



### The Marginalization Of Humanities In Kenya: A Crisis Of Vision And Values

In Kenya's current educational landscape, a troubling fact emerges: over 70% of university students are now enrolled in STEM and business-related courses, while humanities departments struggle with dwindling numbers and reduced funding. The 2022 University Funding Model explicitly prioritized science, technology, engineering, and mathematics courses, allocating significantly higher per-student funding compared to humanities disciplines.

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**News>> Getting To Zero Tolerance: How Community Caravans Are Breaking The Silence Around FGM**

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**News>> Ruto Launches KSh126m NYOTA Funding For 5,040 Coast Youth**

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In a statement issued yesterday, IEBC Chairman Erastus Edung Etheke said Mr. Sunkuli will serve in the acting role for a period of six months or until a substantive CEO is competitively recruited and appointed.



Moses Ledama Sunkuli

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# Kalonzo Musyoka Engages Global Leaders On Food Security, Investment At US Prayer Breakfast

By: WMW  
 @themtkenyentimes

Some Of The Moments As Captured In Pictures

Former Vice President and Wiper Patriotic Front party leader Kalonzo Musyoka is in Washington DC for the 74th National Prayer Breakfast where yesterday, he used the platform to engage global leaders on issues of food security, investment, sustainable development and values-driven leadership. Upon arrival at Dulles International Airport on Wednesday evening, Musyoka expressed gratitude to Albina, Shanice and Enrique for the warm reception.

He was accompanied by Deputy Minority Leader of the National Assembly and Kathiani MP Robert Mbui and Makueni County Senator Dan Maanzo. During the event, Musyoka joined discussions with former South Carolina Governor and former UN World Food Programme Executive Director David Beasley, as well as other global leaders including Henry Kaestner, Zac Sicher, and Gavin Gramstad.

He described the conversations as more than just meetings, emphasizing that they were opportunities to build bridges, unlock investment prospects, and forge partnerships that benefit Kenya and its diaspora communities.

Musyoka reaffirmed his commitment to championing The Kenya We Want; a nation anchored in dignity, opportunity and shared prosperity.

The National Prayer Breakfast is an annual gathering that brings together global leaders, policymakers and faith-based organizations to discuss national and international issues, providing a platform for dialogue, networking, and collaboration.



Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times

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## NEWS IN BRIEF



KUSCCO Limited board of directors (pictured) has appointed CPA Peter Wanjohi Kiama as its interim Chief Executive Officer as part of ongoing recovery and reform efforts at the Union. Mr Kiama has been seconded from the State Department of Cooperatives and brings extensive experience in leadership, oversight and cooperative governance. The appointment is aimed at strengthening transparency, accountability and member-focused management as KUSCCO undertakes key reforms to stabilise and reposition the organisation. KUSCCO said it will provide further updates on progress during the 11th Annual SACCO Leaders' Convention scheduled to take place in Mombasa from February 16 to 20, where members will be briefed on the Union's reform agenda and future direction.



Kenya Agriculture and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO) Katumani centre on Wednesday hosted an international delegation of researchers from the University of Western Australia's Institute of Agriculture, PABRA-CIAT scientists and bean research teams from Malawi, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Burundi, Rwanda and Kenya. The visitors toured several ongoing research initiatives, including the Biobelief trial, PABRA yield trial and drought-tolerant bean trial. They also visited the KALRO seed store and a large-scale farmer demonstration site in Kapiti to observe the application of research findings at farm level. The visit formed part of the Rapid Bean Cooking Project, which seeks to develop improved bean varieties that cook faster, are rich in iron and are resilient to climate change. The project is funded by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR).



The Kenya Meat Commission (KMC) yesterday hosted Major General Faustino Lobaly, Director General of Defence Security Industries, at its Athi River facility. Major General Lobaly was received by KMC's Managing Commissioner, Major General Jattani Gula, and given a guided tour of the facility following a briefing on the Commission's performance by Deputy Managing Commissioner Brigadier C.K. Nyakundi. The visit provided an opportunity to assess KMC's operational capacity and explore ways the Commission can contribute to national food security and strategic supply chains. KMC emphasized its readiness to support initiatives that strengthen Kenya's food systems and meet national demand efficiently.



KTDA on Wednesday hosted a delegation of tea company executives drawn from the German Herbal and Tea Association at Kiru Tea Factory, one of the 71 factories managed by the agency. The visit, the first of its kind in the country, is aimed at giving the executives first-hand insight into Kenya's smallholder tea value chain. The delegation is also expected to engage directly with tea producers and explore ways of strengthening partnerships that link smallholder farmers to international markets.



Prime Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs and Diaspora Musalia Mudavadi yesterday bid farewell to Khalid Abdullah Al Salman, the outgoing Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Kenya and congratulated him on completing his tour of duty. He commended Ambassador Al Salman for his role in strengthening Kenya-Saudi Arabia relations and deepening ties between the two countries' people and economies. Ambassador Al Salman expressed his gratitude to the Government of Kenya, the public, and the business community for the support he received during his tenure. The PCS reaffirmed Kenya's commitment to expanding cooperation with Saudi Arabia in trade, investment, labour governance, multilateral engagement and regional peace and stability.



