



The Digital Renaissance: How Sahiba Writing Squad Is Orchestrating A New Era Of Youth Empowerment And Entrepreneurship

In an age where the global economy is increasingly defined by digital fluency rather than traditional labor, the disparity between academic knowledge and practical skill has become a formidable barrier for the next generation. For many, especially the youth and women in the rural heartlands of Pakistan, the dream of financial independence often feels like a distant mirage

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News>> Kenyans Raise Red Flags Over Proposed Safaricom Divestiture At County Hearings

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News>> DP Leadership Charts New Course After NEC Elections And Nairobi Retreat

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IEBC Courts Faith Leaders For 2027

The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) has reaffirmed its commitment to inclusive engagement and early preparedness for the 2027 General Election, as it met with faith leaders during a Prayer Breakfast hosted in collaboration with the Evangelical Alliance of Kenya (EAK).

The meeting brought together IEBC Commissioners and leaders from the evangelical faith community to reflect, pray, and deliberate on Kenya's electoral journey, with a focus on moral leadership, national unity, and peaceful participation in democratic processes.



IEBC chairman Erastus Etheke addressing the gathering yesterday. Photos/Courtesy

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UDA Vows Inclusive Leadership, Tax Relief As Party Gears Up For 2027 Elections

By: MKT Reporter
@themtkenyetimes

Some Of The Moments As Captured In Pictures

President William Ruto has reiterated the United Democratic Alliance's (UDA) commitment to building a truly national and inclusive political party, promising policies that promote unity, growth, and shared prosperity. Addressing over 12,000 party aspirants at State House, Nairobi, ahead of the 2027 General Election, the President emphasized the party's focus on grassroots empowerment and agenda-based governance free from tribalism, division, and personality-driven politics. Ruto highlighted that more than 80 per cent of UDA's manifesto commitments have already been implemented, contributing to a stable economy and tangible benefits for ordinary Kenyans. He announced plans to ease the cost of living by exempting over 1.5 million workers earning KSh30,000 or less from income tax, while reducing the tax rate from 30 per cent to 25 per cent for another 500,000 earning up to KSh50,000. The President also stressed women inclusion in leadership, pledging fair opportunities for female politicians in party nominations and leadership positions. During the engagement, UDA met with 12,353 aspirants across various positions, including 149 gubernatorial hopefuls, 279 Senate candidates, 323 aspiring women representatives, 1,372 parliamentary candidates, and 10,230 MCA aspirants. Ruto described the party's "Bottom-Up" approach as practical, placing dignity, opportunity, and relief in the hands of citizens at the base of the economy. He called on all Kenyans to support UDA's agenda as the party strengthens its structures and positions itself as a platform for inclusive growth and long-term national development ahead of the 2027 polls.



Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times



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NEWS IN BRIEF



Chief Justice Martha Koome yesterday held a consultative meeting with Senior Counsel Philip Murgor, Ahmednassir Abdullahi, Nelson Havi and the President of the LSK President, Ms. Faith Odhiambo, to deliberate on a range of issues affecting access to justice. The engagement focused on strengthening collaboration between the LSK, justice sector actors and the Judiciary, addressing concerns about corruption in the administration of justice, systemic and practical barriers to justice delivery, and exploring shared solutions to enhance efficiency, integrity, public confidence, and the rule of law. The meeting forms part of the Judiciary's ongoing engagement with the Law Society of Kenya, justice sector actors, and partners, aimed at strengthening collaboration and advancing the effective administration of justice.



Detectives from the Crime Research and Intelligence Bureau (CRIB), Nairobi Region, and Gigiri, in collaboration with Imbirikani Police, have recovered a stolen, unregistered Mercedes-Benz GLK350d reported missing from a Spring Valley garage on January 30, 2026. The luxury vehicle, booked for a paint job, went missing along with the watchman, whose phone was switched off. Forensic tracking led officers to Mombasa Road, where a pursuit ended at a Kajiado South roadblock. The suspects abandoned the car and fled into nearby villages. The Benz, fitted with a fake plate, has been seized. Investigators continue hunting the suspects.



At least 10,000 farmers in Kajiado West sub-county are set to improve their agricultural productivity following the rehabilitation of the irrigation scheme. The rehabilitation project set to strengthen climate resilience and boost food security began in 2024 after devastating floods destroyed canals and water intake systems, forcing many farmers to abandon the irrigation scheme. The project has since restored water flow to farms in Congo Village, marking a major milestone in the revival of agriculture in the region. Kimotho said the irrigation scheme, rehabilitated to the tune of Sh396 million, covers about 2,000 acres of land and supplies food to Magadi, Kiserian, Ongata Rongai and major Nairobi markets, including Marikiti.



The Head of Public Service, Felix Koskei yesterday received a delegation from the Multilateral Cooperation Center for Development Finance (MCCDF) led by Chief Executive Officer Zhongjing Wang, during a courtesy call focused on Kenya's infrastructure priorities. The meeting explored opportunities for enhanced collaboration in financing and implementing strategic development projects. Discussions highlighted the Mau Summit-Malaba Road, a key regional corridor expected to boost connectivity, trade, and mobility, with significant socio-economic benefits. Mr. Koskei noted the importance of strong partnerships in delivering transformative infrastructure. The talks were attended by Economic Planning Principal Secretary Boniface Makokha and other senior government officials, underscoring the project's national importance.



Kirinyaga County Governor Anne Waiguru officially launched the groundbreaking of the Kiumbu ESP Market, aimed at benefiting farmers and traders in Mwea and neighbouring Mbeere South Sub-county, Embu. The semi-arid region, known for tomatoes, French beans, and green grams, has faced significant post-harvest losses due to poor infrastructure and limited trading facilities. The new market, constructed under the Economic Stimulus Programme, is expected to provide a reliable trading hub, reducing travel to Mwea town. Traders like Priscilla Kaveti welcomed the development, highlighting its potential to boost farming, enhance business opportunities, and support the local horticultural economy.



Nakuru County is set to leverage its geothermal energy resources to position itself as a leading business and export hub. Deputy Governor David Kones highlighted plans to integrate the county's strengths; geothermal power, floriculture, and agro-processing into the "Make it Kenya" campaign to boost national branding and export capacity. Upcoming projects, including County Aggregation and Industrial Parks (CAIPs), will attract investment, while technical support will help local businesses meet international standards and access markets through AfCFTA and other global trade avenues. With its strategic location, rapid urban growth, and strong agricultural production, Nakuru aims to become a top destination for investors.

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Product Diversity: Kakuzi Revs Up Domestic Products With A Tea Leaves Pack

By: MKT Reporter
@themkenyentimes

Worth Noting:

- Speaking when he confirmed the launch of the tea product branded as Kakuzi Pure Black Tea, Kakuzi Plc Managing Director, Mr Chris Flowers, said the ongoing diversification strategy prioritises the development of quality consumer products for local consumption.
- As part of the business development plans, Kakuzi disclosed, is enjoying steady growth as domestic sales of products begin to contribute positively to the balance sheet, complementing the firm's flagship Avocado and Macadamia exports.

Publicly listed agribusiness firm Kakuzi limited has added quality tea loose-leaf packets to its growing list of domestic sales products.

As part of an ongoing products-and-markets diversification strategy to boost its earnings, Kakuzi has now introduced a quality loose-leaf tea brand, available in 250 g and 500 g packs.

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The Kakuzi business growth and diversification plan, he said, is firmly anchored in positively contributing to the development and promotion of locally produced, quality, value-added products. All the products, he assured, are benchmarked against export-grade standards.

"This is the first time in our history that we are delivering a quality tea brand for the local market, sourced from our Kaboswa Tea Estate in Nandi County," Mr Flowers said. He added, "Kenyans will enjoy quality export-grade Kakuzi tea leaves in convenient consumer packs."

By packaging the locally processed and blended tea leaves for local sale, Kakuzi, he explained, is working to mitigate export-only risks for its tea produce as international tea trade fortunes dwindle.

Alongside Kakuzi Pure Black Tea, Kakuzi has, in recent years, launched quality ready-to-eat Macadamia, Cold Dressed Macadamia Oil, and



Kakuzi Plc Brand Manager Michelle Dora Wanjiku displays the new Kakuzi Pure Black Tea packs..

Blueberry products to the local market. These products are available at selected retail outlets, Kakuzi Farmers Market along the Nairobi-Nyeri Highway, and online at the Kakuzi online shop.

At Makuyu, Murang'a County, Kakuzi operates an integrated Macadamia Processing Plant, with an installed capacity of 2,000 tons of saleable kernel (SK), making it one of the largest in Kenya. The Kakuzi Macadamia Oil Extraction Plant has

a cold-pressed oil installed extraction capacity of 1,000 litres per day.

Last year, as part of its strategic plans to increase production over the next ten years, the firm disclosed plans to nearly double avocado production and exports from 3 million to 5 million four-kilo equivalent cartons. Kakuzi is also planning to increase its Macadamia production from 900 tons of kernel to 1,500 tons.

The Story of Kakuzi Pure Black Tea

Each packet of tea contains over 2,000 of our hand-picked, selected shoots. Kakuzi Pure Black Tea is grown in the verdant Nandi Hills, almost 2,000 meters above sea level, in a perfect combination of height, temperature and fertile soil. The leaves develop a rich, full-bodied flavour as they soak up bright sunshine during the day.


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Kenyans Raise Red Flags Over Proposed Safaricom Divestiture At County Hearings

By: MKT Correspondents
@themtkenyentimes

Residents across Nyeri, Nakuru and Kitui counties raised sharp questions over the proposed partial divestiture of the Government of Kenya’s shareholding in Safaricom, calling for stronger safeguards on data security, equitable use of proceeds and protection of national interests.

The concerns were aired during public participation forums on Sessional Paper No. 3 of 2025, as Parliament continues to collect views from the public before making a final determination on the proposal.

In Nyeri County, residents meeting at the Nyeri Cultural Centre urged the government to retain a strong stake in Safaricom, citing the company’s central role in hosting and supporting critical government services. Participants warned that reducing state ownership could expose sensitive government systems and citizens’ data to risks.

A resident, Njeri Mwangi told the forum that platforms such as eCitizen depend heavily on Safaricom infrastructure, with many services paid for through M-Pesa. She cautioned that diminished government control could compromise the security of essential digital services.

Another participant, Martin Muturi, questioned the future of Safaricom employees should the divestiture proceed, noting that Vodacom would become the dominant shareholder.

Residents also raised concerns about accountability, public trust and the risk of corruption in managing the sale.

