a robust, ring-fenced Local Content Strategy, with the overarching goal of delivering long-term socio-economic benefits for Turkana County and Kenya as a whole.

"At Gulf Energy, we are approaching this FDP as Kenyans with a view to creating as many jobs and business opportunities for Kenyans, starting with our Turkana host community, as are committed to positioning Kenya as an oil-producing country. We are very ready, and we have set 1st December, 2026, as a target to produce oil, and we hope to expeditiously secure the FDP ratification," Njogu said.

Gulf Energy E&P BV, he disclosed, is an indigenously owned company with strong financial resources to support capital-intensive projects, such as the South Lokichar Oil Project. The company, he added, has established robust financial partnerships and active lines of credit with leading local and international banking and financial institutions.

"The South Lokichar project and the FDP we have presented to the Government present a technically mature pathway to unlock Kenya's largest

onshore petroleum development in a shared prosperity model," He said.

He assured, "While the plan demonstrates a clear scheduling, phased risk reduction and strong economic rationale, Gulf Energy also reaffirms its commitment to operate transparently, safely and in full compliance with Kenyan legislation and international best practices."

Kenya stands to gain significant fiscal and economic benefits, with the Government of Kenya projecting potential earnings between USD 1.05 billion (at USD 60 per barrel) and USD 2.9 billion (at USD 70 per barrel), which translates to KES 136 billion to KES 371 billion over the life of the project.

While commenting on the project's cost recovery proposal contained in the FDP that was approved by the Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum and Energy, Opiyo Wandayi, last November, Njogu explained that the project-specific fiscal measures outlined in the FDP are essential to meeting the investment and bankability thresholds required for a Final Investment Decision (FID).

The South Lokichar Development, he said, presents a strategic and time-sensitive opportunity for Kenya to convert a well-understood petroleum resource into long-term economic value.

Under the Petroleum Sharing Con-

tract (PSC) framework, the State, he explained, retains full ownership and stewardship of the resource, while the Contractor (Gulf Energy) provides the technical capability and risk capital needed to bring it to production.

While petitioning the Joint Parliamentary Committee to recommend the project's ratification in Parliament, Njogu explained that the current opportunity exists against the backdrop of a rapidly evolving global energy landscape, where the window for financing new upstream oil projects is narrowing.

International lenders, he said, are progressively tightening investment criteria for hydrocarbons in line with global climate commitments, and capital is increasingly being redirected toward lower-carbon energy systems.

"As a result, frontier oil projects such as South Lokichar must demonstrate strong economics, robust fiscal stability, and timely decision-making to remain competitive for capital. Any prolonged uncertainty risks placing Kenya at a disadvantage relative to other emerging oil provinces that are actively adjusting their fiscal terms to secure investment before this window closes," he explained.

Parliament is expected to deliberate on the FDP and PSCs before deciding on ratification in the coming weeks.

Ruto Urges African States to Seize KSh299 Trillion Climate Investment Wave For Green Industrialisation

By: PCS
 @themtkenyatimes

President William Ruto has called on African States to take advantage of global economic shifts in climate investment to position Africa as the premier destination for green industrialisation.

The President pointed out that Africa's vast renewable resources make it ideal for climate adaptation and clean energy investments.

He noted that global energy-transition investment reached a new high of about \$2.3 trillion (KSh299 trillion) in 2025, continuing the steady movement towards low-carbon energy systems and technologies.

"The global economy is moving toward lower-carbon production, electrified value chains, and technology-intensive industry. In this context, reliable and affordable power is becoming a core driver of competitiveness," he said.

He made the remarks when he chaired the Committee of the African Heads of State and Government on

Climate Change (CAHOSCC) meeting, on the sidelines of the 39th African Union Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on Friday.

The meeting was attended by President Samia Suluhu Hassan of Tanzania, Vice-Presidents Jessica Alupo of Uganda and Sébastien Pillay (Seychelles), Prime Minister Sifi Ghrieb of Algeria, ministers, representatives of the African Union Commission, and development partners.

The President said green industrialisation is a strategic alignment that will strengthen the economies of African States and create sustainable employment for the continent's youthful population.

He said the Nairobi Declaration at the inaugural Africa Climate Summit in 2023 sets a clear direction towards climate-positive growth.

"Our climate agenda is inseparable from development, energy access, and industrialisation," he said.

President Ruto pointed out that Africa must lead in placing climate priorities at the centre of economic planning and investment decisions.

He commended the Accelerated Partnership for Renewables in Afri-



President William Ruto

ca and the Africa Green Industrialisation Initiative as practical vehicles for achieving the continent's climate goals, supported by the African Continental Free Trade Area.

"Notably, the Green Industrialisation Initiative secured commitments of \$100 billion (KSh13 trillion) from African financial institutions at the second Africa Climate Summit," he added.

President Suluhu explained that her

country fully supports continental climate action.

She said Tanzania is seeking opportunities in green industrialisation, especially in value addition.

She noted that the collective success of Africa's climate action will depend on concerted efforts from member states.

Additionally, she said political commitment on climate adaptation must translate into tangible benefits for the

people.

African Union Commission Chair Mahamoud Ali Youssouf assured the Committee that climate action remains a priority for the commission.

He explained that robust measures have been put in place to deliver on the continent's climate action goals.

He called on Member States to support efforts geared towards reversing the effects of climate change.

Court Grounds Aviation Strike, Passengers Breathe Easy

By: James Mwangi
 @themtkenyatimes

Kenya's skies were set to face turbulence this week, but the Employment and Labour Relations Court has clipped the wings of a looming aviation strike, restoring calm to travelers and airlines alike. In a ruling delivered on February 12, 2026, at Milimani Court, the judge certified the Kenya Civil Aviation Authority's (KCAA) application as urgent and froze the strike notice issued by the Kenya Aviation Workers Union (KAWU). The order ensures that no industrial action will interfere with KCAA's core mandate—safeguarding aviation safety, regulating air services, and supporting the growth of civil aviation.

The decision comes at a time when Kenya's aviation sector is under pressure to maintain reliability amid rising passenger numbers and re-

gional competition. KCAA Director General Emile Arao underscored the importance of uninterrupted operations, stressing that confidence in the industry hinges on stability. The court has scheduled a full hearing for February 26, where the dispute will be examined in detail.

For now, passengers can exhale. Airlines have confirmed that schedules remain intact, while airport operations continue without disruption. The ruling highlights the delicate balance between workers' rights and national interests. Strikes are a legitimate bargaining tool, but when they threaten critical infrastructure, courts often step in to preserve public order. KCAA has pledged to pursue dialogue, emphasizing that sustainable solutions lie in negotiation rather than confrontation. Aviation unions, meanwhile, face the challenge of pressing their demands without grounding the nation's economy.

Kenya's skies remain open, but the ruling is a reminder: when turbulence hits, the law can be the stabilizer.



Kenya Airways plane taking off at JKIA/FILE

KTDA Partners With KIPPRA To Drive Market-Led Drive

By: MKT Correspondent

@themtkenyatimes

The Kenya Tea Development Agency (KTDA) has formalized a strategic partnership with the Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA) aimed at strengthening its policy framework and accelerating reforms under its banner; Farmers First agenda.

The agreement was signed during a meeting at Majani Plaza in Nairobi attended by KTDA National Chairman Chege Kirundi, Acting Group CEO Eng. Francis Miano and departmental heads.

The KIPPRA delegation was led by Executive Director Dr. Eldah Onsomu.

Under the partnership, KIPPRA will conduct a comprehensive review and realignment of KTDA's existing poli-

cies in line with its Strategic Plan.

The exercise will identify policy gaps, recommend reforms and develop new policy instruments to reinforce the agency's farmer-centered vision.

KTDA said the collaboration is central to its transition from a production-led institution to a market-led enterprise responsive to global tea market trends.

The reforms are expected to enhance competitiveness, strengthen marketing and international business operations, and ensure value creation across the tea value chain translates into tangible benefits for farmers.

Kirundi emphasized that a robust organizational and business policy framework; including clear marketing and international trade procedures is critical for sustainable transformation.

He noted that revised policies will improve operational stability, transparency and accountability across the



The stakeholders during the event. Photos/Courtesy.

KTDA Group.