Jubilee Party leaders yesterday met officials from Nakuru County at the party headquarters to deliberate on party affairs and its policy direction. The meeting was led by Party Chairman Vincent Mogaka Kemosi, Deputy Secretary General Zack Kinuthia and Council of Elders chair Njenga Mungai. The leaders reaffirmed the party's commitment to unity, renewal and the strengthening of grassroots structures across the country. Following the consultations, it was resolved that the planned grand opening of the Jubilee Party Nakuru County offices, which had been scheduled for today be postponed to a later date to be communicated. Jubilee Party said it remains focused on offering practical solutions and inclusive leadership as Kenyans face rising living costs, job losses and economic uncertainty under the current administration.



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# Shadows Of Deception: Govt Warns Youth Against Deadly Fake Jobs Abroad

By: David Kimani  
@themkenyentimes

## Worth Noting:

- Mutua's remarks carried political weight and moral gravity. "If someone tells you they can take you abroad, investigate them thoroughly," he said, stressing that the government's official overseas jobs programme, Kazi Majuu, remains the only transparent and verifiable channel.
- He pointed to recent successes: more than 10,000 youth attended recruitment drives in Kilifi, Mombasa, Kwale, and Malindi, with 3,000 receiving job letters and 1,350 already deployed to safe, legitimate opportunities. One young man from the Coast, once a boda boda rider, now earns Sh120,000 monthly in Dubai.

The warning was delivered with urgency, almost like a siren cutting through the coastal air. Labour Cabinet Secretary Alfred Mutua, speaking in Malindi on Thursday, cautioned Kenyans—especially the youth—against falling prey to fraudulent recruitment agencies that promise lucrative overseas jobs but instead funnel desperate applicants into perilous paths, including the front lines of the Russia-Ukraine war.

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But alongside these stories of hope lies a darker reality. Fraudsters, Mutua warned, are exploiting desperation, luring jobseekers with promises of quick visas and high salaries. He urged Kenyans to consult the National Employment Authority website or hotline to verify recruiters, adding that any offer involving tourist or visitor visas for work is a "clear red flag."

The warning comes amid mounting public pressure following revelations of Kenyans caught in the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Ukrainian intelligence recently confirmed the death of Clinton Nyapara Mogesa, a 28 year old



Labour Cabinet Secretary Alfred Mutua

Kenyan who had previously worked in Qatar before being recruited into the Russian military. Mogesa was killed in Donetsk during what officials described as a "meat assault"—a brutal infantry advance with little protection. His body was never recovered, and his family received neither compensation nor explanation. Disturbingly, Mogesa was found carrying passports belonging to two other Kenyans, raising fears of a wider recruitment network target-

ing vulnerable youth.

International observers have noted that foreign nationals are increasingly treated as expendable resources in the war, sent to their deaths with minimal training. Mutua echoed these concerns, warning that some Kenyans trafficked abroad have ended up in criminal networks or conflict zones. He appealed to parents to play a vigilant role: "If your son or daughter is going abroad, investigate properly so

they do not fall prey to companies that will steal their lives."

The government's message is clear: preparation and caution must outweigh desperation. In a world where opportunity and exploitation often blur, vigilance is the only safeguard against tragedy.

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# Getting To Zero Tolerance: How Community Caravans Are Breaking The Silence Around FGM

By: Charity Nyaga and Ellyjoy Kanana  
@themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- The major reason for this day is to encourage a global call to end the harmful practice and speedup progress towards its eradication.
- According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) female genital mutilation refers to all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for cultural or other non-medical reasons.
- The World Health Organization has identified four types of female genital mutilation which are clitoridectomy, excision, infibulation and other types such as pricking.
- The most recent Kenya Demographic Health Survey indicates that the national female genital prevalence rate is 15%. However, some regions in the country have prevalence as high as 95%.

On 6th of February every year, the world marks and celebrates the International Day on Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

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The most recent Kenya Demographic Health Survey indicates that the national female genital prevalence rate is 15%. However, some regions in the country have prevalence as high as 95%.

Female genital mutilation is classified as the worst form of violence against women and girls.

This is because it denies them off their very instrumental rights such as the right to quality education, their right to childhood which is not negotiable and their right to safe motherhood in their future lives.

In the majority of African communities including the Ameru Communities who majorly inhabit our County, female genital mutilation continue to persist since it is done as a rite of passage that signifies entry into adulthood.

A girl who undergoes the cut is considered an adult irrespective of her age. Some families claim that their fore fathers left curses behind that their daughters and daughter in laws should be circumcised. Many families continue to practice is for fear of social rejection and stigma.

Patriarchal decision making structures further reinforce compliance, while secrecy driven by the criminalization of fgm by the law pushes the underground practice.

In addition, limited awareness of health risks and legal implications alongside economic incentives for traditional practitioners also contribute to the continued existence of the harmful practice.

In Tharaka Nithi County, working with Fit For Future Kenya and with support from the Global Media Campaigns to End FGM, we are using community driven methods and particularly through mobile awareness caravans.



Caravan for champions of anti-Female Genital Mutilation in Tharaka-Nithi County. Photos/Mugambi Munene.

The caravans move through villages, markets, schools and public spaces using drama, music, storytelling and dialogues to engage the communities in a culturally respect way. They create safe spaces where young people parents, elders and leaders can openly discuss FGM, challenge social norms.

Through caravans, we are able to reach out to underserved and remote populations, attract large and diverse audience whilst encouraging open dialogues around a topic that

is often surrounded with taboos and silence.

Through caravans, we have been addressing communities and this has empowered young people become advocates of change. We have built trust with the communities and change is taking place.