In Nakuru County, residents turned out in large numbers to submit their views during a public hearing held at Rongai in Kambi Moto.

The exercise was conducted by a sub-committee led by the Chairperson of the Departmental Committee on Finance and National Planning, Kimani Kuria. Organized groups also participated, including the Mau Mau Veterans Associates (MMV Associates CLG) led by James Njuguna Mahuria. Speakers in Nakuru, they called on Parliament to clearly explain the rationale for the divestiture and ensure that public interest remains paramount.

In Kitui County, the participants opposed the proposal to channel all divestiture proceeds into a National Infrastructure Fund.

Speaking during a joint public engagement session at the Kitui

Multi-Purpose Hall, residents argued that rural counties have urgent needs in health and education that should not be overshadowed by mega infrastructure projects.

“What is our stake in this divestiture?” asked Mr. Musau from Kitui Central, questioning why allocations to social sectors were not prioritized.

Residents called for ring-fencing of proceeds to ensure funds are directed to pre-approved, high-impact projects across all 47 counties.

Responding to the concerns, Kitui Rural MP David Mboni acknowledged the need for diversified investments but defended large-scale projects as economic catalysts, citing the Thwake Dam as a transformative initiative for the region.

He noted that Kenya’s limited borrowing space makes alternative funding sources necessary and pledged that Parliament would propose strict safeguards on the use of proceeds.

Vice Chairperson of the Finance Committee, Benjamin Langat, assured residents that the Committee would demand firm commitments from the National Treasury before approving the deal, recalling past controversies surrounding Eurobond borrowing.

Kitui Woman Representative Irene Kasalu questioned the proposed valuation of KSh34 per share, arguing it undervalues Safaricom’s future prospects, while affirming that public views would guide the Committee’s recommendations.

Residents also proposed that part of the divested shares be offered to Kenyans rather than foreign entities, raising concerns over future board composition, job security and the long-term fate of Safaricom Foundation.

The hearings marked the second day of public participation, with the Committee scheduled to continue the exercise in Embu County tomorrow.

Some of the leaders during the public participation in Nyeri yesterday. Photos/ Courtesy.



MP Benjamin Langat addressing the Kitui forum yesterday.



A section of legislators among them MPs Kimani Kuria (Molo) and George Risa Sunkuyia (Kajiado West) were part of the leaders who received a memorandum from the MMV Associate CLG at Rongai CDF office, Nakuru county yesterday.



IEBC Seeks Faith Leaders' Support Ahead Of 2027 Polls

By: MKT Reporter
@themkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- Speaking at the gathering yesterday, IEBC Chairperson Erastus Ethe-kon emphasized the critical role of shared responsibility in safeguarding the integrity of elections.
- He noted that en-gagement with faith-based organizations is part of the Commission's broader strategy to build public trust, promote dialogue, and ensure inclusivity in election management.
- Ethe-kon revealed that the Commission has adopted a cycle-based approach to election pre-paredness, drawing lessons from the 2022 General Election and subsequent by-elections. As part of this approach, IEBC is finalizing a comprehensive Election Operations Plan for the 2025–2027 electoral cycle, which will guide planning, coordination, and execution of electoral activities leading up to 2027.



IEBC commissioners and EAK clergy.

The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) has reaffirmed its commitment to inclusive engagement and early preparedness for the 2027 General Election, as it met with faith leaders during a Prayer Breakfast hosted in collaboration with the Evangelical Alliance of Kenya (EAK).

The meeting brought together IEBC Commissioners and leaders from the evangelical faith community to reflect, pray, and deliberate on Kenya's electoral journey, with a focus on moral leadership, national unity, and peaceful participation in democratic processes.

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drawing lessons from the 2022 General Election and subsequent by-elections. As part of this approach, IEBC is finalizing a comprehensive Election Operations Plan for the 2025–2027 electoral cycle, which will guide planning, coordination, and execution of electoral activities leading up to 2027.

On voter registration, the Chairperson announced that Continuous Voter Registration (CVR) began in September 2025 and will be complemented by an Enhanced Mass Voter Registration (MVR) exercise. The MVR is expected to be escalated to the ward level starting March 2026, with a focus on expanding access, particularly for young voters and first-time registrants.

To support this effort, Ethe-kon said the Commission is implementing pre-registration reforms and upgrading its systems to improve efficiency, reduce congestion at registration centres, and enhance the overall voter experience.

He added that IEBC has also invested in staff training, digitization, and sustained stakeholder engagement, acknowledging that election pre-

paredness is an ongoing and collaborative process.

However, the Chairperson flagged key challenges facing the Commission, including inadequate and delayed funding, as well as delays in electoral legal reforms.

He noted that such reforms should ideally be concluded at least one year before a General Election to allow sufficient preparation.

Ethe-kon also warned that rising misinformation and misuse of digital platforms pose a growing threat to public trust, peace, and social cohesion.

Speaking on behalf of the faith community, EAK Chairperson Bishop Philip Kitoto said the Church has a responsibility to be "salt in every sphere of society." He observed that more than five decades after independence, Kenya should be modeling integrity, justice, and cohesion rather than struggling with destructive social vices.

Bishop Kitoto stressed that the Church cannot remain silent in the face of injustice, violence, or moral decay, regardless of the source. He called for a clear national roadmap

toward peace and unity ahead of the 2027 polls and strongly condemned violence, hate speech, and incitement.

The Prayer Breakfast concluded with a reaffirmation of the role of faith leaders as trusted voices in promoting peaceful participation and ethical leadership, with the IEBC expressing appreciation to EAK and pledging continued collaboration in the run-up to the 2027 General Election.

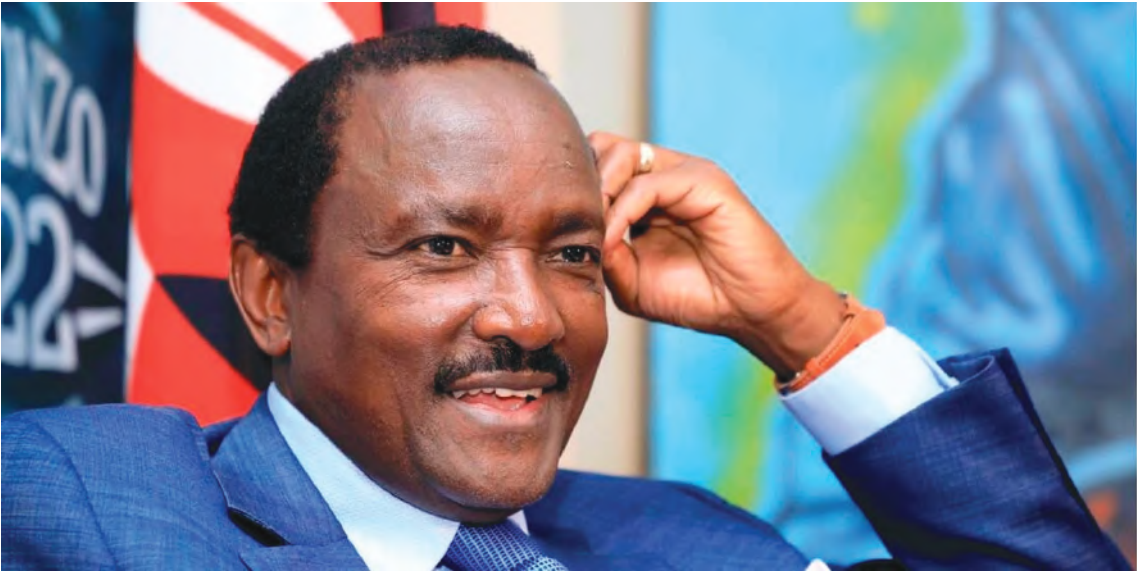
The forum took place just a day after the resignation of IEBC Chief Executive Officer Marjan Hussein Marjan, a development that comes amid heightened focus on the Commission's leadership and institutional preparedness ahead of the next electoral cycle.

Azimio’s Quiet Collapse And The Crisis Of Opposition Politics In Kenya

By: Dr Philip Chebunet
@themkenyetimes

Until recently, Azimio La Umoja– One Kenya Coalition existed largely in name rather than in practice. For months, the coalition has been conspicuously absent from the public arena, marked by a lack of grassroots activity, inconsistent messaging, and no discernible political direction. In Kenya’s competitive political environment, prolonged silence is rarely neutral; it is often interpreted as political death. Coalitions that fail to mobilise and engage consistently lose relevance quickly, and Azimio appears to have fallen into this trap. Its decline has been accelerated by the ruling United Democratic Alliance’s overt and subtle courting of the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM). Historically, ODM has been Azimio’s backbone – not merely as a constituent party, but as a mass mobilisation machine with deep emotional and grassroots roots. Once ODM signals cooperation with the ruling establishment, even without

a formal defection, Azimio is stripped of its core pillar. Perception matters in politics, and the perception of collaboration alone fatally undermines Azimio’s credibility as an opposition force. Efforts to rebrand the opposition under a “United Opposition” banner are further complicated by leadership contradictions. Dominant political figures such as Rigathi Gachagua do not naturally fit into collective leadership frameworks. Effective opposition politics demands compromise, restraint, and consensus-building. When leading personalities are unwilling or unable to subordinate personal ambition to shared leadership, unity becomes elusive and coalitions fracture before they mature. The opposition space is also crowded with confrontational voices whose politics relies more on intimidation and noise than organisation and persuasion. Kenya’s electoral history shows that political bullying rarely translates into votes. While such figures may dominate headlines and social media discourse, they struggle to build broad, inclusive alliances capable of winning national elections.



Azimio La Umoja party leader Kalonzo Musyoka

Most critically, Azimio has lost touch with the grassroots. There is no coherent economic message resonating at the ward level, no visible organisers, and no trusted voices consistently articulating the coalition’s agenda on the ground. In contrast, the government maintains constant visibility through development tours, local administration networks, and sustained engagement.

In the absence of a credible and present opposition, voters gravitate towards those who appear active, even when dissatisfied. Taken together, these dynamics suggest that Azimio, in its current form, is no longer a viable political vehicle. This does not signal the end of opposition politics in Kenya, but it does point to the urgent need for a new structure, a different leadership mod-

el, and a genuinely grassroots-driven movement ahead of 2027. Coalitions do not survive on history or symbolism alone; they endure through presence, discipline, and a deep connection with ordinary citizens.