KTDA expressed confidence that KIPPRA, as the Government's pre-

mier public policy think tank, is well positioned to guide the transformation and support inclusive growth in Kenya's tea sector.

The Mt. Kenya Times



Mt Kenya Leaders Warn ODM Against Targeting Kindiki's Deputy President Post

By: Dennis Dibondo

@themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- **Led by Tharaka Nithi Governor Muthomi Njuki and Laikipia East MP Mwangi Kiunjuri, the leaders dismissed claims that there is a vacancy in the Deputy President's office. They maintained that the position is constitutionally occupied and should not be part of any political bargaining.**
- **"The Deputy President's seat must be completely off the table. There is no valid reason to target it," Njuki said, arguing that Mt Kenya's voting strength remains significant in shaping any national political arrangement.**
- **Njuki further stated that if ODM insists on demanding the position, the ruling side could symbolically "donate" Kindiki to ODM while retaining him in office, underscoring that the constitutional post itself is not open for negotiation. He warned that premature political maneuvering could unsettle the constitutional order and heighten tensions.**



Laikipia East MP Mwangi Kiunjuri who led Meru MPs in defending Kindiki speaks at a function in Rippi Central Imenti constituency on Friday. Photo/Dennis Dibondo..

A section of leaders from the Mt Kenya region has cautioned the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) against pushing for the Deputy President's position in any anticipated coalition negotiations, declaring the seat non-negotiable and firmly held by Deputy President Kithure Kindiki. Led by Tharaka Nithi Governor Muthomi Njuki and Laikipia East MP Mwangi Kiunjuri, the leaders dismissed claims that there is a vacancy in the Deputy President's office. They maintained that the position is constitutionally occupied and should not be part of any political bargaining.

"The Deputy President's seat must be completely off the table. There is no valid reason to target it," Njuki said, arguing that Mt Kenya's voting strength remains significant in shaping any national political arrangement.

Njuki further stated that if ODM insists on demanding the position, the ruling side could symbolically "donate" Kindiki to ODM while retaining him in office, underscoring

that the constitutional post itself is not open for negotiation. He warned that premature political maneuvering could unsettle the constitutional order and heighten tensions.

Kunjuri, who was accompanied by Igembe South MP John Paul Mwirigi, Imenti Central MP Moses Kirima, Tigania West MP John Mutunga and Nominated MP Dorothy Muthoni, vowed to defend Kindiki's position. The leaders spoke during a community empowerment forum in Katheri East, Imenti Central, Meru County.

Kunjuri urged Mt Kenya leaders to avoid internal divisions, cautioning that fragmentation along ethnic lines would weaken the region's political influence. "Once Ameru, Embu and Kikuyu agree to be divided along tribal lines, we will be finished one by one," he said.

The MPs accused opposition leaders of spreading misinformation and attempting to undermine the government. Mwirigi dismissed critics, arguing that leaders serve to deliver development rather than personal interests. He praised President Wil-

liam Ruto's administration, saying it has fulfilled many of its promises and remains committed to completing pending projects.

"People should never be deceived by the opposition. Ruto and his Deputy Kindiki are the ideal. This is where we will get more benefits and development," Mwirigi said, adding that the region is preparing to overwhelmingly support the Ruto-Kindiki ticket again in 2027.

The leaders defended the government's development record, citing infrastructure upgrades, revival of stalled road projects, expansion of electricity connectivity, water initiatives and affordable housing programmes. They also referenced the administration's bottom-up economic model, saying grassroots empowerment initiatives are already transforming livelihoods across the region.

Mutunga pointed to investments in roads, markets, hospitals and water connectivity as evidence of progress, while Muthoni described Kindiki as a unifying and development-focused leader. "We are ready for any coa-

lition arrangement, but the Deputy President's seat is a no-go zone. We will defend it," she said.

The leaders also criticised former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua and other opposition figures, accusing them of misleading residents. They argued that Mt Kenya overwhelmingly backed the current administration and should safeguard its political stake.

Kunjuri maintained that President Ruto and his deputy share a joint mandate that cannot be separated. "There is no vote for Ruto and a separate vote for Kindiki. It is tied. If one goes, the other goes," he said.

Njuki: DP's Position Is Ours To Stay

Governor Njuki said they will not release DP position to ODM adding that it need be, they better donate Prof Kindiki to ODM to remain in the position

By: MKT Reporter
 @themtkenyatimes



Worth Noting:

- Speaking during the burial of Mrs Priscilla Cianjoka in Karingani Ward, Chuka/Igambang'ombe Constituency, the leaders led by Tharaka Nithi Governor Muthomi Njuki said the Mt Kenya region remains firmly in Ruto's government and will not allow political maneuvering around the DP's seat.
- Njuki who is DP Kindiki's governor and who also serves as Vice Chair of the Council of Governors, stated that Prof Kindiki would mobilize more votes for President Ruto than any running mate fronted by the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM).
- "We are in President Ruto's government and we are there to stay. We have Prof Kindiki as Deputy President and we are comfortable," Njuki said.

Leaders from the Mt Kenya region have reaffirmed their support for President William Ruto and Deputy President Kithure Kindiki, declaring they will not relinquish the Deputy President's position ahead of the 2027 General Election and they better consider 'donating' him (Prof Kindiki) to ODM.

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Njuki who is DP Kindiki's governor and who also serves as Vice Chair of the Council of Governors, stated that Prof Kindiki would mobilize more votes for President Ruto than any running mate fronted by the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM).

"We are in President Ruto's government and we are there to stay. We have Prof Kindiki as Deputy President and we are comfortable," Njuki said.

He further claimed that following the death of former Prime Minister Raila Odinga, ODM had split into factions and was likely to experience further divisions ahead of 2027, making it unlikely to vote as a bloc.

Accompanied by Tharaka Nithi County Assembly Speaker John Mbabu, Njuki emphasized that the region's support for the government is strongly tied to Prof Kindiki's position as Deputy President. He warned that any move to replace him could prompt a reassessment of their political stance.

Dismissing ODM's reported interest in the DP seat as provocative, Njuki argued that if the government is truly broad-based, ODM could even consider supporting Prof Kindiki 'as its member' while he remains Deputy President.

"We are ready to hand over Prof Kindiki to ODM provided that he remains DP in 2027," Njuki stated.

The governor rejected claims that Prof Kindiki lacks political backing, asserting that Mt Kenya and other parts of the country are firmly behind him. He also said President Ruto has repeatedly expressed confidence in Kindiki's performance, describing him as the best Deputy President currently suited for the country.

Njuki's remarks came days after



Tharaka Nithi Governor Muthomi Njuki during the burial ceremony on Friday.

Oburu Odinga shifted his tone regarding ODM's ambitions for the Deputy President's seat in 2027. While speaking in Kisumu on February 2, Oburu had indicated that ODM was primarily interested in dialogue with Ruto's administration rather than seeking to unseat Kindiki.

However, at a subsequent party meeting in Mombasa, he clarified that he had been misquoted and maintained that the party's pursuit of the Deputy President's position remains an option.

Beyond national politics, Governor Njuki said he remains focused on de-

livering his development agenda in Tharaka Nithi County. He highlighted improvements at Chuka Level Five Hospital, including the establishment of an Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and an amenity wing to enhance specialist and private care services.

He added that his administration is collaborating with faith-based hospitals by deploying additional medical personnel to improve service delivery.

Before the end of his tenure next year, Njuki pledged to construct a modern bus park and convert the current bus stop into a recreational picnic

area. He also promised that a bypass in Chuka town would be completed by August next year to ease traffic congestion for motorists traveling to Nairobi and Meru.

Kagwe Secures Up To 1 Million Bags Of Maize From Zambia To Mitigate Drought Impact

By: MKT Correspondent

[@themtkenyatimes](https://twitter.com/themtkenyatimes)

Agriculture and Livestock Development Cabinet Secretary Mutahi Kagwe has secured an assurance from the Government of Zambia to supply up to 1 million 90kg bags of maize to Kenya if drought conditions worsen and local stocks fall short.

Speaking on the sidelines of the 49th Session of the IFAD Governing Council in Italy, CS Kagwe said bilateral talks with Zambia's Minister of Agriculture, Reuben Mtolo, confirmed that the southern African country can release maize from its grain reserves to support Kenya.