As we draw closer to the year 2030, there is a need for collective efforts from families, communities and national and sub national (County) governments to intensify their efforts and campaigns using strategies

that are impactful and lead to sustainable social change.

Through the community FGM caravans, we have become staunch and dedicated Anti FGM champions. We have learnt that together we can ensure that our traditions become a source of pride and not pain to girls and women.

Charity Nyaga & Ellyjoy Kanana are Youth Champions at Fit For Future Kenya, an Non-Governmental Organisation that fights FGM




Some of the participants in a caravan for champions of anti-FGM in Tharaka-Nithi County. Photos/Mugambi Munene.



# IEBC Appoints Moses Ledama Sunkuli As Acting CEO Amid Leadership Transition

By: MKT Reporter  
@themtkenyetimes



Worth Noting:

- In a statement issued yesterday, IEBC Chairman Erastus Edung Etheke said Mr. Sunkuli will serve in the acting role for a period of six months or until a substantive CEO is competitively recruited and appointed.
- The appointment is aimed at ensuring continuity in the commission's operations during a critical transition period.
- Mr. Sunkuli is currently the Director of Electoral Operations, a role in which he has overseen key electoral processes and administrative functions within the commission. The IEBC said his extensive institutional experience and familiarity with the commission's systems made him suitable to steer the secretariat during the interim period.

The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) has appointed Moses Ledama Sunkuli as its Acting Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Commission Secretary, effective immediately, following the exit of former CEO Marjan Hussein.

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"The Commission is committed to fast-tracking the recruitment of a substantive Chief Executive Officer/Commission Secretary and ensuring a seamless transition, while maintaining the highest standards of excellence in service delivery to the Kenyan people," the statement read.

The CEO and Commission Secretary is the accounting officer of the IEBC and plays a central role in the implementation of commission decisions, management of staff, and coordination of electoral activities. The position is established under the IEBC Act and is critical to the commission's independence and operational efficiency.

Mr. Sunkuli's appointment, however, has drawn attention due to the decision to overlook the commission's two Deputy Chief Executive Officers; Ruth Kulundu and Obadia Keitany both of whom have previously served in senior capacities within the IEBC secretariat. While the commission did not address this directly, sources familiar with the process indicated that the appointment was based on internal operational considerations and the need for stability within the electoral operations directorate.

The exit of Marjan Hussein created a leadership vacuum at a time when the IEBC is under pressure to rebuild public confidence, address legal and administrative reforms, and prepare for upcoming electoral milestones, including boundary reviews and by-elections where applicable.



Erastus Edung Etheke

The commission has in recent years faced challenges ranging from political scrutiny and court cases to staffing gaps and funding constraints.

Observers say the appointment of an acting CEO is a necessary stop-gap as the commission reorganizes and moves to fill substantive positions in line with the law.

As Mr. Sunkuli takes up the acting role, attention will now turn to the recruitment process for a substantive CEO and whether the commission can navigate the transition smoothly while safeguarding its constitutional mandate.



Marjan Hussein Marjan



# Kirinyaga County Residents Urge Caution On Safaricom Partial Divestiture

By: MKT Reporter  
@themtkenyentimes

Kirinyaga County residents raised concerns over the proposed partial divestiture of the Government of Kenya's shares in Safaricom, stressing that public interest, service continuity, and data security must remain a priority.

The concerns were raised yesterday during a public participation forum on Sessional Paper No. 3 of 2025, which outlines the government's plan to sell part of its stake in Safaricom.

Residents questioned the long-term impact of the proposed sale, particularly if Vodacom becomes the largest shareholder, and called for assurances that the transaction would not compromise Safaricom's infrastructure or essential services.

Participants urged Parliament to ensure transparency in the valuation and negotiation process and recommended that detailed reports on existing and proposed infrastructure be made available.



Parliamentary and national government officials outside Kirinyaga County Commissioner's office.

Some residents also cautioned against rushing the sale, suggesting that alternative financing options be explored to maintain strategic public control of the telecommunications giant.

Residents emphasized that any proceeds from the divestiture should be directed to priority sectors, notably education, health, and agriculture, which have a direct impact on livelihoods and national development.

"Citizen welfare must remain central to any decision involving strategic national assets," they said.

The partial divestiture plan comes as the government seeks to raise funds for development projects while reducing fiscal pressure. Safaricom, Kenya's largest mobile network operator, plays a critical role in the economy, providing mobile money services, connectivity and employment for



Some of the residents who attended the public participation forum in Kirinyaga yesterday. Photos/Courtesy.

thousands of Kenyans.

Earlier, a delegation led by Irene Mrembo paid a courtesy call to the County Commissioner's Office during the forum, engaging with local officials on the divestiture process.

The delegation aimed to hear directly from residents on their priorities and concerns regarding the potential sale.

The government has assured that the divestiture will be conducted transpar-

ently, with mechanisms to safeguard public interest, although full details of the process and valuation are yet to be disclosed. Stakeholders are calling for continued consultations to ensure that any sale balances revenue generation with national development priorities, while protecting citizens' welfare and strategic control over key national assets.





# Hope As More Kenyans Embrace Early Cancer Testing

By: John Kamau  
@themkenyatimes

Medical experts in Kenya are expressing renewed optimism in the fight against cancer as more citizens turn up for early screening and testing, a trend attributed to sustained awareness campaigns and improved access to services.

This comes amid rising cancer-related deaths and as the country marked World Cancer Day on Wednesday.