Dr Philip Chebunet is a Lecturer and Political Communication Expert



Power, Law And Loyalty: Gachagua’s Bold Gamble As Havi And Kega Join DCP

By: David Kimani
@themkenyentimes

Rigathi Gachagua has never been a man to shy away from political theatre. This week, the former Deputy President and now leader of the Democracy for Citizens Party (DCP) staged one of his most audacious acts yet: welcoming two heavyweights—lawyer Nelson Havi and former Kieni MP Kanini Kega—into his fold ahead of the 2027 General Election. The announcement, made with deliberate flourish on X, was more than a routine party update. It was a signal of intent, a declaration that Gachagua’s DCP is positioning itself as the new crucible of power in Kenya’s restless political landscape.

The timing was deliberate. Kenya’s political scene is already simmering with anticipation as parties realign, coalitions fracture, and new alliances emerge. Against this backdrop, Gachagua’s move to bring in Havi, a Senior Counsel and former president of the Law Society of Kenya, alongside Kega, a seasoned legislator with deep roots in Mt Kenya politics, carries weight. It is a calculated gamble that blends legal intellect with grassroots loyalty, a combination designed to give DCP credibility both in Nairobi’s corridors of power and in the villages of Central Kenya.

Havi’s entry into DCP is particularly symbolic. Known for his sharp legal mind and combative style, he has long been a figure who straddles the worlds of law and politics. His first attempt at elective office came in 2022 when he contested the Westlands parliamentary seat under the United Democratic Alliance (UDA). He lost to ODM’s Tim Wanyonyi, who secured 58,400 votes against Havi’s 19,500. Yet defeat did not dampen his ambition. In November 2024, Havi resigned from UDA, citing the wishes of Westlands residents who, he claimed, wanted a fresh political direction. For months, speculation swirled about whether he would join ODM, but his eventual alignment with Gachagua’s DCP now sets the stage for a rematch in Westlands under a new banner.

Gachagua was effusive in his praise. “DCP is the home of progressive professionals who desire political leadership,” he declared, describing Havi as one of the country’s finest lawyers. The message was clear: DCP is not merely a refuge for political defectors but a platform for professionals who can shape legis-

lation, oversight, and representation. In a country where legal battles often define political contests, Havi’s presence offers Gachagua both intellectual firepower and symbolic legitimacy.

Kanini Kega’s arrival adds another layer of intrigue. His political journey has been long and winding, marked by resilience and reinvention. He first sought the Kieni parliamentary seat in 2002 and 2007, losing both times. His breakthrough came in 2013 when he won on a TNA ticket, later defending the seat in 2017 under Jubilee. Kega became a staunch ally of former President Uhuru Kenyatta, playing a central role in the “Kieleweke” faction that supported the Uhuru–Raila handshake. In 2022, he backed Raila Odinga under the Azimio la Umoja coalition, only to be swept aside by the UDA wave that engulfed Mt Kenya.

Yet Kega is nothing if not resilient. Within months of losing his seat, he was elected to represent Kenya at the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), ensuring his relevance in regional politics. His decision to join DCP now signals a return to domestic political trenches, aligning himself with Gachagua in what could be a strategic bid to reclaim influence in Mt Kenya. “Welcome home Hon. Kanini Kega,” Gachagua wrote on X, framing the move as a homecoming rather than a defection.

Political analysts see the twin announcements as part of Gachagua’s broader strategy to rebrand himself and his party. According to Dr. Jane Mwangi, a political scientist at the University of Nairobi, “Gachagua is trying to position DCP as a credible alternative to UDA in Mt Kenya. By bringing in figures like Havi and Kega, he is signaling that DCP is not just a regional party but one with national ambitions.”

The move also reflects the shifting sands of Kenyan politics. Since the 2022 elections, UDA has dominated Mt Kenya, but cracks have begun to appear. Discontent over economic hardships, rising living costs, and perceptions of neglect have created openings for alternative voices. Gachagua, once a key figure in UDA, has sought to capitalize on these frustrations by presenting DCP as a vehicle for change.

Havi’s candidacy in Westlands will test whether DCP can break into urban constituencies traditionally dominated by ODM. His legal background and professional networks could appeal to middle-class

voters, while his combative style may resonate with younger, digitally savvy constituents. Yet he faces the formidable challenge of unseating Tim Wanyonyi, whose popularity remains strong.

For Kega, the challenge is different. His task will be to rebuild trust in Mt Kenya, where voters decisively rejected Azimio in 2022. Aligning with Gachagua gives him a chance to reposition himself within a party that claims to represent grassroots interests. His experience in EALA also provides him with regional credentials that could bolster his appeal.

Critics, however, remain skeptical. Some argue that DCP risks becoming a refuge for political opportunists rather than a genuine movement for change. Others question whether Gachagua, whose tenure as Deputy President was marked by controversy and sharp rhetoric, can reinvent himself as a unifying leader.

Still, the symbolism of welcoming both a legal heavyweight and a seasoned politician cannot be ignored. It suggests that Gachagua is building a coalition that blends professional expertise with political experience, a formula that could resonate with voters tired of traditional party politics.

The broader implications are significant. If DCP succeeds in attracting more defectors and professionals, it could reshape the political landscape ahead of 2027. Kenya’s politics has long been dominated by ethnic blocs and party loyalty, but the emergence of a party that emphasizes professional competence and progressive leadership could mark a shift.

International observers are also watching closely. Kenya has positioned itself as a regional leader in democratic transitions, and the rise of new parties like DCP reflects the dynamism of its political system. According to a recent report by the African Centre for Governance, “The entry of professionals into politics, as seen with figures like Nelson Havi, signals a growing demand for accountability and expertise in governance.”

As the 2027 elections draw nearer, the stakes will only rise. For Gachagua, the challenge is to transform DCP from a fledgling party into a formidable force capable of competing with UDA and ODM. For Havi and Kega, the challenge is to prove that their moves are not mere opportunism but genuine commitments to progressive leadership.

The drama of Kenyan politics is often defined by defections, alliances,



Democratic Change Party (DCP) leader Rigathi Gachagua welcoming Nelson Havi



DCP party leader Rigathi Gachagua welcoming Kanini Kega

es, and betrayals. Yet beneath the theatrics lies a deeper struggle over the future of governance. The entry of Havi and Kega into DCP is more than a headline; it is a chapter in the unfolding story of Kenya’s demo-

cratic evolution. Whether it ends in triumph or disappointment remains to be seen, but for now, Gachagua has succeeded in capturing the nation’s attention.

DP Leadership Charts New Course After NEC Elections And Nairobi Retreat

By: WMW
@themkenyaintimes

Worth Noting:

- The workshop, convened in partnership with the Centre for Multiparty Democracy (CMD) Kenya, brought together key party organs to reflect on governance, leadership and institutional capacity as the party prepares for upcoming political milestones.
- The meeting was presided over by the party leader Justin Muturi, who underscored the importance of unity, discipline, and collective responsibility in repositioning the party on the national stage.
- According to the party, the forum provided an opportunity for strategic reflection on credible internal processes and effective coordination between party organs. Members engaged in open and frank discussions on strengthening democratic culture within the party, managing internal competition and enhancing trust among members and the public.

The Democratic Party of Kenya (DP) has signalled a renewed push to strengthen its internal structures and national outlook following a high-level leadership workshop held in Nairobi by its newly elected National Executive Committee (NEC) and the Party Elections Board (PEB).

The workshop, convened in partnership with the Centre for Multiparty Democracy (CMD) Kenya, brought together key party organs to reflect on governance, leadership and institutional capacity as the party prepares for upcoming political milestones.

The meeting was presided over by the party leader Justin Muturi, who underscored the importance of unity, discipline, and collective responsibility in repositioning the party on the national stage.

According to the party, the forum provided an opportunity for strategic reflection on credible internal processes and effective coordination between party organs. Members engaged in open and frank discussions on strengthening democratic culture within the party, managing internal competition and enhancing trust among members and the public.

The Nairobi retreat comes barely a week after the DP concluded its party elections, a process that ushered in a new NEC.

The elections, overseen by the PEB, were held during the party's National Delegates Conference, held at Ufungamano House, Nairobi last week.

Party officials described the exercise as competitive and largely peaceful,



Some of DP NEC members; From left, James Mwangi Macharia (National Organising Secretary), Ms Beatrice Njeri (Young Democrats Chairperson), C.N. Kihara (Deputy Party Leader - Operations) and Ms Jane Wanjiru (Deputy Party Leader - Programs).
Photo/Courtesy.

reflecting a renewed commitment to internal democracy after a period of organisational restructuring.

The polls resulted in a blend of experienced leaders and new faces assuming key positions, a move party insiders say is intended to inject fresh energy while retaining institutional memory.

The elections were also seen as a test of the party's ability to manage internal affairs transparently as it seeks to reassert itself in Kenya's multiparty landscape.

During the workshop, CMD Kenya facilitators led sessions on party governance, leadership skills, and best practices in democratic management of political organisations. Emphasis was placed on the need for strong institutions rather than personalities, as well as clear rules to guide decision-making and conflict resolution.

In a statement to members countrywide, the DP leadership said the party is now focused, capable, and forward-looking, with a clear commitment to democratic principles and

collective action.

The leadership expressed confidence that the newly elected team has the capacity to deepen public trust, strengthen grassroots structures and provide steady direction.

With its internal elections concluded and leadership organs now aligned, the Democratic Party says it is positioning itself as a serious contender in future political contests, with ambitions not only to influence national debate but also to play a central role in forming the next government.



Democratic Party of Kenya (DP) NEC and PEB members in a group photo after yesterday's meeting. Also present were Centre for Multiparty Democracy officials. Photos/Courtesy.

Waiguru Launches Countywide Sanitary Pads Drive To Keep Girls In School

By: MKT Reporter
@themkenyatimes

Kirinyaga Governor Anne Waiguru has launched a large-scale sanitary pads distribution programme aimed at reducing school absenteeism among girls during menstruation and improving their overall academic performance. The countywide initiative targets school-going girls who often miss classes due to lack of access to sanitary products.

Through the County Department of Gender and Youth, a total of 3,173 girls drawn from 20 primary and secondary schools across the county have received sanitary towels. The distribution exercise is being carried out by County Executive Committee members on behalf of the governor.

According to data held by the Kirinyaga County Government, nearly three out of every ten girls miss school every month due to menstruation, a situation that continues to undermine girls' education and long-term prospects. The programme seeks to address this challenge by ensuring that girls can attend school comfortably

ably and without disruption.

In addition to providing sanitary pads, the initiative includes mentorship sessions designed to build confidence, resilience, and awareness among the beneficiaries. The sessions aim to empower girls socially and emotionally, helping them navigate adolescence while remaining focused on their education.