With an estimated 3.3 million Kenyans currently facing acute food insecurity—a figure projected to rise to 3.6 million by June 2026—Kagwe emphasized that Zambia's proximity

and COMESA membership would facilitate timely, duty-free supply without the need for additional government gazetttement.

CS Kagwe noted that an initial consignment of 250,000 bags could be imported immediately to stabilize the market while allowing authorities to monitor supply and demand carefully. The arrangement underscores Kenya's commitment to strengthening regional trade partnerships as a buffer against climate-induced food shortages.

Minister Mtolo assured that once pricing is agreed upon at the government level, authorized traders could supply the full 1 million bags. The discussions were attended by Kenya's Principal Secretary for Livestock Development, Jonathan Mueke, and PS Water Julius Korir.



Cabinet Secretary Mutahi Kagwe with his Zambian counterpart Reuben Mtolo. Photo/Courtesy.

Government Steps Up Rural Electrification As Wandayi Launches Kisii Phase

By: Elizabeth Angira

[@ElizabethAngira](https://twitter.com/ElizabethAngira)

Energy Cabinet Secretary Opiyo Wandayi has launched the Last Mile Connectivity Project in Kisii County, promising faster, wider and more affordable electricity connections for households that have remained in the dark for years.

Speaking during the launch ceremony at Bokubo village in Nyaribari Chache, Wandayi said that, the government is accelerating universal access to electricity as a key driver of economic growth, digital inclusion and social transformation.

"This programme is about dignity and opportunity," he said. "When we connect a home to electricity, we are not just lighting a bulb. We are opening doors to education, business, security and better health."

The Last Mile Connectivity Project, implemented by Kenya Power under the Ministry of Energy, targets households located near existing transformers but unable to afford or access connections.

In Kisii County alone, more than 18,000 new households have been connected to the national grid under the current phase, pushing the county's electricity access rate to over 78 per cent, according to data shared

during the event.

Nationally, the programme since its inception in 2015, the Last Mile Connectivity Project has significantly contributed to the growth of the electricity access rate in the county, which currently stands at 76% with 9.6 million households connected to the grid.

Wandayi emphasized that electricity is central to Kenya's industrial ambitions and the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda.

He noted that reliable power enables value addition in agriculture, supports cottage industries and attracts investment in rural areas.

"We cannot talk about digital jobs, innovation hubs or modern agriculture without power," he said. "Electricity is the backbone of development."

The CS also revealed that additional transformers have been installed across the county to stabilize supply and reduce outages. Over 120 new transformers have been mounted in different wards in Kisii over the past year to support the growing number of connections and ease pressure on the grid.

Residents who attended the launch expressed optimism that electricity will reduce household costs in the long run and improve security in their neighbourhoods.

The switch from darkness to light



Energy Cabinet Secretary Opiyo Wandayi, Nyaribari Chache MP Zaheer Jhanda at Bokubo during the launch of last mile connectivity. Photo/Elizabeth Angira

represents more than infrastructure. It signals inclusion.

Nyaribari Chache MP Zaheer Jhanda decried the continued lack of electricity in some villages, terming it unacceptable in this century.

"It is shameful that to date, there are homes still relying on small lanterns 'koroboi' that produce harmful smoke," Jhanda said. "These lamps are not only outdated but dangerous. The smoke affects families' health, especially children and the elderly who inhale it every day."

He affirmed that the government is determined to ensure every house-

hold is connected to electricity under the ongoing Last Mile Connectivity programme.

Jhanda noted that where electricity has already reached, the transformation is visible and measurable.

Small trading centres that once fell silent at dusk now remain vibrant late into the evening. Barbershops, welding workshops, salons and cyber cafés are thriving in areas that were previously off-grid. Students are able to study beyond sunset without relying on smoky kerosene lamps, while health facilities can safely refrigerate vaccines and op-

erate essential medical equipment without interruption.

Kisii Deputy Governor Elijah Obebo pledged the county government's support in accelerating connections across the remaining underserved areas.

"We will continue working closely with the national government to identify unconnected clusters and fast-track applications, particularly for vulnerable families," Obebo said, adding that no community should be left behind in the push for universal access to electricity.

Yes,...U R My Love.



I asked an question yesterday,
Iam still waiting for your answer today.

I asked u ,do u love me?
Iam for u,are u for me?

I have feeling for u in my heart,
Do u feel my love in your heart?

Why are you quiet? please say something.
I want an answer first,
After that everything.

He was silent,
Suddenly he broke the silence.
And he looked into my eyes,
I saw too much love in his eyes.

He held my hand and said to me,
Do you still want an answer from me?

You can see the answer in my eye.
I have many dreams for you,...
U r my sugarpie.

You can feel my heart.
You are my love,
You are my part.

Love has no language,it has only feeling.
Love has its own world,its own meaning.

He said, "I love....." And he became quiet.
Suddenly my heart gave an answer right.

Yes,he is my love,
He is my choice.
He is my silence,
He is my voice.

Yes,he is my whole life,I feel for him.
I will spend my whole life with him.

In love there is no other way.
Love is felt,...No need to say.

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Healthy



If you want to become healthy,
Plenty of fruits are waiting for you.
Do not hesitate choose them first,
And keep your body strong and true.

Exercise daily, stay active and fit,

Eat an egg each day for strength.

Add some nuts and healthy soup,
And go the extra length.
Laugh more, spread love everywhere,
Let kindness be your guide.

Live happily, stay positive
With joy that lasts for life.

S. Sanjana
Seventh Standard
PUMS Konganancherry
Chengalpattu district
Motivated by V. JAYANTHI



Good Relationships Are Not 'M About Who
Came First,

But about who stays till the last

Who withholds all trials and tribulations,
And who stays near you,
who are ready to hold you when you fall,
Not the one who pushes you down and runs
away,
Many fall in that area stabbing at the back.

A true relationship is one who stays with you
till the end,

Travels with you wherever you go,
Holds you and never leaves you at any cost,
It's not the one who stays in joy and in sorrow
too.

One who stays till the end, without jealousy,
hatred, and betrayal,
That's the bond that's real, that's true love
That is really difficult to get.
If you get . Cherish it don't miss it

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

The One Who Stays

Some are only passing shadows,
Some lighten your hidden load.

When storms silence your laughter
And nights feel endlessly vast,
The truest love is not who found you
But who stands with you till the last.

For life is not measured in meetings,
But in souls that remain through all days;
Blessed are those rare hearts
That love you enough to stay.

V. JAYANTHI
Graduate teacher
Creative writer
Chengalpattu district
Tamil Nadu



Love is not about arriving first,
Nor shining for a while and fading away;
It is the quiet promise of a heart
That looks at you and chooses to stay.

Not everyone who walks beside you
Is meant for the length of your road;

Sparkling Dreams



The dreams that I sown
Long long ago
Manured and nourished
By heaps of perseverance
Sustained the deep bruises
Life injected in me;
Yet the scars remain raw
That feed me enough confidence
To pursue my cherished dreams
And I sparkle everyday
With unshakable Willpower.

Shyni. S. S,
BT Assistant
GHSS, Rameshwaram.



My village is beautiful.
All my relatives live happily here.
There are not many streets,

My Village

Yet we live a joyful life.

My school is in my village;
I love going there every day.
I meet my uncle and aunty on the way,
And my heart feels light and gay.

Not many buses come here,
But there are so many trees.
Because of them, we feel fresh
All the time, with ease.