According to the Ministry of Health, Kenya records about 45,000 new cancer cases annually, with approximately 29,000 deaths reported each year, making cancer the second leading cause of death after pneumonia.

Dr Gladwell Gatheca, the Head of the Cancer and Non-Communicable Diseases Division at the Ministry, noted that while the statistics remain worrying, significant milestones have been achieved in prevention, diagnosis, and treatment.

Dr Gatheca said the government, working with various stakeholders, has intensified awareness campaigns that have encouraged more Kenyans to seek early testing, leading to better

outcomes.

She emphasized that cancer is largely preventable and treatable when detected early.

One of the major achievements highlighted is the decentralisation of cancer care.

Previously, treatment was mainly available in Nairobi and at Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital in Eldoret, but regional cancer centres have now been established in Garissa, Nakuru and Mombasa, reducing the burden of long-distance travel for patients.

She also reported progress in preventive measures, noting that HPV vaccination coverage among girls has increased from 35 percent to about 62 percent, a key step in reducing cervical cancer cases.

Speaking during World Cancer Day commemorations at Kenyatta University Teaching, Referral and Research Hospital (KUTRRH), Dr Gatheca reiterated the ministry's commitment to empowering community health promoters to spread accurate information on cancer prevention and early screening.

To ease the financial burden on patients, the government has expanded cancer treatment coverage under the



Dr Gladwell Gatheca, head of cancer and non-communicable disease division in the Ministry of Health briefing journalists.

Social Health Authority (SHA) insurance scheme, making care more affordable and reducing the risk of catastrophic health expenditure.

Meanwhile, KUTRRH Head of Oncology Dr Abeid Athman noted that although many patients still present with late-stage cancer, there has been a noticeable increase in diagnoses at

stages one and two due to early testing.

Common cancers seen include breast, prostate, esophageal, and colorectal cancers. He added that heavy investment in modern technologies, such as nuclear medicine, PET scans, and CyberKnife radiation therapy, has reduced the need for Kenyans to

seek treatment abroad.

Dr Caroline Ngugi, Director of Training, Research, and Partnership at KUTRRH, urged Kenyans to take advantage of free cancer testing services offered at the hospital, underscoring the importance of early detection in saving lives.

# Reprieve For Kisii Family As Dennis Makori Alias Sonko Builds Them A New Home

By: Elizabeth Angira  
@themkenyatimes

For years, a family of five in Maroo Village, South Mugirango Constituency in Kisii County, lived in fear whenever dark clouds gathered in the sky. What should have been a normal rainy season turned into a nightmare, as their small mud-walled house with a leaking iron-sheet roof offered little protection from the cold and rain.

During heavy downpours, the family had no option but to stay awake through the night, shifting from one corner to another as rainwater poured into the house.

Speaking to the press, Josephine Mogere, the mother, said she survives by doing manual jobs to put food on the table.

"We used to place sufurias and basins on the floor to collect water," she recalled, her voice trembling. "Sometimes all of us, including the children, would squeeze into one dry corner and wait for the rain to stop."

The house, which had been their only shelter for years, was no longer safe. Its walls were weak, the



roof riddled with holes, and the floor muddy. Despite their determination to survive, the family lacked the financial means to repair or build a better home. Neighbours occasionally offered temporary help, but the situation remained unchanged.

Their plight reached Dennis Makori, popularly known as Sonko, an aspiring South Mugirango parliamentary candidate, through concerned neighbours who highlighted the family's dire living conditions. Moved by their story, Makori stepped in to offer assistance.

Makori said it was painful to witness families living in such conditions at a time when elected leaders should be stepping in to support the most vul-

nerable members of society.

"There are many similar cases in this constituency," he said. "As leaders, we must take responsibility and ensure our people live with dignity. I am committed to changing the lives of this community."

He urged leaders holding elective positions to support vulnerable families so they can at least afford basic needs such as shelter.

Makori handed over a newly built, decent house to the family, replacing the old leaking structure. The new home has strong walls, a proper iron-sheet roof, and enough space to allow the family to live comfortably and with dignity.

As the final touches were completed,



emotions ran high. The family could not hide their joy as they stepped into their new home for the first time.

"We never imagined something like this would happen to us," said the father, Julius Mogere. "For many years, we suffered, especially during the rainy season. Today, our children can sleep peacefully without fear."

Neighbours gathered to witness the handover, describing the gesture as life changing. Many praised Makori for responding swiftly and restoring hope to a family that had almost lost it.

"This shows that when leaders and people of goodwill listen, lives can truly change," said local resident An-

gelina Bosibori Ombacho.

She noted that beyond providing shelter, the new house has restored the family's dignity and hope.

The children can now focus on their education without worrying about where they will sleep when it rains, while the parents say a burden that weighed heavily on them for years has finally been lifted.

As rains continue across many parts of the country, the story of this Kisii family stands as a reminder that simple acts of kindness can make a lasting difference transforming lives from hardship to hope, and from sleeping in the rain to living under a safe roof.



# Ruto Launches KSh126m NYOTA Funding For 5,040 Coast Youth

By: MKT Reporter  
@themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- President William Ruto, who presided over the event, said the beneficiaries each received the first tranche of KSh25,000 out of the total KSh50,000 business support package.
- Of this amount, KSh22,000 is paid directly to the youth while KSh3,000 is saved under the National Social Security Fund (NSSF).
- So far, young entrepreneurs from 44 counties have benefited from the programme. Today, the President is expected to preside over the disbursement of funds to beneficiaries from the remaining Coast counties of Mombasa, Kwale and Taita-Taveta.
- President Ruto announced that the government is set to roll out the second component of the NYOTA programme, dubbed On-the-Job Experience, targeting 90,000 young people. Under the initiative, beneficiaries will be attached to master craftsmen for six months and receive a monthly stipend of KSh6,000, with the government covering the cost of training, assessment and certification.