Governor Waiguru said the programme is part of her administration's broader girl-child empowerment agenda. She noted that many girls have been forced to stay away from school during their menstrual cycle due to the high cost or unavailability of sanitary products, especially in households facing economic hardship.

Speaking during the exercise at Kinyaga Secondary School, Chief Officer for Gender and Youth Sheila Mwangi said the initiative was meant to ensure that no girl is left behind because of her menstrual cycle. She observed that many families prioritize basic household needs over sanitary products, leaving girls to struggle in silence.

The programme has been widely welcomed by school administrators.



Some of the girls who received the pads. Photo/Courtesy.

Kinyaga Secondary School Principal Naomi Kariuki said the donation would help keep girls in school at a time when many parents are facing financial difficulties. Similar sentiments were echoed by Kinyaga Primary School headteacher Willy

Gathumbi and Kutus Comprehensive Primary School headteacher Patrick Njue, who described the initiative as timely and impactful.

The county government noted that while the current focus is on the girl-child, complementary programmes

targeting the boy-child are also planned. Governor Waiguru added that her administration has set aside Sh30 million in the current financial year to support young people, women, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups.

Katiba Institute Turns The Screws: Funding Freeze Demanded On Unlawful Presidential Advisors

By: Grace Wanja
@themkenyatimes

The battle over Kenya's constitutional order has taken a dramatic turn, with Katiba Institute now pressing the Controller of Budget to choke off funding for presidential advisor roles declared unlawful by the High Court. In a sharply worded letter to Dr. Margaret Nyakang'o, the watchdog organization demanded confirmation that no payments have been approved since the January 22 ruling—and that none will be authorized going forward.

The urgency of the appeal reflects the gravity of the court's finding: that the creation of the advisory offices bypassed the Public Service Commission and the Salaries and Remuneration Commission, violating both constitutional and statutory safeguards. "The Court found that

the establishment of these offices and the appointment of advisors were undertaken without a clear constitutional or statutory basis," Katiba Institute noted, citing Article 228 of the Constitution, which obliges the Controller of Budget to ensure public funds are spent lawfully.

The High Court, under Justice Bhatii Mwamuye, had already dismissed fresh applications seeking to suspend the ruling, invoking the doctrine of res judicata to prevent endless litigation. "The applicants failed to demonstrate new evidence or likelihood of injustice," Mwamuye ruled, closing the door on attempts to revive the contested offices.

Represented by lawyers Malidzo Nyawa and Joshua Malidzo, Katiba Institute argued that reopening the matter would erode judicial authority. The respondents—21 former advisors—countered that a temporary stay was necessary to allow for handovers, but the court was unmoved.



They have since signaled plans to appeal to the Court of Appeal, prolonging a saga that has already stirred fierce debate over the limits of presidential power.

The controversy is more than legal wrangling; it is a test of Kenya's commitment to transparency and fiscal discipline. Analysts warn that un-

checked executive appointments risk draining public coffers while undermining institutional oversight. Civil society groups have rallied behind Katiba Institute, insisting that the ruling must be enforced to restore confidence in governance.

With a 14 day deadline set for Dr. Nyakang'o's response, the stand-

off now shifts to the Controller of Budget's office. Whether she acts decisively could determine not only the fate of the advisors but also the credibility of Kenya's constitutional safeguards.

My Mother



to go to bed. She teaches me discipline and to respect others.

She has a solution for every problem and supports our family in every possible way. She keeps our house neat and clean. She takes care of us when we fall sick. She sacrifices her comfort for our happiness.

My mom is a strong person and takes great care of all of us. I love my mother very much.

My mother is my best friend. I share my secrets with her. She cooks delicious and tasty food. My mother is the most important person in our family, and she helps me in many ways. She understands my situations well and always guides me.

She helps me with my homework and supports me in my studies. She wakes up early in the morning and is the last person

By,
R. Mythily
VIII Std
PUMS Chinna Obulapuram
Gummidipoondi
Thiruvallur Dt
Tamil Nadu
India

If You Don't Believe In Yourself, No One Will



If we don't believe in ourselves,
No one believes us.

If We realise our potential,
We will achieve and be vital.

Rajesh Kanna B N

Who am I!
If we know the answer for this
We are the real heroes.

An elephant doesn't know it's power
Necessity makes everyone very powerful.

If we believe in ourselves we can achieve!
Anything in the world we can receive.

RAJESH KANNA.B N
M.Sc.,M.A.,M.A., B.Ed., PGD G&C, CELT.,
BT Asst
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TIRUR.
TIRUVALLUR DISTRICT.
Tamil Nadu. India
Creative Writers.

The More You Trust In God, The More He Will Amaze You



No one can beat him
Come near to Him, be close to him,
think of Him forever and ever
Chant His name always,
praise Him, worship him
He will do wonders
The more you trust God,
the more He'll amaze you
With miracles and wonders,
in an amazing way.
What we can't imagine he will do for us
Nothing is impossible for him

The more you trust in God, the more
He'll guide and help you.
No need for any doubt, no need for fear,
He has done wonders and miracles
Be patient, trust in Him,
His plans are grand and
Different from ours,
It is beyond our understanding
Keep 100% faith in Him,
taste His love is so sweet
His ways are amazing

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

A Serious Joke



8)Life makes us fool.

So say hello to it
Be a happy fool.

And live like a cool.

9)This is a serious joke,
Easy to get or rare.

Understanding depends on you,
I don't care.

Respect women.

She is not a non living thing.
She is also a human being.

She is also respected like you
She also has her own view.

She completes all her duty.
She is an example of god's beauty.

She gave you birth,she is mother.
She is the teacher of your life,
All relations after her.

She is a daughter,she is happiness.
she is with you in all your weakness.

She is a sister,she is a Pavitra Bandhan.
without her useless is raksha bandhan.

She is your whole life.
she is a loving wife.

She is an amazing person,a great friend.

she is your love,she is girlfriend.

World is worthless without her.
do love and respect her.

Priya Princess Panwar
Self made, original
Suraj vihar,Dwarka moad, New delhi-78

1)Life is very much pain.

There is nothing to gain.

2) Be happy stay alone.

Life will be go went gone.

3)Don't have any belief.

Life will be relief.

4)Two ways to live the life,
Those are do and die.

So friends!Be wise.

Don't do anything
Only eat and rise.

5)No matter you are non-veggie or veggie.

Want to live life easy.

Please don't fight,be happy.

Be lazy,live life easy.

6) Life takes our test.

Gives the tension,gives the rest.

Don't give any test,do rest.

Be happy in yourself and say iam the best.

7)Life is very unbelievable.

To understand that we are not able.

Can't see its level.

Don't be angel,don't be devil.

Family Is A Circle Of Strength On All Days



It's being loved just as you are,
Your safest place, your guiding star.

In every storm, they stand near,
Sharing your smile, drying your tear.
No matter how far or where you roam,
Family is always your heart's true home.

By,
S. Barsharani Jana
VIII Std
PUMS Chinna Obulapuram
Gummidipoondi
Thiruvallur
Tamil Nadu
India

Family is a circle of strength on all days,
Warm hugs, gentle words, and quiet ways.