P. PRIYANKA
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TAMIL NADU

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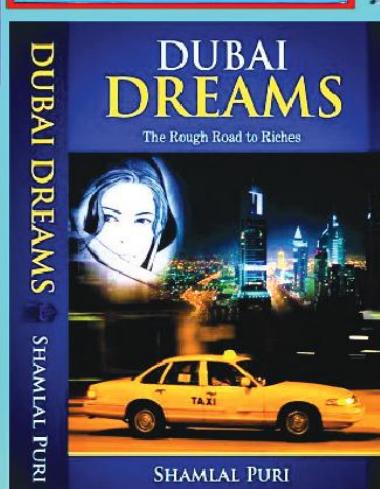
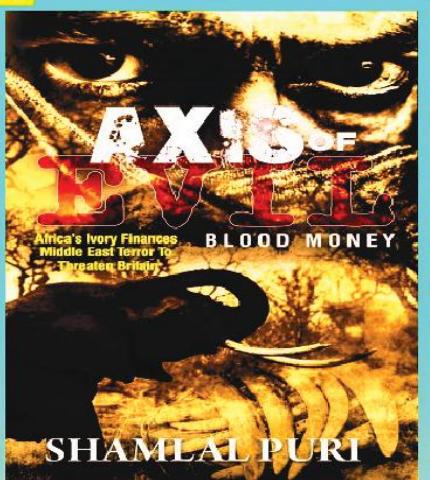
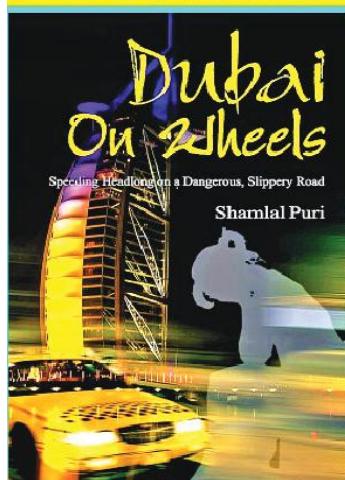
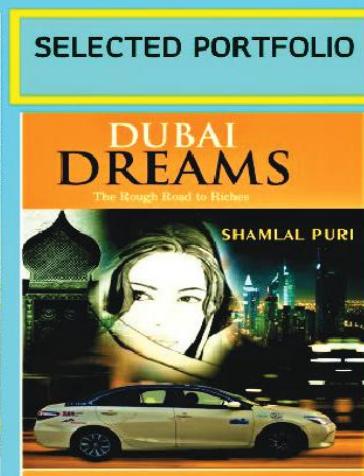
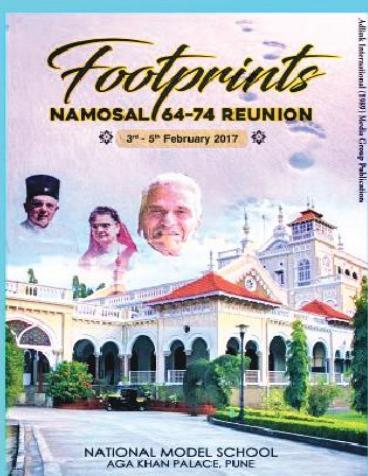
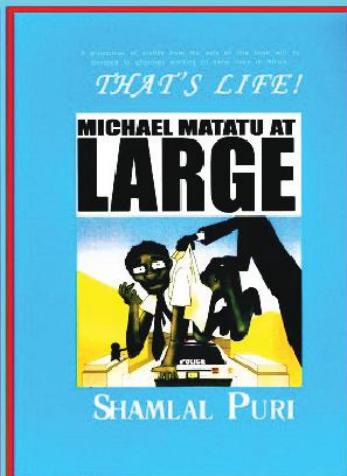
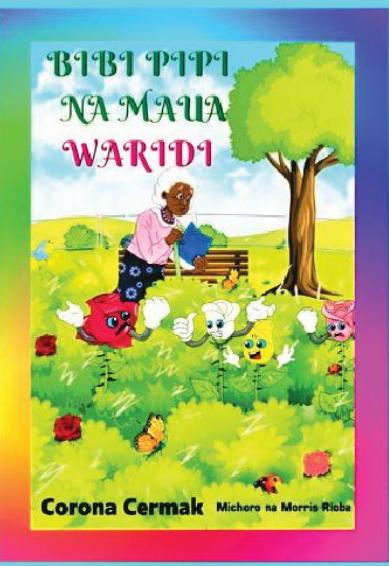
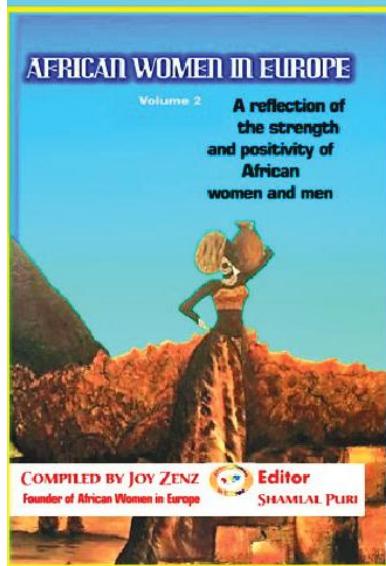
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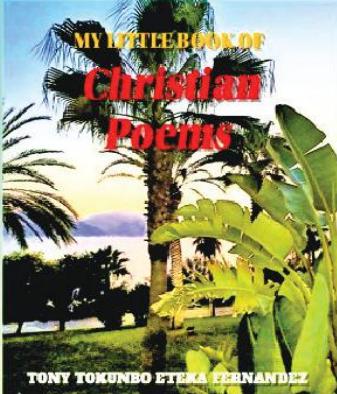
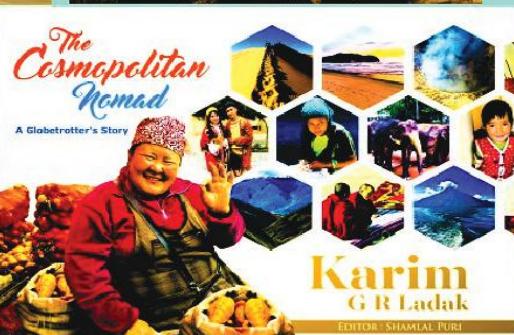
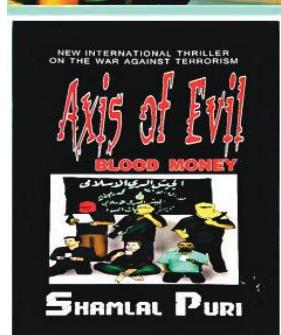
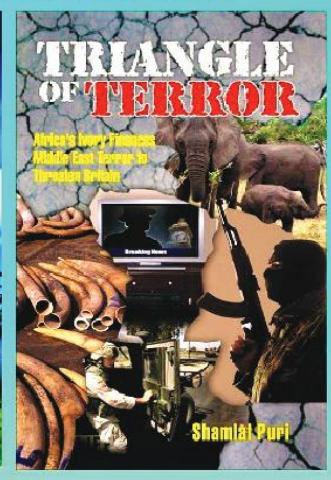
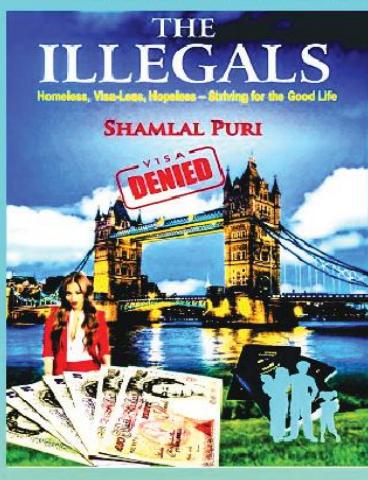
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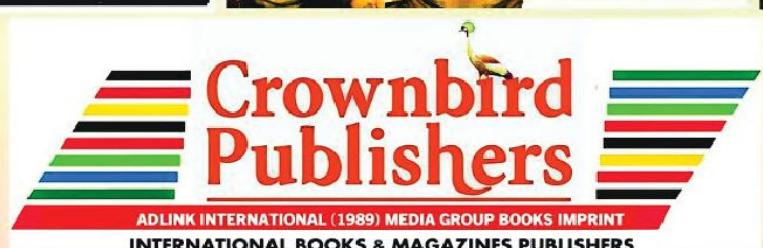


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COUNTIES

UDA Holds Sensitization Workshops In Kirinyaga Ahead Of Repeat Grassroots Elections

By: MKT Correspondent
 @themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- The exercise follows elections held about a month ago in which some polling stations are said not to have met the minimum required thresholds such as the stipulated minimum voter turnout, compliance with demographic requirement such as gender or age of aspirants.
- In a social media post released after the exercise, Kirinyaga Governor Anne Waiguru said that the sensitization exercise was an affirmation that UDA Party is people-centered party that listens and responds.
- “Following members’ calls for greater involvement and civic education, the party took the process back to the ground. The huge turnout once again confirms that Kirinyaga stands firmly with UDA and Kenya Kwanza government as we strengthen our structures from grassroots”, the post read.