A total of 5,040 young entrepreneurs from Lamu, Kilifi and Tana River counties yesterday received KSh126 million under the Business Start-Up Capital component of the NYOTA programme during a ceremony held in Malindi.

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Already, 532,000 youth have applied for the opportunity.

The President urged more young people to apply by dialling \*254# and selecting the On-the-Job Experience option under the NYOTA project.

He said the programme is aligned with the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda and is designed to ensure inclusivity by giving all young people, regardless of background, access to business opportunities and skills training.

Highlighting development projects in Kilifi County, the President said the government has invested KSh21 billion in affordable housing, modern markets and student hostels.

He noted that the Affordable Housing Programme has created more than 5,000 jobs in the county and over 500,000 jobs nationally.

On infrastructure, President Ruto said KSh2.2 billion has been allocated to improve electricity connectivity in Kilifi County.

He also pointed to gains in the blue economy, including the establishment of nine fish landing sites across the Coast region.

Mining and Blue Economy Cabinet Secretary Ali Hassan Joho said more than 100 boats have been issued to young people, while KSh983 million has been disbursed to 278 groups in



President William Ruto and his deputy Kithure Kindiki interacting with some of the NYOTA beneficiaries in Malindi yesterday.  
Photo/Courtesy.

Kilifi County.

The President reiterated that no child should be sent home over school fees or uniforms, noting that KSh44 billion was released to schools in January to cater for capitation.

Deputy President Kithure Kindiki said the NYOTA programme targets youth who miss out on opportunities due to limited formal education.

World Bank Country Director Qimiao Fan described NYOTA as

an innovative and inclusive initiative aimed at closing opportunity gaps.

Governors from Lamu, Kilifi and Tana River counties said beneficiaries of the programme have been exempted from paying county levies.





# UNC And NRM Join Growing List Of Parties As ORPP Awards Provisional Registration

By: MKT Reporter  
@themtkenyatimes

The Office of the Registrar of Political Parties (ORPP) has awarded provisional registration certificates to the United National Congress (UNC) and the National Restoration Movement (NRM), bringing the number of newly enlisted political outfits preparing to contest the 2027 General Election to 35. Registrar of Political Parties, J.C. Lorionokou issued the certificates at ORPP headquarters where he urged party founders to uphold core values and comply with legal requirements in pursuit of full registration.

Kenya's political landscape continues to expand ahead of the polls, with hundreds of party names having been reserved in recent months as aspirants jostle to join the race.

In the lead-up to the 2027 election cycle, other parties such as The We Alliance Party (TWAP), Peoples Forum for Rebuilding Democracy (PFRD),



Registrar J. C. Lorionokou

Imarisha Uchumi Party (IUP) and National Economic Development Party (NEDP) have also secured provisional status under strict statutory conditions.

Under the Political Parties Act, provisional registration allows emerging parties to start organising and recruiting members but requires them to

demonstrate compliance; including establishing offices in at least half of Kenya's counties and meeting membership thresholds within 270 days to qualify for full registration.

ORPP officers have guided the UNC and NRM on these operational obligations, including membership recruitment, ICT infrastructure, records



ORPP officials with UNC and NRM founders. Photos/Courtesy

management and functional governance structures.

According to the ORPP, there are around 90 fully registered political parties in Kenya, reflecting the country's vibrant multiparty system.

The surge in provisional applications underscores heightened political mobilisation as parties position them-

selves ahead of the general election next year.

Founders of UNC and NRM thanked ORPP officials for their professionalism and support throughout the registration process.

# NLC Undertakes Oversight Of Land Use Planning In Nyeri, Laikipia And Nyandarua Counties

By: MKT Reporter  
@themtkenyatimes

A team from the National Land Commission (NLC) has conducted a comprehensive monitoring exercise on the preparation and implementation of County Spatial Plans and Urban Land Use Plans in Nyeri, Laikipia, and Nyandarua counties.

Led by NLC Director of Land Use Planning and Research, Charles Kagema, the exercise aimed to assess the status of land use planning, the technical capacity of county planning teams, available planning tools, partnerships, and challenges hindering effective implementation.

In Nyeri County, the team met County Coordinator Joyce Kinyanjui and held discussions with County Executive Committee Member for Lands Ndirangu Gachunia, Chief Officer for Lands Fred Maina, and Director of Physical Planning Beatrice Koech.

The discussions focused on Nyeri's progress in land use planning, man-



aging urban growth, and exploring opportunities for collaboration with the NLC to strengthen planning frameworks.

In Laikipia County, the NLC delegation, hosted by officer Jane Letapardai, engaged the county's physical planning team, including Chief Physical Planner Michael Mudenyio,

Senior Physical Planner Richard Muchoki, and Chief Physical Planner Fredrick Gachagua.

The team reviewed ongoing spatial planning initiatives, assessed institutional capacity, and explored strategies for effective plan implementation.