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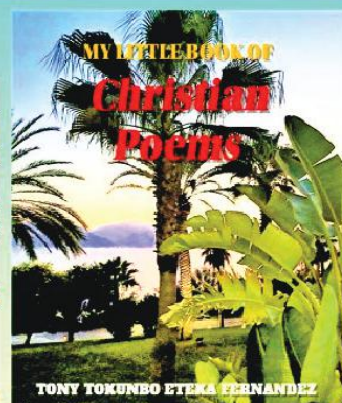
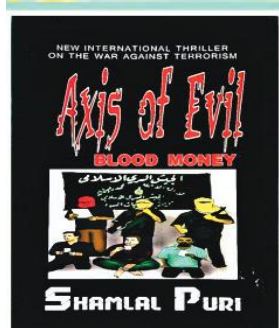
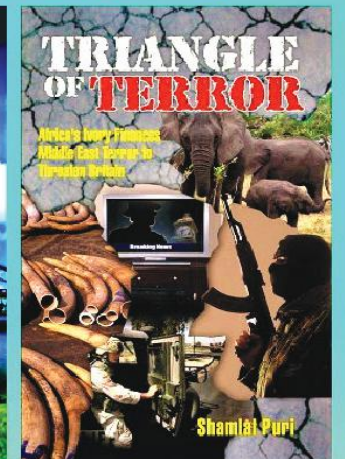
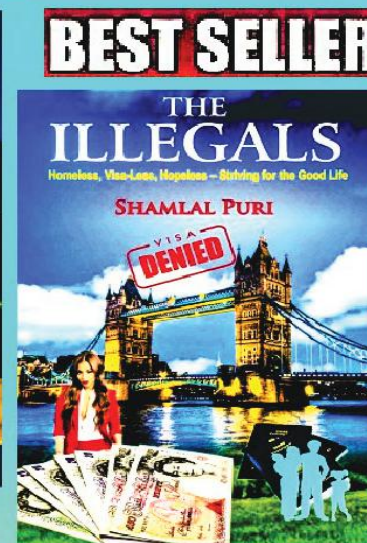
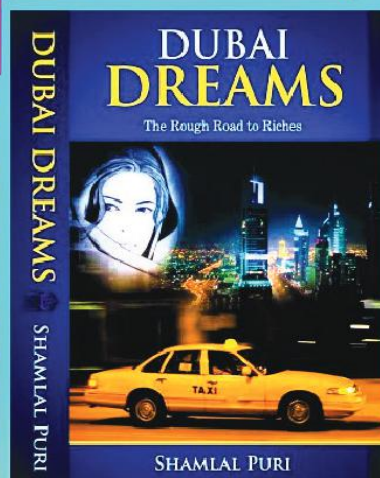
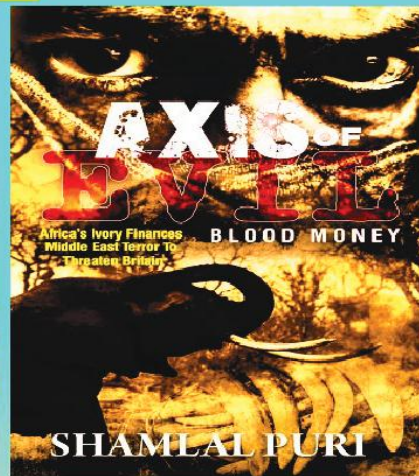
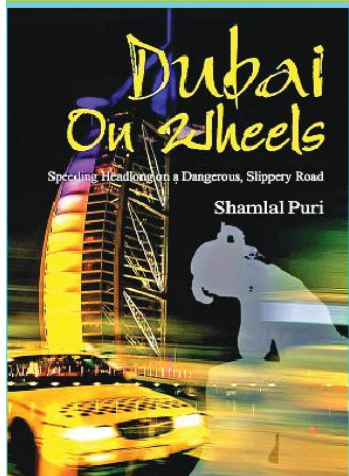
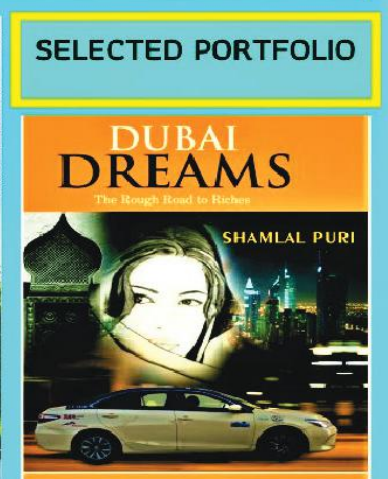
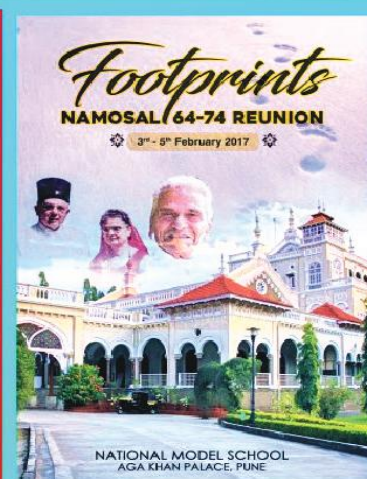
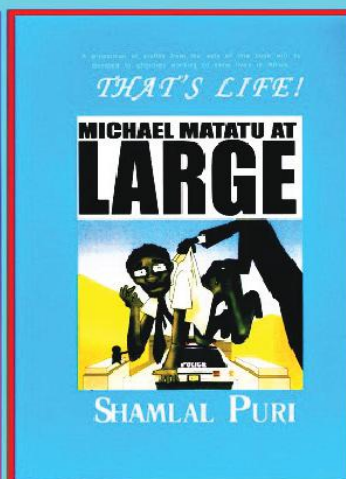
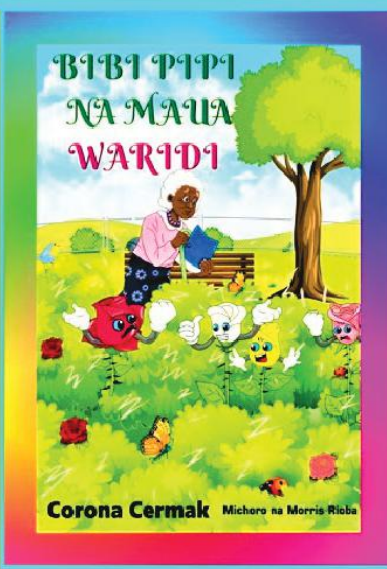
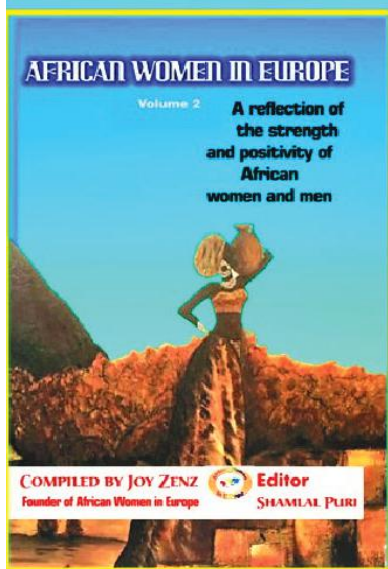
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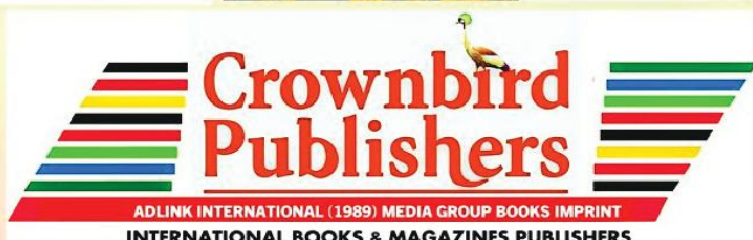
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BUSINESS

Nairobi Coffee Exchange Endures 14-Hour Marathon As Nearly 47,000 Bags Trade Hands



By: Henry Kinyua
@themkenyatomes

Worth Noting:

- Over the marathon session, a total of 46,984 bags weighing 2,868,424 kilograms were sold, generating USD 19,869,355.42 (KSh2.58 billion).
- On average, the exchange moved roughly 3,356 bags per hour; about 56 bags every minute a pace rarely seen at the auction floor.
- The average price settled at USD 346.35 per 50-kilogram bag. Top-quality lots fetched premiums of up to USD 442.00, while lower-grade coffee traded at prices as low as USD 104.00.
- Compared to last week's sale (Sale 15), volumes surged by 43 per cent from 32,876 bags, although prices softened by about 10 per cent from an average of USD 385.00. The contrast highlighted a familiar market truth: when supply pours in, prices often cool.

The Nairobi Coffee Exchange (NCE) turned into a test of stamina on Tuesday as this week's sale stretched for an extraordinary 14 hours.

This week's sale, known in the trading floor as Sale 16 run from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

By the final gavel, nearly 47,000 bags of Kenya's prized coffee had been sold, underscoring both the resilience of the market and the relentless demand for the country's beans.

When the dust finally settled, traders, brokers and buyers alike were left to wonder whether anyone had managed a proper lunch break or whether the sheer volume of caffeine in the room made food optional.

A Long Day, Big Numbers

Over the marathon session, a total of 46,984 bags weighing 2,868,424 kilograms were sold, generating USD 19,869,355.42 (KSh2.58 billion).

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Stronger Than Last Season

Despite the week-on-week price dip, this week's sale painted a far brighter picture when viewed against the same sale last season.

In Sale 16 of the previous year, only 23,333 bags were sold at an average price of USD 341.00.

This year's volumes more than doubled, while prices held relatively steady, signaling stronger market activity and sustained international interest in Kenyan coffee.

Brokers Battle for Market Share

Fifteen marketing agents took part in the sale, with performance varying widely across the board.

Alliance Berries Limited dominated



the session, selling 15,027 bags at an average price of USD 349.03 per bag, translating to a commanding 32 per cent market share.

Kirinyaga Slopes Coffee Brokerage Company Ltd recorded the highest average price of the day; USD 382 across 9,735 bags, accounting for 20.7 per cent of total volumes. New Kenya Planters Co-operative Union PLC followed with 4,621 bags at an average of USD 344.73, securing a 9.8 per cent share.

Kipkelion Broker Company Ltd sold 4,421 bags at USD 328.27, while KCCE Marketing Agency Limited rounded out the top five with 4,316 bags at an average of USD 341.41.

Smaller but notable contributions came from brokers such as Kinya Coffee Marketing Agency Ltd, Coffee Estates Bourgeoisie Brokers Limited, Minnesota Coffee Marketers Limited and several county-based agencies, reflecting broad participation across the sector.

Big Buyers Dominate the Floor

On the buying side, the market was highly concentrated.

Ibero Kenya Ltd emerged as the largest buyer, snapping up 16,209 bags; 34.5 per cent of the total sold.

C. Dormans SEZ Ltd followed with 8,641 bags, while Kenyacof Limited purchased 5,466 bags. Other major

buyers included Louis Dreyfus Company (4,646 bags), Sasini (K) Limited (4,497 bags), and Taylor Winch (Coffee) Limited (3,520 bags).

Together, these six buyers accounted for a striking 92 per cent of all coffee traded, purchasing a combined 42,979 bags.

AA and AB Grades Lead the Way

Grade performance reflected the continued strength of Kenya's premium offerings.

AA coffee moved 14,365 bags at an average price of USD 368, while the AB grade dominated volumes with 22,639 bags at USD 352; nearly half of all coffee sold during the session.

Other grades, including C, PB (Peaberry) and specialty selections, filled out the remainder of the catalogue,

with prices varying widely depending on quality.

Outlook: Market Shows No Signs of Fatigue

This week's sale finally closed at 10:00 p.m., marking one of the longest trading days at the Nairobi Coffee Exchange in recent memory.

With volumes more than doubling compared to last season and buyer demand remaining robust, the performance pointed to a coffee sector that is not just awake, but wide awake.

If the market continues at this pace, future sales may need stronger chairs, longer days and perhaps a clearer answer to the lingering question on everyone's mind: when, exactly, do coffee traders eat?



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The Digital Renaissance: How Sahiba Writing Squad Is Orchestrating A New Era Of Youth Empowerment And Entrepreneurship

By: Zainab Mustafa

@themtkenyatimes

In an age where the global economy is increasingly defined by digital fluency rather than traditional labor, the disparity between academic knowledge and practical skill has become a formidable barrier for the next generation. For many, especially the youth and women in the rural heartlands of Pakistan, the dream of financial independence often feels like a distant mirage, obscured by a lack of resources and mentorship. However, since 2021, a transformative movement headquartered in Khanewal has been systematically dismantling these barriers. Sahiba Writing Squad (SWS), operating under the resonant mantra "Every Journey Begins Here," has emerged as more than just a training institute; it is a catalyst for a social and economic renaissance, bridging the gap between potential and professional success.

The architect of this change is Miss Sahabzadi Khan, a visionary leader whose own journey serves as a blueprint for the "Squadians" she mentors. Recognized as one of Pakistan's youngest entrepreneurs and most prolific authors, Miss Khan represents the very excellence she seeks to ignite in others. Her professional portfolio is staggering, featuring over 300 certifications and more than 50 national and international awards. As the Founder and Chairperson of both SWS and Vision of Women, she has led initiatives in learning, leadership, and empowerment since 2019. Her mission is deeply rooted in the upliftment of women from rural areas, providing them with the tools to carve out independent identities from their homes while fostering emotional, spiritual, and professional growth.

Sahiba Writing Squad fulfills its mission through a sophisticated ecosystem designed to address the multifaceted needs of today's aspiring professionals. At the heart of this system is the Digital Literacy Program (DLP). In a world where the gig economy is worth billions, digital literacy is no longer an optional luxury; it is a fundamental right. This program offers high-demand, skills-based courses that lead to official, registered certifications. By focusing on practical earning ability, the DLP has successfully

empowered thousands of students to transition from learners to earners, providing them with the confidence to navigate the global freelance market effectively.