Some of the UDA Party grassroots leaders in Kirinyaga County during forum.

The United Democratic Alliance (UDA) party on Thursday conducted sensitization workshops across Kirinyaga County in preparation for repeat grassroots elections scheduled for March 7.

The exercise follows elections held about a month ago in which some polling stations are said not to have met the minimum required thresholds such as the stipulated minimum voter turnout, compliance with demographic requirement such as gender or age of aspirants.

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Speaking during the sensitization forum for Gichugu constituency, Salma Ochieng, one of the trainers from the party headquarters said that the grassroots elections will be conducted in four levels: polling centres, ward level, constituency and the national level.

Ochieng explained that the sensitization held targeted the polling centre level, where all eligible party members are allowed to vote, with those elected at the level serving as delegates for ward-level elections before proceeding to constituency and national delegate system election.

“We are here today to ensure that each polling center meets the minimum threshold for each of the representatives who will be elected”, said Salma.

She stressed that the party had done away with manual voting system and will use electronic voting only as a way of enhancing efficiency, transparency, and credibility in the elec-

toral process.

Ishmael Bosire, who was training the party members from Ndia Constituency expressed optimism that the ongoing sensitization exercise would help address any shortcomings and ensure the forthcoming elections meet the expected standards.

Esther Macai, a UDA grassroots aspirant from Njukiini ward in Gichugu constituency noted UDA members and aspirants as well as voters have now been well sensitized on what is expected from registration to elections.

“The exercise today has been very informative since most of us had not well understood the eligibility criteria as well as some other details during the last elections. However, with today’s sensitization, we are now ready and well informed and the upcoming elections will be successful”, said Esther.

Cecily Wairiuko, a UDA member from Kiaragana, lauded UDA for being a listening party noting that the

training was thorough as more people now understand better of what is expected of them. “We are now waiting for the grassroots election date so that we can turn out in large numbers and vote”. She said, pointing out that those supporting UDA are doing so because the party’s leader, President William Ruto had delivered his promise to the electorate through the many development projects his administration has implemented across the country. She also lauded Governor Anne Waiguru for the transformation that Kirinyaga has undergone through her leadership, noting that there is tangible development in the county.

The deadline for registration of aspirants has been set for February 21, ahead of the March 7 polling station repeat elections.

Party officials urged members to familiarize themselves with the guidelines and actively participate in the repeat exercise to strengthen grassroots leadership structures across the county.

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Poverty Is A Social Issue, Not A Mathematical Problem



By: Odhiambo Jerameel Kevin Owuor

[@themtkenyatimes](#)

Worth Noting:

- Sub-Saharan Africa bears the disproportionate weight of global poverty in ways that expose poverty's fundamentally social and historical nature. The region, home to only 16 percent of the world's population, contains 67 percent of those living in extreme poverty according to the World Bank's "Poverty, Prosperity, and Planet Report 2024."**
- In Nigeria alone, over 11 percent of the world's extreme poor resided in 2024, with the Democratic Republic of the Congo accounting for another 10 percent. These concentrations are not mathematical coincidences but the direct legacy of colonialism, resource exploitation, structural adjustment programs, and continued economic marginalization.**
- Zimbabwean writer Tapiwanaise Pamacheche poses the critical questions that statistics cannot answer: "Is poverty leading us to the stagnant sea of prostitution?"**

As of 2024, 839 million people approximately 10.3 percent of the global population live in extreme poverty, surviving on less than three dollars per day. This staggering statistic from the World Bank's September 2025 Poverty and Inequality Platform update represents not merely a number to be calculated and recalculated, but 839 million individual human stories of struggle, resilience, deprivation, and denied dignity. Each percentage point contains millions of lives constrained by circumstances far beyond their control, embedded in systems of inequality that no algorithm can adequately capture or computational model can fully comprehend. Poverty is fundamentally a social issue; a manifestation of historical injustices, structural inequalities, power imbalances, and policy failures that demands social solutions rooted in human understanding rather than mathematical reductionism.

The contemporary obsession with quantifying poverty through income thresholds and statistical models, while useful for tracking progress, dangerously obscures the lived reality of deprivation. As Matsime Simon Mohapi powerfully articulates in "Poverty in the Land of Riches - South Africa," poverty transcends statistics: "Poverty is what you see in the eyes of a Black child living in the squatter camp." This visceral description captures what no poverty line can measure the psychological weight, the erosion of hope, the accumulated trauma of economic exclusion. The World Bank's recent adjustment of the international poverty line from \$2.15 to \$3.00 per day in 2021 purchasing power parity terms resulted in an upward revision of extreme poverty rates, with Sub-Saharan Africa's rate jumping from 37.0 percent to 45.5 percent in 2022. Nonetheless this mathematical recalibration changes nothing about the daily reality of hunger, homelessness, and humiliation that constitute poverty's true burden. As Mohapi further notes, "Poverty is when there is no food and a child is forced to fill its stomach with water for the night" a reality that no equation can solve.

Sub-Saharan Africa bears the disproportionate weight of global poverty in ways that expose poverty's fundamentally social and historical nature. The region, home to only 16 percent of the world's population, contains 67 percent of those living in extreme poverty according to the World Bank's "Poverty, Prosperity, and Planet Report 2024." In Nigeria alone, over 11 percent of the world's



extreme poor resided in 2024, with the Democratic Republic of the Congo accounting for another 10 percent. These concentrations are not mathematical coincidences but the direct legacy of colonialism, resource exploitation, structural adjustment programs, and continued economic marginalization. Zimbabwean writer Tapiwanaise Pamacheche poses the critical questions that statistics cannot answer: "Is poverty leading us to the stagnant sea of prostitution? Is the pauperism playing a role in tarnishing our image? Is paucity injecting a lethal poison in our morals? Is penury eating civilization and destroying families?" These rhetorical interrogations remind us that poverty corrodes social fabric, moral frameworks, and community cohesion in ways that GDP calculations cannot measure.

The mathematical approach to poverty fails spectacularly when confronted with the reality of inequality within and between nations. South Africa, Namibia, and Zambia possess the highest income inequality in the world, with Gini coefficients approaching 63, 59, and 58 points respectively. In South Africa specifically, youth unemployment stood at 62.2 percent in 2024, while the expanded unemployment rate including discouraged workers reached 42.9 percent. These are not merely statistical anomalies but manifestations of systemic exclusion rooted in apartheid's legacy and neoliberal economic policies that have concentrated wealth while abandoning the majority. As South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu articulated through the concept of ubuntu, "a person is a person only

through other persons, that my humanity is caught up in yours." When the richest 10 percent in Africa hold over 71 percent of the continent's wealth while the poorest 50 percent possess only 1.2 percent, we witness not a mathematical distribution problem but a profound moral failure and social rupture that severs the interconnectedness essential to human flourishing.

Global efforts to reduce poverty have stalled dramatically, revealing the inadequacy of technocratic approaches divorced from political and social transformation. The World Bank's "Poverty, Prosperity, and Planet Report 2024" notes that between 2024 and 2030, only 69 million people are projected to escape extreme poverty, compared to 150 million who did so between 2013 and 2019 a devastating deceleration. The COVID-19 pandemic reversed decades of progress, with extreme poverty increasing for the first time in generations from 8.9 percent in 2019 to 9.7 percent in 2020. This regression, driven primarily by South Asia where extreme poverty surged by 2.4 percentage points, demonstrates poverty's vulnerability to shocks that mathematics cannot predict or prevent. As Nigerian literary giant Chinua Achebe insisted, "art is, and always was, at the service of man," arguing that literature must have purpose and message a philosophy applicable to all human endeavors including poverty alleviation, which cannot be value-neutral or purely technical but must be guided by commitment to justice and human dignity.