The monitoring exercise concluded



ed in Nyandarua County, where the team, received by County Coordinator Winnierose Wahome, consulted Director of Physical Planning Rachael Mugo, County Director of Survey Samuel Kamau, Chief Land Valuer Joseph Mwariki, and Chief Officer for Lands Samuel Gitaka.

The discussions focused on improving coordination between planning, survey, and valuation functions to support orderly land development.

The NLC emphasized that the exercise aligns with its constitutional mandate to oversee land use planning nationwide. The Commission also highlighted that strong partnerships with county governments are critical for promoting sustainable land use, managing urban expansion, and ensuring balanced socio-economic development.



# 14 POEMS

## Some People Come Into Our Lives To Teach Us How To Live Alone Without Them



Some people come into our lives  
Not to bring happiness or peace  
But to teach us lessons,  
Through bitter lessons  
through trials and fights  
They teach us many things indirectly  
Their trust can't be trusted blindly

They come to multiply our worries, test our  
happiness

They teach us it's better to live without  
their them happily  
Because they are a great burden .  
It's better to live without weight  
We realize our burden has become less,  
when they are gone from our sight and  
heart  
They showed us how to live alone,

That too strong and brave and  
courageously

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

## No Applauds No worries



I paint a picture shade by shade,  
Light and dark on paper it played,  
Eyes don't see the flower and bud,  
All they see is a faint smudge.

I sing a song soft and strong,  
Carrying my feelings all along,  
Before appreciating the feel and flow,  
All they point is a note that went low.

Strange that efforts fade from sight,  
And flaws stand out loud and bright,  
Yet, I will always write, draw, and sing,  
For my joy is in the work I am doing.

M.Raddhika  
Freelance content creator  
Sivakasi

I compose a poem with careful rhyme,  
Words flowing like beads so fine,  
But no applause for the glow,  
All they notice is a small typo.

## Pick Your Pace



Either shoes or people,  
If they can't fit you, kick them out.  
As they come in different sizes,  
try your suitable titles.

Creamy or jelly need not to be tasted alike.

Yet it shows its flavour which adds to our  
life.  
Skip if it isn't your cup of tea.  
Gently nudge your degree.

At the outset someone becomes itchy  
feet.

Wait and watch its magical beat.  
In the inopportune state, turn a new leaf.  
Kick back your joyful journey without any  
grief.

M. DEVIKA  
PGT ENGLISH  
CREATIVE WRITERS  
FIITJEE GLOBAL SCHOOL, CHENNAI.  
TAMILNADU, INDIA

## The Best Person



Tell you the truth  
Even when it's awkward  
The person knows your mess  
But chooses you still  
Who listens without trying to fix  
Being understood instead of analysed  
Being allowed to hurt  
Having your feelings seriously  
Is this emotional or physical  
Always with you to comfort  
Not for their safety or feeling alone.  
We at a loss to realise  
That they're the best person.

N. Selvarani  
B. T. ASST  
GHS SAKKARAKKOTTAI  
RAMANATHAPURAM  
TAMIL NADU  
INDIA

## The Moon



It gives light to all without any bias.  
I think the moon is the greatest of all  
things.  
It glows at night like a majestic king.

By  
V. Vidhyasri  
VIII Std  
PUMS Chinna Obulapuram  
Gummidipoondi  
Thiruvallur Dt., Tamil Nadu, India

I think the moon is the greatest of all  
things.  
It glows at night like a majestic king.  
It blooms like a flower every fifteen days.  
I miss it dearly on cloudy days.  
When I feel sad, I look at the moon,  
And my sadness flies away soon.  
I don't know what magic it has,

## Bravely Stand Alone



dark  
And the earth alone embarks  
The life facilitating in perk.  
So I imprisoned myself to be alone  
Swallowing my sorrows without groan  
Confined in solitary zone  
To share the happiness alone.  
And at times when I'm alone  
Boost my creativity on my own  
For satisfying my attitudes to be well grown  
By stepping out blissfully with my dreams to  
be blown.  
And being alone differs from being lone  
As the later kills us to mourn  
For being alone teaches oneself to be well  
known  
Exhibiting the quantitative meaning to be  
born.

As the sun alone makes the earthly systems  
work  
The moon alone embodies the nature to be

G.Sarala.



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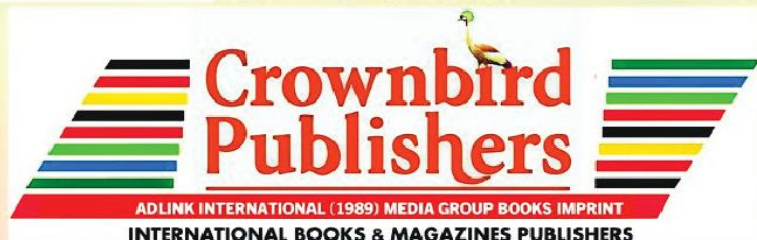
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# Ruto's Hustler Bottom Up Was A Lie, Not A new Economic Order

*People Don't Eat GDP Statistical Numbers Growth*



By: Ndung'u Wainaina  
@themkenyatimes

## Worth Noting:

- Building a strong domestic economy is a consequential imperative. It is new transactional, fragile, and unpredictable multipolarity competitive world order. In such an ambiguous global environment, Kenya must make clear choices. Countries without futuristic strategy rooted in preparedness, vigilance, and realism will be left behind. We must see the world as it is emerging. Change is unavoidable.
- Old politics of our person, ethnic, regionalism and kingpinship is over. It is completely irrelevant. We are in world on competition of ideas, visions and values. A strong national economic resilience and the ability to chart a strategic and pragmatic course is critical.