Beyond technical training, the organization understands that recognition is a powerful motivator. To this end, SWS consistently organizes monthly, annual, and international competitions. These events serve a dual purpose: they challenge participants to refine their craft and provide them with a prestigious stage to showcase their creative and technical talents. By honoring winners with shields, cash prizes, and certificates, SWS instills a sense of professional validation that is often missing in traditional educational settings. This competitive spirit, combined with community support, ensures that talent from even the most remote areas can gain visibility on a global scale.

The organization also prioritizes the democratization of high-level industry knowledge through its Virtual Sessions. By collaborating with CEOs, veteran brand owners, and industry experts, SWS hosts interactive workshops and Q&A series. This direct mentorship allows students to gain insights into the nuances of business strategy, freelancing, and entrepreneurship that are rarely found in textbooks. This initiative led to the establishment of the Virtual Session Community, a dedicated space where the organization regularly hosts trainings that keep its members ahead of the curve in an ever-shifting digital landscape.

Perhaps the most socially significant contribution of SWS is its commitment to the female economy. Through the Women Entrepreneurs Community, the agency offers product-based training specifically aimed at uplifting small industry leaders. Recognizing the unique hurdles faced by women in rural sectors, SWS provides a platform where they can grow their businesses free of cost. By offering free public relations (PR) support and marketing guidance, SWS enables women to build successful brands from the comfort of their homes. This initiative is a direct assault on the economic limitations often faced by women, turning domestic spaces into hubs of innovation and financial autonomy.

The professional integrity of Sahiba Writing Squad is a cornerstone of its success. Unlike many informal training groups, SWS is a fully reg-

istered skills-based agency with the

Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), operating on a legal and professional basis since 2021. A major milestone in its journey was achieved in 2025, when SWS successfully obtained membership with the Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Khanewal. This affiliation, along with collaborations with entities like the National Youth Leadership Programme (NYLP), Pakistan Tech Forum, and Connected Pakistan, underscores the agency's credibility and its central role in the regional economic ecosystem.

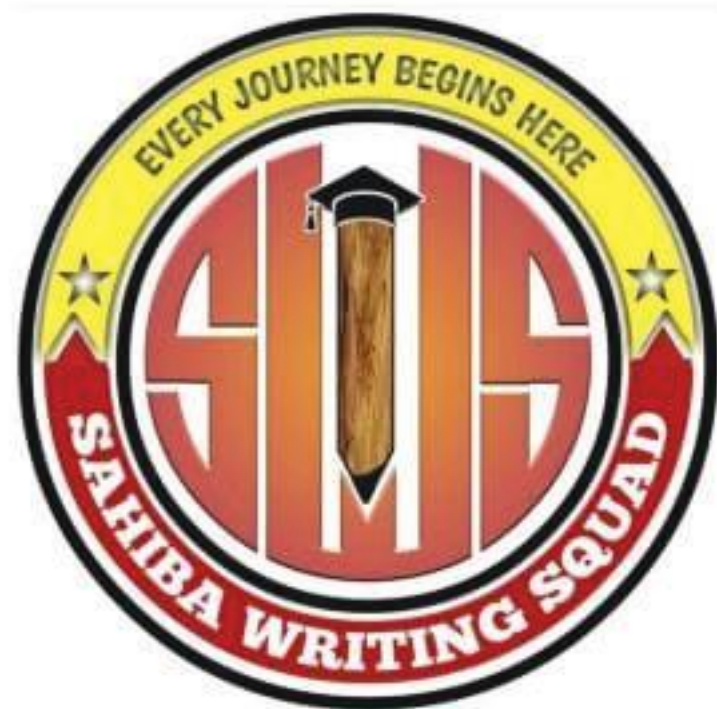
Innovation is woven into the very fabric of the organization. SWS does not just teach existing methods; it brings innovation to business plans and strategies, helping startups meet modern standards. By fostering a culture where mental health is recognized as essential and individuals are encouraged to lead with character, SWS is shaping a new class of leaders. These are individuals who are not only technically proficient but are also socially conscious and professionally resilient. The agency's focus remains clear: to build both knowledge and earning ability simultaneously.

As Sahiba Writing Squad continues to expand its reach, its impact is felt far beyond the borders of Khanewal. It is creating a ripple effect of success that empowers the youth to become independent and the women to become leaders. By turning the "rural disadvantage" into a

digital advantage, the organization is proving that with the right guidance, every journey can lead to a destination of success and purpose. The story of SWS is a testament to the fact that when passion meets a structured platform, the results can transform a society.

In conclusion, Sahiba Writing Squad stands as a beacon of hope and practical progress for the youth of Pakistan. Through the visionary leadership of Miss Sahabzadi Khan and a dedicated team, it is systematically dismantling the barriers to entry in the digital world. Whether

through a certification in the Digital Literacy Program, a win in an international competition, or the launch of a home-based business, SWS provides the launchpad for a new generation of digital pioneers. For those ready to take charge of their destiny, the message is clear: your journey to professional excellence and financial independence begins here. This is not just an agency; it is a community where dreams are given the wings of skill and the foundation of professional support.





The Cost Of Bribery And Divisive Politics Ahead Of 2027 General Elections

As Kenya approaches the 2027 general elections, the stakes could not be higher. The ballot box offers citizens a rare opportunity to chart a new course, yet the specter of bribery and divisive politics threatens to derail this moment. Too often, voters are tempted to trade their democratic power for short-term material gains—cash handouts, reflector jackets, shukas, or other trinkets. Such transactions may seem harmless in the moment, but they perpetuate a cycle of regret, leaving citizens to endure five years of mismanagement before the next chance to vote.

The danger is not limited to bribery alone. Party politics continues to dominate electoral choices, with certain regions favoring specific parties regardless of candidate competence. This entrenched loyalty undermines meritocracy, allowing unqualified leaders to ascend to positions of power simply because of partisan allegiance. Compounding the problem is tribal politics,



where leadership opportunities are distributed along ethnic lines, eroding national unity and weakening the foundations of good governance.

The cost of these practices is immense. Corruption flourishes, accountability diminishes, and the promise of a just and prosperous Kenya remains deferred. Yet the solution lies within the hands of voters themselves. By rejecting bribery, resisting divisive

party loyalties, and transcending ethnic boundaries, Kenyans can elect leaders who embody integrity, competence, and vision. The 2027 elections must not be squandered; they should mark a turning point where citizens choose progress over patronage, unity over division, and accountability over corruption.

Mc Gathuku, Independent Journalist

Clean Energy Startup Collapse And Policy Backlash In Kenya

Kenya has long positioned itself as a regional leader in clean and renewable energy, driven by ambitious climate commitments and a vibrant ecosystem of startups innovating in solar power, clean cooking, and carbon-credit solutions. Yet the recent collapse of a major clean-energy startup has exposed troubling weaknesses in the country's policy and regulatory framework, sparking backlash and renewed debate over the sustainability of Kenya's green transition.

The shutdown revealed the fragile environment in which clean-energy ventures operate—one heavily dependent on government approvals, policy consistency, and investor confidence. Regulatory delays, abrupt oversight changes, and uncertainty around carbon-credit mechanisms undermined the company's viability, leading to job losses, disruption of services to thousands of households, and erosion of trust in the broader clean-energy ecosystem.



Critics argue that while Kenya's leaders champion climate action in public forums, bureaucratic inefficiencies and inconsistent enforcement often stifle innovation. Limited consultation with stakeholders further discourages investment, leaving startups vulnerable to collapse. Environmental advocates warn that such instability threatens progress in reducing reliance on fossil fuels, particularly for low-income communities that benefit most from affordable clean-energy solutions.

Government officials, however, defend stricter regulation as necessary to ensure transparency and credibility in emerging carbon markets. Yet critics insist that regulation must enable

rather than restrict, striking a balance between accountability and innovation.

Ultimately, the collapse underscores deeper structural challenges—poor inter-agency coordination, slow policy implementation, and inadequate support systems. Unless these are addressed, Kenya risks weakening its reputation as a clean-energy leader. A stable, transparent, and inclusive policy environment is essential to safeguard green ambitions and secure long-term social, economic, and environmental gains.

Melody Akinyi Ochieng, Laikipia University

Youths, Protests And Digital Activism: How Gen Z Is Rewriting Kenya's Political Future

Kenya's political landscape is undergoing a profound transformation, driven by the energy and ingenuity of Generation Z. This cohort of young citizens has embraced both the streets and the screens, fusing traditional protest with digital activism to demand accountability from leaders and institutions. Their voices, amplified through social media, are reshaping the contours of civic engagement and redefining what it means to participate in democracy.

Platforms such as X, TikTok and Instagram have become the new town squares, enabling rapid mobilisation and instantaneous dissemination of information. Hashtags and viral videos now serve as rallying cries, drawing attention to issues that resonate across diverse communities. In bypassing traditional gatekeepers, Gen Z has expanded public participation, ensuring that grievances over governance, economic justice and social equity are heard far beyond the



confines of political rallies.

Recent demonstrations led by young people underscore deep frustrations with unemployment, rising living costs and questionable public spending. Unlike earlier movements often tethered to party politics, this wave of activism is issue-driven, rooted in demands for transparency and accountability rather than loyalty to political factions. It is a shift that unsettles entrenched structures while invigorating democratic debate.

Of course, challenges remain.

The specter of misinformation and the sustainability of digital-driven movements raise legitimate concerns. Yet the influence of Gen Z is undeniable. By merging online advocacy with physical protest, Kenya's youth are asserting their rightful place in the democratic process, compelling leaders to reckon with a generation determined to shape the nation's future.

Whytney Nasir, Laikipia University

How Money, Wealth And Power Shape The Lives Of The Poor

The renewed attention surrounding the Jeffrey Epstein files has reignited a global debate on how money and power often operate beyond the reach of justice. While the scandal has drawn headlines because of the prominent names linked to Epstein's circles—including politicians, business elites, and international figures—the deeper issue extends far beyond reputations. It underscores how wealth and influence continue to shape society in ways that disadvantage the poor while shielding the powerful.

The Epstein case illustrates how privilege creates impunity. Private jets, exclusive estates, elite networks, and high-powered legal teams formed a protective shield around a system that preyed largely on vulnerable individuals. Many victims came from unstable or impoverished backgrounds, lacking the resources or voice to challenge powerful figures. Meanwhile, the wealthy leveraged influence



to delay investigations, soften accountability, and divert scrutiny.

This imbalance reflects a broader truth: poverty is punished more harshly than crime. A poor person accused of a minor offense may languish in remand for years, while a wealthy individual facing serious charges secures bail, manipulates proceedings, or avoids trial altogether. Such double standards erode trust in institutions and normalize inequality.