The concentration of poverty in fragile and conflict-affected states under-

scores poverty's political and social dimensions. By 2025, more than three-quarters of the global extreme poor will live in Sub-Saharan Africa or in fragile and conflict-affected countries according to the UN SDG Report. The Middle East and North Africa region experienced increases in poverty even before COVID-19, with extreme poverty rising from 8.5 percent in 2022 to 9.4 percent in 2025, primarily due to fragility and conflict. These patterns reveal that poverty flourishes where governance fails, where violence destroys social institutions, where displacement ruptures communities, and where political instability prevents long-term planning and investment. Nelson Mandela's observation remains urgently relevant: "Poverty is not an accident. Like slavery and apartheid, it is man-made and can be removed by the actions of human beings." Poverty persists not because we lack mathematical models but because we lack political will to address its root causes in exploitation, marginalization, and structural violence.

The inadequacy of income-based poverty measures becomes evident when examining multidimensional deprivation. While 839 million people lived below the extreme poverty line in 2024, an additional 1.5 billion lived on less than \$4.20 per day, and 3.8 billion survived on less than \$8.30 per day nearly half the global population. These gradations reveal that poverty is not a binary condi-

Poverty Is A Social Issue, Not A Mathematical Problem

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tion amenable to simple calculation but a continuum of exclusion from full participation in society. In African literature, this multidimensional understanding is inherent. Ghanaian writer and feminist Ama Ata Aidoo eloquently stated, "For us Africans, literature must serve a purpose: to expose, embarrass, and fight corruption and authoritarianism." Similarly, poverty analysis must expose the systems that create deprivation, embarrass those who perpetuate inequality, and fight for comprehensive transformation rather than incremental adjustments to poverty lines. The International Labour Organization's 2025 report notes that 240 million workers globally 6.9 percent of the employed population live in extreme poverty, demonstrating that employment alone cannot solve poverty when work is precarious, informal, and inadequately compensated.

Social protection systems, essential for poverty reduction, reveal the political choices underlying poverty's persistence. In 2023, for the first time, more than half the world's population (52.4 percent) received at least one social protection benefit, yet 3.8 billion people remained unprotected according to the UN SDG Report. While high-income countries approach universal coverage at 85.9 percent, low-income countries provide coverage to merely 9.7 percent of their populations. Countries spend on average 19.3 percent of GDP on social protection, but this ranges from 24.9 percent in high-income countries to just 2.0 percent in low-income nations. Guaranteeing basic social security in low- and middle-income countries requires an additional \$1.4 trillion annually, 3.3 percent of their aggregate GDP. These disparities are not mathematical inevitabilities but political decisions about resource allocation, taxation, and priorities. As Tapiwana ishe Pamacheche laments, "Mother! Ripped apart. Reaped stones of poverty, weeds that sprouted" poverty reproduces itself across generations not through mathematical laws but through social neglect and policy abandonment.

Working poverty exposes the fiction that market participation alone constitutes escape from deprivation. The global working poverty rate fell from 37.4 percent in 1991 to 6.9 percent in 2024 at the extreme poverty line, yet in least developed countries, nearly three in ten workers remained in extreme poverty in 2024. The difference between poverty rates among the employed versus the unemployed is less than two percentage points, revealing that employment provides minimal



protection against poverty when work is exploitative, when wages are insufficient, and when labor rights are denied. Kenyan writer Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, in "Decolonizing the Mind," emphasizes that language and culture shape consciousness, arguing that true liberation requires mental as well as material transformation. Similarly, poverty eradication requires not just employment statistics but transformation of economic relationships fair wages, worker power, social protection, and recognition that labor has dignity beyond its market price. The persistence of working poverty reveals that poverty's causes lie in social relations of production rather than individual productivity deficits. Land rights and tenure security illustrate how poverty intertwines with historical dispossession and contemporary exclusion. Based on 2022 data from 85 countries, only 43 percent of adults possess official land tenure documents, falling to just 15 percent in Sub-Saharan Africa. This means nearly 1.4 billion adults in developing regions are excluded from formal land markets, lack access to mortgage-based finance, and have no legal means to protect their land rights. In one in five reporting countries, fewer than one in ten adults hold official land documentation. These patterns reflect colonial land grabs, postcolonial elite capture, gender discrimination, and legal systems that privilege formal documentation over customary rights. As Idowu Koyenikan writes in "Wealth for all Africans," "It takes nothing to stay in poverty, but everything to break free from it." Yet when property rights are denied, when legal

systems exclude, when documentation requires resources the poor lack, breaking free becomes structurally impossible regardless of individual effort. Poverty's persistence reflects not inadequate mathematical modeling but systematic denial of economic rights and resources.

Climate vulnerability disproportionately impacts the poor, creating a vicious cycle that mathematical interventions cannot interrupt without addressing underlying injustices. One in five people globally faces risk of extreme weather events in their lifetime, yet those most vulnerable contributed least to climate change. Sub-Saharan Africa, bearing 67 percent of extreme poverty, produces minimal greenhouse gas emissions compared to upper-middle and high-income countries that account for four-fifths of global emissions. The "Poverty, Prosperity, and Planet Report 2024" emphasizes that achieving a world free of poverty on a livable planet requires serious, immediate action addressing these interconnected crises. Former South African President Thabo Mbeki warned, "A global human society, characterized by islands of wealth, surrounded by a sea of poverty, is unsuitable." Climate change intensifies this unsustainability, flooding poverty-stricken regions while prosperity insulates the wealthy. Addressing climate-induced poverty requires not better climate models but transformative justice; debt forgiveness, technology transfer, climate reparations, and recognition that historical emissions create contemporary obligations.

In 2024, 839 million people live in extreme poverty not because of insuf-

ficient mathematical sophistication but because of social choices about distribution, about power, about whose lives matter, about whether we recognize our fundamental interdependence. As Desmond Tutu reminded us through ubuntu philosophy, our humanity is inextricably bound together. The solution to poverty cannot be found in poverty lines, regression analyses, or econometric models, however useful these tools may be for measurement. Poverty will end only through social transformation: redistribution of resources and power, decolonization of economic structures, establishment of universal social protection, guarantee of economic rights, and recognition that every human being deserves not just survival but dignity, opportunity, and full participation in society. The numbers tell us the magnitude of the challenge, but the solution lies in our collective commitment to justice, our willingness to recognize that in enriching others we enrich ourselves, and our courage to build societies whereas Nelson Mandela proclaimed, poverty becomes history not because we calculated better but because we chose better, we chose each other, we chose justice, we chose humanity. Poverty is indeed not a mathematical problem to be solved through superior algorithms, but a moral catastrophe to be ended through social solidarity, political transformation, and unwavering commitment to the inherent dignity and worth of every human being.

The writer is a social commentator.

Kisii's 200 Teen Mothers Get Lifeline as Government Demands Immediate School Reentry

By: Elizabeth Angira
 @themtkenyatimes

Ambassador Professor Julius Bitok, Principal Secretary for Basic Education, has directed education officials in the region to ensure that all 200 girls return to school immediately and without any conditions.

Speaking at Sugubo Secondary School in Bobasi Constituency during a community empowerment forum, Prof. Bitok emphasized that the government is firmly committed to ensuring that every child under the age of 18 is in school.

He reiterated that the President has made it clear: no student should be turned away because of lack of school fees, uniform, or any other requirement.

"I am here with education officials, and we have agreed that we will mobilize every village to ensure that all learners return to school," he said.

The PS noted that special attention would be given to teen mothers to ensure they receive the support they need to resume their education.

He warned those responsible for harming children that the government would not tolerate such actions.

"We will not allow anyone to interfere with the lives of our young girls. They must be protected," he stated, calling upon teachers, religious leaders, the church, and all stakeholders to work together in safeguarding children from violence and exploitation.

Prof. Bitok termed it deeply troubling that 200 girls in Kisii County are facing challenges related to early pregnancy.

He described the situation as unacceptable and urged collective responsibility in addressing the crisis. He further called upon the National Government Administration Officers (NGAO) to work closely with education officials in tracing and mobilizing learners back to school, especially vulnerable girls in villages across the county.

On matters of governance, the PS revealed that the government is also focused on cleaning and verifying data within the basic education sector.

Following the recent release of an official report by the Cabinet Secretary, the ministry is working to ensure accurate student enrollment data across primary, junior, and senior schools nationwide.

He confirmed that the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI)

has been engaged to investigate cases where enrollment data may have been exaggerated. Those found culpable will face the full force of the law.