Kenya is on turning point. It must have own rupture. It is inevitable. Our political freedoms have proved inadequate without our economic freedom.

We can't live lie anymore. We must build a new political order based on our constitutional economic order statecraft.

Building a strong domestic economy is a consequential imperative. It is new transactional, fragile, and unpredictable multipolarity competitive world order. In such an ambiguous global environment, Kenya must make clear choices. Countries without futuristic strategy rooted in preparedness, vigilance, and realism will be left behind. We must see the world as it is emerging. Change is unavoidable.

Old politics of our person, ethnic, regionalism and kingpinship is over. It is completely irrelevant. We are in world on competition of ideas, visions and values. A strong national economic resilience and the ability to chart a strategic and pragmatic course is critical.

A country's strength is determined by a combination of economic power (GDP, innovation, resources), military might (advanced forces, defense), political governance stability (leadership, rule of law, low corruption), capital (education, health, skilled workforce), and soft power (culture, international relations, morality).

President Ruto never changed the structure of economic system. There was never hustler bottom-up economy. He sold a political narrative packaged as hustler economy (bottom up). It was a big lie. It was never the case. Within months after being sworn in President Ruto went back to continuity. What he knew and was comfortable with. He quickly abandoned his political hustler economy narrative. He we back to establishment politics and economy.

President Ruto has actually enhanced the very structural problems inflicting the economy like spiraling public debt, institutional weaknesses, financial system issues, human capital deficits etc. He stabilized macro-economics but fundamentally failed to tackle the daily economic realities of the people. People don't eat GDP statistical numbers growth.

But in order to politically survive and appear not to have betrayed his hustler political promise, President Ruto has formalized costly unsustainable handout economy funded through debt and punitive taxes. Because his betrayal to hustles, within one year in office his campaigns-based gov-



President William Ruto laying the foundation stone for the 1,080-unit Mtwapa Mini-City Affordable Housing Project in Kilifi County yesterday.

ernment (cabinet) could not hold and deliver. Secondly, he faced revolt from his vote base that brought him to power and young people (Gen Z). His political narrative of hustler economy was never new economic order. It was political narrative for new win in old wines skin. There was never Bottom-Up economic model. There was continuity of why people told former President Uhuru "Maliza Uende".

People of Kenya must elect a legitimate government that fundamentally dismantle and dismember the Mbeberu (Settler) economy and its pillars of extraction, exploitation and domination. People must free the economy by removing the structural chokeholds. People must end an economic system order that has existed for the last 120 years. A new political order must unlock the people's capabilities, potential and ingenuity in driving the economy. People must true economic freedom not fake hustler economy.

Later President Kibaki only shook the Mbeberu economy and people felt like they had seen economic liberation. But the system held its ground. We must this dehumanizing economic system. We must establish a new economic order based on people-values of entrepreneurship, innovation and productivity. It is people driving a resilient competitive economy. State is referee not player. It creates fair rules and level playing field for everyone while making sure the essential public goods are provided. People and grow it.

The West has admitted that it created an USA led international rules

based economic order hegemony for its own interests. That system is facing rupture. It is over. It is time for establishing a new economic system informed by realities of what the world is today. The era of Mbeberu economic order is over. We must have a new economic order based on our interest, values and issues.

Kenya has very hardworking, industrious and entrepreneurial people. They don't give up easily. They turn turbulence into resilience. Theirs is not just hope and faith. It is faith in action. This is what makes the country remain resilient.

Kenya is a country of economic growth without broad shared transformation. Many Kenyans want a change in direction to a more inclusive and responsive economic growth model. The growth model largely state-led, debt-financed, and private sector underpowered must end. A new economic and fiscal compact model is non-negotiable driven by strengths in debt free economy, human capital, investments, innovation, and entrepreneurial energy.

To make Kenya an economic crucible of possibilities and infinite opportunities, it will require to leader with vision, innovate with purpose, and grow with equity. Competitiveness, innovation, entrepreneurialism, and dynamic supportive ecosystem must be the fundamental drivers.

People's economy is possible. It is driven by investment in people, productivity and enterprise. People have real opportunities to earn, save and prosper with credible government en-

joying legitimacy and trust. You can't grow economy by taxing poverty. Tax is a consequence of value creation not extraction.

The linchpin of people economy principle is human needs, dignity, and choice, emphasizing that economic system should fundamentally serve people not the other way around. It is prioritizing essential provisions like food, housing, health, education etc and economic sovereignty for well-being, acting as a bedrock for sustainable and equitable development.

The country must adopt more smarter spending and capital allocation with complete inefficiencies elimination. Revenue must be mobilized fairly with less tax and limited regulatory burdens. Private sector needs strong empowerment by cutting off government local market borrowing, and reducing credit costs. Skilled human capital is key. Making education and training more accessible and quality is pivotal.

Finally, energy costs must come down drastically by tackling structural problems of cartel priced costs and capacity. Investment in the green economy and energy will be pivotal. We must have strict clean governance system with stronger rule of law. The country needs political leadership with foresight, steel and unchained.