The impact of power is also economic. While elites exploit tax loopholes and move wealth

offshore, governments struggle to fund healthcare, education, and employment programs. The poor bear the brunt of these failures, paying more for basic goods and enduring shrinking opportunities.

Ultimately, the Epstein files serve as a mirror of systemic injustice. Until societies confront the imbalance between wealth and poverty, the poor will remain voiceless while the powerful remain protected.

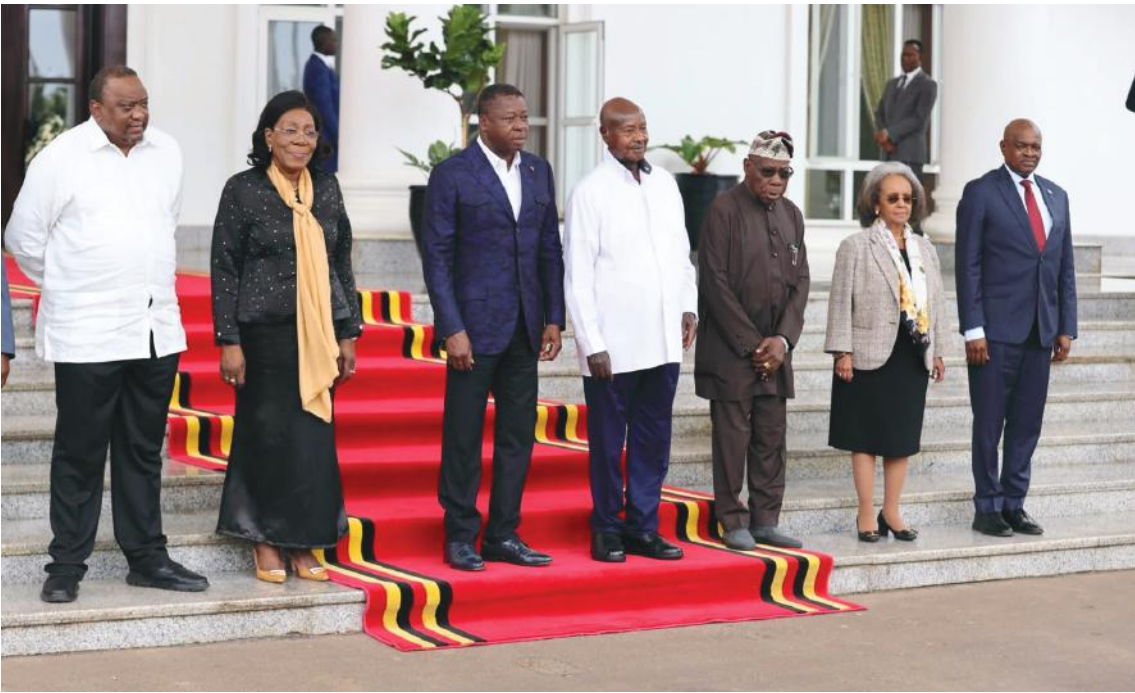
Erick Otieno, Laikipia University

Panel Of Former African Leaders Discusses Peace Process In Eastern DRC

By: Xinhua News Agency
@themtkenyatimes

A high-level panel of facilitators led by former African heads of state convened in the Ugandan capital of Kampala to advance dialogue and the peace process in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The one-day meeting, hosted at State House Entebbe by Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, was mandated to support regional dialogue and strengthen collective responses to the crisis in eastern DRC. According to a State House statement issued late Tuesday, the panel included former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, former Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta, former Ethiopian President Sahle-Work Zewde, former Botswanan President Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi, and former

Central African Republic President Catherine Samba Panza. Addressing the meeting, Museveni said that a lasting solution in eastern DRC remained elusive. Obasanjo emphasized the need for solutions grounded in African realities, noting that the crisis in the eastern DRC involves multiple unresolved issues beyond armed groups, including the March 23 Movement. He also cautioned against overreliance on externally driven approaches, stressing that while international partners can play a supportive role, durable peace must be anchored in African-led initiatives. Obasanjo emphasized the importance of identifying the root causes of the conflict, including domestic tensions and the country's relationships with its neighbors.



Some of former African leaders in Uganda on Tuesday. Photo/Courtesy.

Gaddafi's Son Killed In West Libya Armed Attack

By: Xinhua News Agency
@themtkenyatimes

Saif al-Islam Gaddafi, the son of the late Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi, was killed in an armed attack in western Libya on Tuesday, according to a statement from his political team. Abdullah Othman Abdurrahim, a member of the team, posted the announcement on Facebook, stating that four masked gunmen carried out a "treacherous operation" by storming Gaddafi's residence at noon in the city of Zintan. The attackers reportedly disabled surveillance cameras before a "direct armed confrontation" ensued, resulting in his death. The political team called on the Libyan judiciary and the international community to investigate the "crime" and identify the perpetrators and those who "masterminded" the attack.



Saif al-Islam Gaddafi

Authorities in Tripoli and Zintan have not yet confirmed the details of the incident. Saif al-Islam Gaddafi has re-

mained a significant and polarizing figure in Libya since the 2011 NATO-backed uprising that ended his father's rule.

Venezuelans Rally In Caracas To Demand Release Of Maduro, His Wife

By: Xinhua News Agency
@themtkenyatimes

Thousands of people rallied in the Venezuelan capital of Caracas to demand the release of the country's President Nicolas Maduro and First Lady Cilia Flores, one month after they were seized by force during a U.S. military operation in Venezuela. Miranda state Governor Elio Serrano said that the mobilization showed people's determination to tell the world they are still standing, adding the country's acting president Delcy Rodriguez has "the support of the people." Jenny Escobar, president of the Federation of Women Entrepreneurs of Venezuela, said the rally reaffirmed people's loyalty and steadfast support for Maduro and Flores. Protesters marched from Plaza Venezuela toward Urdaneta Avenue in central Caracas,



Nicholas Maduro and his wife before they were arrested. Photo/File

continuing demonstrations that have been held since Jan. 3.

Kindiki Rallies UDA Aspirants Around Manifesto Delivery, Defends Economic And Sectoral Gains

By: Irene Mwangi
@themkenyaintimes



Worth Noting:

- Speaking during a meeting with UDA aspirants, Kindiki said the Kenya Kwanza administration was deliberately focused on full, one hundred percent implementation of its manifesto, urging leaders to clearly articulate what was promised, what has already been delivered, and how outstanding pledges will be completed.
- “At the time we asked Kenyans for their votes, we presented a clear manifesto, and that manifesto continues to guide our leadership,” Kindiki said.
- The Deputy President said the economy has steadily stabilized since President William Ruto took office in 2022 amid post-COVID economic strain.

Deputy President Kithure Kindiki rallied United Democratic Alliance (UDA) aspirants to anchor their campaigns on the party's 2022 manifesto, insisting that loyalty to promised commitments remains the core test of leadership under the ruling coalition.

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“At the time we asked Kenyans for their votes, we presented a clear manifesto, and that manifesto continues to guide our leadership,” Kindiki said.

The Deputy President said the economy has steadily stabilized since President William Ruto took office in 2022 amid post-COVID economic strain.

He noted that inflation had dropped from 9.6 per cent to about 4.4 per cent, the shilling had strengthened from about 165 to around 128–129 against the US dollar, and foreign exchange reserves had more than doubled to \$12.1 billion.

“Today, inflation has declined to about 4.4 percent, the shilling has stabilized at around 128/129 to the dollar, and foreign exchange reserves have more than doubled to 12.1 billion dollars, restoring macroeconomic stability,” Kindiki stated.

Sectoral Gains

Agriculture, which supports more than 70 per cent of Kenyans, was highlighted as a key pillar of the administration's agenda. Kindiki said government intervention had reduced fertiliser prices from about Sh7,000 per bag in 2022 to roughly Sh2,500, significantly lowering production costs for farmers.

According to the Deputy President, maize production has risen from 44 million bags in 2022 to 67 million bags in 2024 and is projected to hit 75 million bags in 2025.

He also cited improved returns in key value chains, with coffee prices rising from about Sh70 per kilogram to between Sh120 and Sh160, and sugar production increasing from 472,000 to 815,000 metric tonnes, cutting imports by 70 per cent.

In the livestock sector, Kindiki said milk production had grown from 4.6 billion litres to 5.3 billion litres,



while dairy exports had nearly doubled to Sh8.9 billion. Meat exports, he added, had increased by 45 per cent to Sh12.9 billion. He pointed to the near completion of the Kenya Leather Industrial Park as a boost for value addition and farmer incomes.

The Deputy President also highlighted investments in the blue economy, including Sh3.2 billion in grants to fishermen and cooperatives along the Indian Ocean and Lake Victoria, alongside new landing sites, cooling facilities and testing laboratories aimed at reducing post-harvest losses.

On education, Kindiki said reforms guided by a presidential working party had expanded the sector's budget from Sh500 billion in 2022 to Sh702 billion. He cited the employment of 100,000 teachers, construction of 23,000 classrooms and 1,600 laboratories, and a sharp rise in TVET enrolment from 297,000 to 718,000 learners.

In health, he said the transition from NHIF to SHIF Taifa Care had ex-

panded coverage from seven million to 29.2 million Kenyans, supported by modern equipment and more than 107,000 community health promoters nationwide.

Kindiki said job creation remained a central focus, with affordable housing, markets, hostels and institutional housing projects spread across 235 active sites. He said nearly Sh800 billion worth of contracts were underway, employing about 500,000 young people, with a target of one million by the end of the year.

Digital and overseas employment opportunities, he added, had expanded through 30,000 kilometres of fibre optic cable, over 700 ICT hubs and labour agreements with 13 countries, resulting in 538,000 Kenyans working abroad and a more than \$1 billion increase in diaspora remittances over three years.

Turning to infrastructure, the Deputy President said stalled road projects dating back to 2014 had been revived after the government cleared Sh190 billion in pending bills. He

said resources had been secured to complete 6,000 kilometres of roads and that the National Infrastructure Fund would drive an ambitious expansion, targeting 28,000 kilometres of new roads in seven years.

Kindiki also announced plans to extend the railway from Naivasha to the Uganda border, with President Ruto expected to break ground on the Naivasha–Malaba line, financed largely through domestic resources to reduce reliance on debt.

He said the government was mobilising domestic savings to reach Sh1 trillion to fund high-return projects, describing the strategy as key to restoring national dignity.