"The report is public, and action will be taken. Anyone found manipulating student data will be held accountable," he said.

Meanwhile, Stephen Isaboke, Principal Secretary for Broadcasting and Telecommunications, expressed solidarity with the affected girls and widows in the community, sharing that he personally understands the pain of growing up in a widowed household.

"I am a product of a widow myself. I understand that struggle," he said.

He linked the initiative to the government's broader bottom-up economic transformation agenda under President Dr. William Samoei Ruto, which seeks to uplift vulnerable populations.

He referenced the NYOTA programme, which targets youth aged 19–29 who dropped out of school and supports them with funding to start income-generating ventures.

"What we are doing here is similar ensuring that these 200 girls from Sugubo are not left behind. They deserve a second chance. They deserve dignity and opportunity," he said.

On the ICT front, Isaboke assured residents that the government is expanding the digital superhighway across Kisii County. A Centre of Excellence is under construction in the South Mugirango area, alongside additional digital hubs across constituencies, including Masige and other parts of the county.

These hubs and schools, he said,

will be equipped with computers to bridge the digital divide and ensure youth are part of the digital economy.

Kisii woman rep Dorice Donya, described meeting teen mothers who were struggling with uncertainty about their future. Many did not know how they could return to school or rebuild their lives.

Donya said that, after the visit, consultations were held in Nairobi with Prof. Bitok, who expressed deep concern and committed to personally addressing the situation and offering hope.

Donya spoke firmly against defilement and the culture of silence surrounding such crimes.

She stressed that defilement is a criminal offense and must be treated as such not resolved through informal negotiations or prayer sessions conducted at home.

"Defilement is a crime against a child and against the state. It should never be settled privately," Donya said.

She also challenged the stigma placed on victims, stating clearly that shame belongs to the perpetrator not the child.

"The child did not defile herself. She carries no shame. Accountability must rest entirely with the offender," Donya said.

Leaders called for stronger enforcement of the law and collective responsibility in protecting children.

They also emphasized the need to empower both the girl child and the boy child, ensuring that all children grow up with education, values, protection, and opportunity.



Ambassador Professor Julius Bitok, Principal Secretary Education (Middle) Stephen Isaboke, Principal Secretary for Broadcasting and Telecommunications, Kisii Woman Rep Dorice Donya during community empowerment at Sugubo in Bobasi have called stronger enforcement of the law and collective responsibility in protecting children.

Photo/Elizabeth Angira



Stephen Isaboke, Principal Secretary for Broadcasting and Telecommunications



Kisii Woman Rep Dorice Donya



Ambassador Professor Julius Bitok, Principal Secretary Education

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Valentine's Day Exposes A Paradox: Gen Z Celebrates Love In Memes And Hashtags, Yet Recoils From Its Traditional Anchor—Marriage.

Kenya's president recently lamented that young people are shunning matrimony, echoing elders who see a generation unwilling to build families. But the charge oversimplifies. Gen Z grew up watching marriages unravel in violence, betrayal, and financial strain. To them, love is not a sanctuary but a battlefield. Convincing someone who witnessed domestic chaos that marriage is paradise is a hard sell. Self preservation, not romance, becomes the safer choice.

Commitment and compromise—pillars of lasting unions—clash with Gen Z's fierce individualism. They prize autonomy, personal space, and self expression. Love, however, demands surrender of some freedoms. For many, that feels like shackles rather than devotion. Add to this a marketplace where soko ni chafu—love is commodified, measured by material offerings. Older generations, with established wealth, outbid struggling youths, turning affection



into a transaction. Organic love has been replaced by competitive, monetary love.

Infidelity, normalized in pop culture and whispered across social feeds, further poisons the well. What looks glamorous online often translates into heartbreak, depression, even violence offline. In such an atmosphere, marriage feels less like a promise and more like a trap.

Valentine's Day should be a celebration of affection, but for

many Gen Zs it reopens wounds. As couples flaunt roses and dinners, society must remember those scarred by love's failures. Pressure from elders will not heal them. Gen Z will choose love and marriage on their own terms, in their own time.

Until then, roses may bloom, but the thorns are what Gen Z remembers.

By Daniel Maina, Laikipia University

Transition Stress: The Hidden Test Of Student Resilience

From the leap into a new school to the grind of higher academic demands, transitions define the student journey. They can spark growth, but they also ignite anxiety. Concentration falters, motivation dips, and confidence erodes. Emotionally, students wrestle with self doubt, irritability, or low mood. Socially, many withdraw, feeling disconnected from peers and reluctant to seek help. Left unchecked, transition stress breeds burnout, poor performance, and lasting mental health scars.

Yet these challenges are not insurmountable. Resilience—the ability to adapt and recover—can be cultivated. Schools that encourage self awareness, normalize help seeking, and teach emotional regulation equip students to face change with strength. More importantly, institutions must create environments where students feel safe, understood, and valued. That sense of belonging is the antidote to isolation and the founda-



tion for academic success.

Transition stress is not a flaw in students; it is a reality of educational life. Ignoring it risks turning opportunity into trauma. Addressing it transforms upheaval into growth. The responsibility lies with educators, administrators, and policymakers to recognize the weight of transitions and

respond with empathy, structure, and support.

Education should not break students in the name of progress—it should build them for the future.

By Rebah Mukalo, Laikipia University

Building Integrity, Battling Corruption

Corruption is the nation's most corrosive enemy—eroding trust, draining resources, and stunting development. Governments that confront it head on are not just enforcing laws; they are safeguarding democracy itself.

Kenya's anti corruption drive has sharpened its legal teeth. Tougher statutes, specialized commissions, and stiff penalties send a clear message: misuse of public funds will not be tolerated. Officials caught in bribery or fraud face dismissal, fines, and prison. The deterrent effect is real—corruption is no longer a risk free gamble.

Transparency is the second weapon. Publishing budgets, contracts, and project details online empowers citizens and media to scrutinize government spending. Accountability thrives when secrecy dies. Technology strengthens this fight further: e procurement, online tax filing, and digital payments reduce face to face dealings where bribes flourish. Anonymous complaint portals give citizens a safe channel to expose wrongdoing.

Education and awareness cam-



paigns add a cultural dimension. By instilling integrity in schools and communities, the government aims to make corruption socially unacceptable. Public participation completes the arsenal. Whistleblower protections encourage citizens to speak out, while community monitoring ensures that development projects serve the people, not private pockets.

The war on corruption is far from over, but progress is visible. Laws, transparency, tech-

nology, education, and citizen action form a united front. The challenge is consistency—sustained effort without compromise.

A corruption free nation is not a dream; it is a duty—and the government must prove it every single day.

By Alex Mutisya, Laikipia University

Ruto's Security—Balancing Access And Protection



When citizens breach presidential security perimeters, it is not just a lapse in protocol—it is a crack in the nation's shield. President William Ruto's recent encounters with crowds pressing dangerously close have ignited debate about whether Kenya's security systems are keeping pace with modern political realities.

Today's politics prizes openness. Leaders mingle with citizens at rallies, projecting accessibility and empathy. Yet this intimacy comes at a cost: heightened vulnerability. Social

media mobilization, economic frustrations, and political tensions can quickly turn gatherings volatile. Security agencies face the daunting task of managing unpredictable crowds while guarding against unseen threats.

The issue is not one officer “sleeping on the job.” It is systemic. Intelligence coordination, crowd control strategies, and enforcement of safety protocols must be reinforced.

Protecting the presidency is not about shielding one man—it is about safeguarding the symbol of national unity and constitu-

tional authority. Kenya's democratic openness is worth defending, but it must coexist with uncompromising protection of the Head of State. Accessibility should never translate into exposure. The public deserves connection with its leaders, but the nation demands stability above all.

When presidential security falters, it is not just the president at risk—it is the image of Kenya itself.

By Collins Kibor, Writer & Journalist

Sports >> *CAF President Patrice Motsepe has reaffirmed that the WAFCON will proceed as scheduled in Morocco, dismissing speculation about possible changes to the tournament's host.

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Why Caf Will Not Shift Women's Africa Cup Of Nations From Morocco To South Africa



Nigeria celebrate after winning Wafcon. PHOTO/CAF WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

CAF President Patrice Motsepe has reaffirmed that the Women Africa Cup of Nations (WAFCON) will proceed as scheduled in Morocco, dismissing speculation about possible changes to the tournament's host.