“To finance development sustainably, the government is mobilizing domestic savings to reach one trillion shillings, enabling investment in high-return infrastructure projects. This approach reduces reliance on foreign borrowing and restores national dignity by building the country using its own resources,” Kindiki expressed.



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Sports >> *With less than a fortnight to the historic HSBC SVNS 2 at Nairobi's Nyayo National Stadium on February 14-15, here is what you need to know about the event.

What You Need To Know About HSBC SVNS 2 In Nairobi



With less than a fortnight to the historic HSBC SVNS 2 at Nairobi's Nyayo National Stadium on February 14-15, here is what you need to know about the event.

Why is it referred to as HSBC SVNS?

SVNS, pronounced "sevens," is the rebranded name for the premier World Rugby Sevens Series, an annual, elite-level international rugby competition featuring both men's and women's teams.

It was introduced in 2023 to supercharge rugby's global appeal with a shorter, festival-style format featuring eight cities, and later expanded to enhance the fan experience.

However, on May 1st, 2025, World Rugby officially announced the changes within the

HSBC SVNS Circuit as curtains fell on the 2025 season in Los Angeles, California.

World Rugby confirmed that the sevens competition will embrace a new model at the start of the 2026 season. The new format introduces a three-division structure in 2026: HSBC SVNS Division 1, which is the top-tier, HSBC SVNS Division 2- second tier, and Division 3 – third tier.

How does the new format work? Division 1 – Eight men's and eight women's teams compete in six high-impact SVNS Series events.

Division 2 – Six teams per gender compete in a second division across three events.

Division 3 – A standalone Challenger event with eight teams per gender, qualifying from regional

competitions.

Season finale to determine world champion: Three blockbuster SVNS World Championship Series events with the top 12 men's and women's teams (eight from Division 1, four from Division 2)

Inaugural event

Division 2 will feature six teams comprising Kenya, USA, Belgium, Canada, Uruguay, and Germany for the men, Kenya Lionesses, Brazil, China, Spain, Argentina, and South Africa, competing in three legs across the global cities of Nairobi (Kenya), Montevideo (Uruguay), and São Paulo (Brazil)

The tournament will be played in a round robin format, where the top team will amass the most available points in the standings.

At the end of the three legs, the top four teams will be promoted to the top-tier Division 1.

Nairobi HSBC SVN 2 Notebook

- Nairobi HSBC SVN 2 Notebook

- It is the first time Kenya is hosting the prestigious World Rugby event

- Capital FM Kenya is the official Media Partner and Entertainment partner

- Tickets were sold out two weeks before the event, with no tickets to be sold at the gate, outlining Kenya's passion for rugby

- The event will be held at the 18,000-capacity Nyayo National Stadium

- There will be no parking available at the event venue

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >>> *National men’s rugby 7s player Kevin Wekesa has been accorded the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Climate Award for 2025.

Shujaa Player Receives IOC Award For Environmental Work Ahead Of HSBC Division 2 Tourney



National men’s rugby 7s player Kevin Wekesa has been accorded the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Climate Award for 2025.

The Kabras Sugar player was recognised for using sports as a platform to enhance environmental sustainability through replacement of single-use plastics.

“Kenyan rugby sevens player Kevin Wekesa founded Play Green to use sport as a platform for climate action, responding to the rising temperatures and desertification that are already disrupting livelihoods across Kenya,” IOC said.

They added: “The programme has so far replaced single-use plastic bottles with reusable aluminium

bottles for Kenya’s national rugby teams, saving nearly 1,000 plastic bottles every week.”

Furthermore, Wekesa was applauded for using Play Green to enhance awareness on water conservation, waste management and climate justice through partnerships with 40 schools around the country.

“To date, the initiative has supported the planting of 2,300 trees and engaged thousands of children in climate education. Kevin has extended this work to clubs and federations, launching match-day recycling initiatives and installing clearly marked recycling bins and collection points to divert waste from landfill,” the statement read.

The Shujaa star has also under-

lined his ambition to upscale the initiative through plastic-free stadium zones, biodegradable packaging and establishing a Green Ambassador programme in schools.

“With the support of this award, Kevin aims to turn these plans into a replicable model for grassroots climate action through sport,” IOC revealed.

The award is the latest achievement for a player who has shone for the country on and off the pitch.

The 25-year-old broke into the national set-up in 2021 and has become a mainstay of the team, through its ups and downs.

He has also turned out for Hyderabad Heroes in the Indian Rugby

Premier League where he has been turning heads with his virtuoso performances.

Wekesa will be turning out for Shujaa at the HSBC Division 2 in Nairobi on February 14-15 at the Nyayo Stadium in Nairobi.

Kenya will be up against the United States and Germany in Pool A, in the competition that will feature 12 teams — both men and women.

Capital Sport

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Kombo Josiah And The Journey Of A Pen That Exalts A Noble Language



By: Wanjohi. P. Mugambi
@themkenyaintimes

Worth Noting:

- Msanifu's journey in poetry began early, greatly influenced by the nurturing of his parents, Joseph Kombo and Alice Ouma, both passionate lovers of poetry and literature. In that environment, language was not merely a tool of communication but a family heritage and a treasury of wisdom. Through his parents, Msanifu learned to value words, respect meaning, and recognize the weight of the pen in shaping social thought.
- He did not walk alone in developing his talent. Mr. Isoe Kevin has been a crucial pillar in his literary journey—as co-writer, mentor, and close advisor, constantly encouraging him. Their relationship is built on faith, discipline in writing, and a shared passion for advancing Kiswahili literature. Likewise, Mr. Machogu Josphat has been a key partner, currently collaborating with him on a joint poetry anthology—an effort that reflects the solidarity of writers as a path to literary growth.

In an era where social, technological, and cultural changes are unfolding rapidly, literature has remained a vital pillar for reflection, critique, and the shaping of society. Within this context, the Kiswahili language continues to serve as a strong instrument for uniting communities, expressing ideas, and preserving culture. Among the writers who have devoted themselves to this mission is Kombo Josiah, popularly known by the pen name Msanifu—a poet who has turned his pen into the voice of society and a bridge for transformation.

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Positive competition has also marked his journey. In 2022, he participated in a poetry contest featuring twenty-six writers from diverse backgrounds. Mugambi Wanjohi emerged first, while Msanifu took second place. The contest was not merely a test of skill but a platform for exchanging ideas, learning, and growth. Since then, Wanjohi has remained a source of motivation, inspiring Msanifu to pursue literature boldly and without hesitation.

Thematically, Msanifu's poetry mirrors social realities. He addresses emerging issues such as climate change, politics, women's roles in society, male chauvinism, and socio-economic challenges affecting

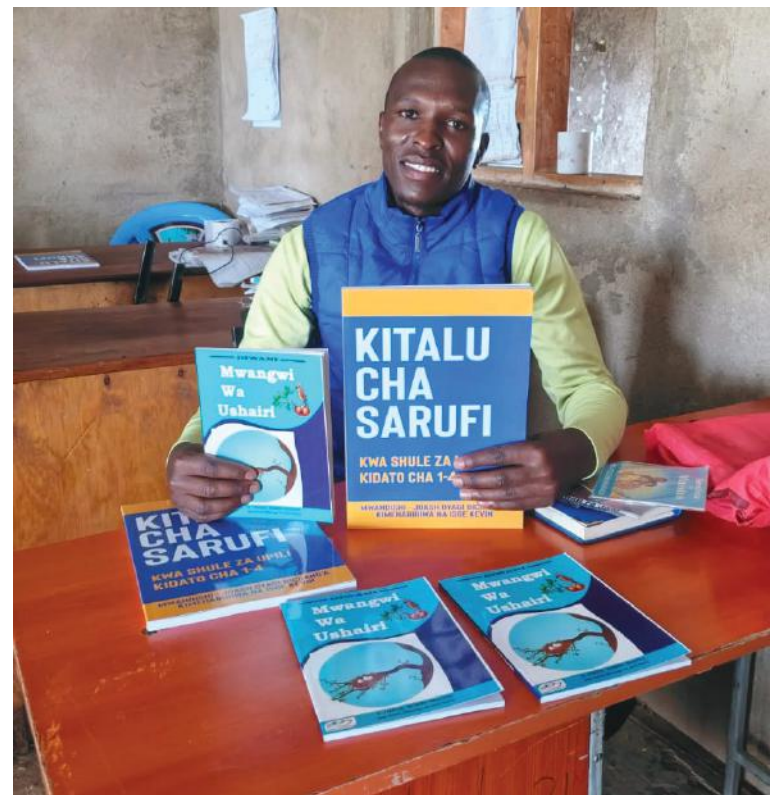
ordinary people. To him, a poet is both the mirror of society and a lamp that lights the way. Through refined language, vivid imagery, and messages that stir emotion, he uses poetry as a tool to warn, educate, and inspire positive change.

By engaging in competitions and literary forums, Msanifu has earned several awards, recognition of his contribution to Kiswahili literature. Yet beyond accolades, his greatest inspiration has come from earlier writers. Chief among them is the late Professor Ken Walibora, whose works—especially the novel Siku Njema—deeply influenced him, opening his eyes to literature's power in addressing social issues with eloquence and appeal. Remarkably, Msanifu had the privilege of receiving direct guidance from Walibora through phone conversations—an experience he treasures as a defining moment in his literary life. May Professor Walibora's soul rest in eternal peace.

To date, Msanifu has authored several books and continues his literary research tirelessly. He launched his first poetry anthology while in his third year at university, a bold step that affirmed his identity as a writer. The event, coordinated by Mr. Isoe Kevin, became a milestone that opened doors to wider literary platforms.

Beyond writing, Msanifu has invested greatly in nurturing emerging writers. Through mentorship, training, and close collaboration, he has helped talents such as Hamisi Nickson, Hellen Bahati, Doreen Nekesa, Simon Kasili, Isaiah Limo, Sharon Odhiambo, and many others to believe in their abilities and develop their literary voices. For him, talent is a trust that must be shared so literature can live and grow.

Broadly, Msanifu believes Kiswahili is a pillar of societal development. It is a language that transcends ethnic boundaries, strengthens cooperation and social bonds, preserves and promotes culture, identifies communities, conveys emotions, stimulates thought and research, builds economies through writing, editing, publishing, and broadcasting, and nurtures talent. Kiswahili is a language of quality, growing daily



in stature, recognized internationally, and honored with a global day of celebration.

In conclusion, Kombo Josiah (Msanifu) stands as an example of a writer who serves the word with commitment and integrity. With humility and gratitude to God, he con-

tinues to serve Kiswahili with love and dedication, believing that to nurture language is to nurture society, and to nurture society is to build a hopeful tomorrow.