Speaking during the CAF Executive Committee meeting in Dar es Salaam, he emphasized that the competition remains on track and must take place within its planned window due to its role in qualification for the Women's World Cup 2027.

"The WAFCON continues... there's discussions taking place and there're a lot of competitions. Remember, Morocco came

to assist because there were many countries that wanted to host it, but we didn't have time. Our standards are very high," he said.

Motsepe noted that although several countries expressed interest in hosting the tournament, time constraints and CAF's high infrastructure and organizational standards made continuity essential.

"As we speak now, we still have an engagement with Morocco because some of the other countries say, 'please can we host it,' but they want to change the date. We can't change the date because it's one of those qualifi-

ers for the World Cup," the South African said.

Recent speculation had linked South Africa as a potential backup host, with Deputy Sports Minister Peace Mabe indicating readiness should changes occur. However, CAF's position signals confidence in Morocco's continued hosting role.

The 2026 edition will be historic, featuring 16 teams — including Kenya's Harambee Starlets — for the first time.

The top four finishers will secure Africa's qualification slots for next year's Women's World Cup in Brazil, raising the stakes as the continent's leading wom-

en's football nations prepare for an expanded and highly competitive tournament.

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GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *Kenya Wheelchair Basketball Federation (KWB) have lamented about the poor facilities at the Moi International Sports Center (MISC) Kasarani

Wheelchair Basketballers Cry Foul Over Deplorable Training Facilities Ahead Of Major Competitions



American coach Rollin Sanders oversees training session for wheelchair basketball teams at Kasarani Stadium. PHOTO/Calvin Kaindi

Kenya Wheelchair Basketball Federation (KWB) have lamented about the poor facilities at the Moi International Sports Center (MISC) Kasarani, as they prepare for the Africa U-25 Women Wheelchair Basketball Championships and International Wheelchair Basketball Federation (IWBF) Africa Championships.

The federation's president Alfred Simiyu Barasa says they have been denied access to main arena, which is more suitable to persons with disabilities (PWDs).

"The management of Kasara-

ni have denied us access to the main arena which is user friendly to Persons With Disabilities (PWD'S). Whatever has been availed to us has a wooden floor that is dilapidated, the toilets available have stairs, the main entrance has no ramp, so how will these athletes access the facility?" Simiyu asked.

The Under 25 championships are set for the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) whereas IWBF Africa Championships will be staged in Angola in March — where Kenya stand a chance to qualify

for this year's Commonwealth Games.

The Under 25 competition will also double up as qualifiers for this year's World Championships in Ottawa, Canada.

Meanwhile, the team have acquired the services of American wheelchair basketball coach Roland Sanders who is thus far impressed with the talent levels in the squad.

"I am happy to be here, the hospitality is on another level, the talents and intensity is what I did not expect. We just need the gov-

ernment to work on better facilities for training," the Texas native said.

In Angola, Kenya will be represented by the 3X3 as well as 5X5 basketball teams — both men and ladies.

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The Leadership And Impact Of Dr. Karine Coen-Sanchez



By: Anila Bukhari
[@themtkenyatimes](https://twitter.com/themtkenyatimes)

Dr. Karine Coen-Sanchez is an internationally recognized speaker, scholar, and institutional advisor whose work operates at the intersection of governance, equity, institutional accountability, and organizational risk. Through her consulting practice, and public engagement, she has emerged as a leading voice guiding institutions to critically examine how norms, policies, and behavioural systems shape inclusion, decision-making, and organizational outcomes.

Grounded in qualitative and grounded theory research traditions, Dr. Coen-Sanchez's scholarship challenges conventional assumptions about neutrality, fairness, and procedural objectivity. Rather than treating neutrality as an unquestioned institutional virtue, her work demonstrates how unexamined frameworks of civility and impartiality can inadvertently reproduce systemic inequities and generate institutional vulnerabilities. Her research advances a model of reflective governance in which neutrality is understood as an active, ethically accountable practice continuously evaluated for its real-world consequences.

As a sought-after international speaker, Dr. Coen-Sanchez has delivered keynote addresses, executive briefings, and specialized trainings to oversight bodies, regulatory organizations, universities, and senior leadership teams. Her presentations are distinguished by their ability to translate complex theoretical insights into practical institutional strategies. One of her most influential invited sessions, *Beyond Neutrality: Ombuds as Architects of Inclusive and Accountable Systems*, encapsulates her central thesis: that institutional actors must balance fairness, accountability, and risk awareness within increasingly complex governance environments.

Through this work, she equips professionals with frameworks to identify systemic barriers, strengthen psychological safety, and recognize emerging governance and institutional risk dynamics.

Dr. Coen-Sanchez's approach is defined by intellectual rigor, methodological precision, and ethical clarity. Drawing from sociology, governance studies, and public health, she develops interdisciplinary frameworks that illuminate how institutional norms, behavioural expectations, and systems-level dynamics influence organizational stability and equity outcomes. Her scholarship, grounded in peer-reviewed research and grounded theory methodologies, is distinguished by its commitment to bridging theory and practice. Rather than remaining confined to academic discourse, her research is designed for translation into real organizational, regulatory, and policy contexts.

This applied orientation has made Dr. Coen-Sanchez a trusted advisor to institutions navigating periods of transformation, regulatory scrutiny, and heightened public accountability. Her consulting engagements frequently focus on institutional risk identification, systemic barrier diagnostics, governance conflict analysis, and policy interpretation, enabling organizations to better understand how structural dynamics shape both performance and inclusion. By integrating behaviour-informed mitigation strategies with policy-to-practice translation frameworks, she supports leaders in designing systems that enhance transparency, resilience, and institutional integrity.

As an award-winning scholar and consultant, Dr. Coen-Sanchez is widely recognized for her ability to transform complex systemic challenges into clear strategic pathways. She emphasizes that meaningful institutional change requires more than symbolic commitments to diversity or fairness; it demands measurable accountability, sustained organizational effort, and proactive identification of structural and governance risks. Her work supports organizations in embedding equity

into decision-making processes while strengthening governance coherence and organizational effectiveness.

At a time when global institutions confront rising inequality, governance complexity, and growing public distrust, Dr. Coen-Sanchez offers a distinctive combination of research-grounded insight and strategic advisory expertise. She recognizes that modern organizations operate within intricate social ecosystems shaped by competing stakeholder, regulatory, and reputational pressures. Her work provides leaders with practical tools to navigate these dynamics with integrity, aligning institutional values with operational realities through evidence-based, behaviour-informed approaches.

Central to Dr. Coen-Sanchez's philosophy is the conviction that accountability, inclusion, and risk awareness are mutually reinforcing rather than competing priorities. She challenges institutional leaders to move beyond performative gestures toward governance frameworks that produce equitable, transparent, and sustainable outcomes in practice. Her trainings emphasize psychological safety as a foundational condition for institutional learning, adaptive governance, and long-term organizational resilience. Throughout her career, Dr. Coen-Sanchez has remained deeply committed to advancing interdisciplinary dialogue connecting research, policy, and institutional practice. She actively contributes to conversations that bridge academic scholarship with governance strategy and organizational design, underscoring the shared responsibility of institutions to address systemic inequities while strengthening accountability structures.

Ultimately, Dr. Coen-Sanchez's contributions extend beyond individual organizations to shape broader conversations on equity, governance, and institutional responsibility. She envisions institutions that are not only inclusive in intention but demonstrably accountable, resilient, and ethically grounded in action. Through her scholarship, speaking engagements, and advisory work, she continues to influence how organizations understand neutrality, behavioural norms, and systemic risk.



Dr. Karine Coen-Sanchez

and advisory work, she continues to influence how organizations understand neutrality, behavioural norms, and systemic risk.

In an era defined by rapid social and organizational change, Dr. Coen-Sanchez stands out as both a visionary thinker and pragmatic strategist. Her work inspires leaders to engage critically with their systems, embrace accountability as a core governance principle, and cultivate inclusion as an ongoing institutional practice — recognizing that reflective governance is also a cornerstone of institutional risk management and sustainable organizational health.

www.karine-consults.com