The writer is Transitional Justice and Human Security Fellow @NdunguWainaina



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# The Marginalization Of Humanities In Kenya: A Crisis Of Vision And Values



By: Odhiambo Jerameel Kevins Owuor  
@themkenyatimes

In Kenya's current educational landscape, a troubling fact emerges: over 70% of university students are now enrolled in STEM and business-related courses, while humanities departments struggle with dwindling numbers and reduced funding. The 2022 University Funding Model explicitly prioritized science, technology, engineering, and mathematics courses, allocating significantly higher per-student funding compared to humanities disciplines. A recent survey of Kenyan parents revealed that 85% would discourage their children from pursuing degrees in philosophy, history, or literature, viewing them as "unmarketable." This dramatic shift represents more than just changing career preferences; it signals a fundamental crisis in how Kenyan society values different forms of knowledge. The statistics reveal a nation gradually abandoning the very disciplines that could help it understand its complex post-colonial identity, navigate ethnic tensions, and build a more just society. When the then Cabinet Secretary for Education Ezekiel Machogu announced the new competency-based curriculum reforms in 2023, not a single humanities scholar was included in the core advisory team.

The roots of this disdain stretch back to Kenya's colonial experience, where education was instrumentalized as a tool for creating a compliant workforce rather than critical thinkers. British colonial administrators established a system that valued technical skills for low-level administrative roles while reserving deeper intellectual pursuits for the colonizers themselves. This legacy persists in the contemporary dismissal of humanities as "soft" or "impractical" disciplines that cannot directly contribute to economic development. President William Ruto's government has repeatedly emphasized the need for "hands-on skills" and "job-ready graduates," inadvertently reinforcing the notion that critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and cultural understanding are luxuries Kenya cannot afford. Nonetheless, this perspective ignores how countries like South Korea and Singapore deliberately invested in humanities alongside STEM to build innovative, ethically grounded societies. As philosopher Martha Nussbaum warned in her book "Not for Profit," nations that marginalize humanities education are "producing generations of useful machines, rather than complete citizens who can think for themselves."

Kenya's unemployment crisis has intensified pressure on students to



choose "practical" courses, creating a vicious cycle that devalues humanities further. With youth unemployment hovering above 35%, families understandably push their children toward degrees perceived as offering clearer career paths. However, this narrow focus ignores compelling evidence that humanities graduates develop transferable skills—critical analysis, communication, cultural intelligence—that are increasingly valuable in a complex global economy. A 2023 study by the Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis found that humanities graduates were actually more likely to be self-employed entrepreneurs than their STEM counterparts, having developed the creative and analytical skills necessary for innovation. The irony is profound: in seeking security through technical education, Kenyan families may be limiting their children's adaptability in a rapidly changing job market. As economist Anzette Were noted in her analysis of Kenya's education crisis, "we are training young people for jobs that may not exist in ten years, while neglecting the cognitive flexibility that humanities provide."

The government's funding policies have institutionalized this bias, creating a two-tier university system where humanities departments operate with crumbling infrastructure and overworked faculty. Under the current Differentiated Unit Cost model, a student studying medicine receives approximately Ksh 500,000 in government funding annually, while a history student receives barely Ksh 100,000. This disparity sends a clear message about which disciplines the

state values, making it nearly impossible for humanities departments to attract talented students or maintain quality programs. Libraries in many public universities lack current books in philosophy, sociology, or anthropology, while science labs though often inadequate themselves receive priority funding. Faculty members in humanities departments frequently teach classes of over 200 students, making meaningful engagement impossible and reducing once-vibrant intellectual discussions to rote memorization. The underfunding is so severe that the University of Nairobi's philosophy department, once the intellectual heartbeat of East Africa, now operates with just five full-time faculty members serving hundreds of students.

This impoverishment extends beyond universities into Kenya's public discourse, where complex social problems are addressed with technocratic solutions that ignore historical context and cultural nuance. The perennial challenges of corruption, ethnic polarization, and inequality are treated as management problems requiring better systems rather than deep-seated issues requiring cultural transformation. Policy makers reach for technical fixes new anti-corruption software, digital voting systems, economic stimulus packages while ignoring the ethical, philosophical, and historical dimensions of these challenges. When the 2017 and 2022 elections nearly tore the country apart along ethnic lines, the response was largely administrative: reform the electoral commission, improve vote tallying technology, enhance security. Even so no serious national conver-

sation emerged about the historical grievances, colonial land injustices, and philosophical questions of citizenship that fuel these divisions. As political scientist Wambui Mwangi observes, "Kenya's elite treat ethnic violence as a mechanical failure of the state apparatus, rather than a profound crisis of values and historical memory that only humanities can adequately address."

The consequences of this humanities deficit are visible in Kenya's struggling creative economy and its limited cultural soft power on the global stage. Despite having some of Africa's most talented writers, musicians, and artists, Kenya lacks the critical infrastructure of literary criticism, art theory, and cultural studies necessary to elevate these voices internationally. Nigerian literature flourishes globally partly because Nigeria invested in humanities departments that produced scholars who could contextualize and theorize African creativity. Kenya's cultural producers work largely without this intellectual support system, limiting their reach and impact. The country's film industry remains nascent compared to Nigeria's Nollywood, not primarily due to funding gaps but because of an absence of film studies programs, critical theory, and aesthetic philosophy. When Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Kenya's most celebrated writer, advocated for decolonizing the mind and embracing African languages, his ideas found more institutional support in Amer-



# The Marginalization Of Humanities In Kenya: A Crisis Of Vision And Values

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ican and European universities than in Kenyan ones. This represents an extraordinary failure of imagination: Kenya exports its greatest minds because it cannot recognize the value of what they do.

The business sector's dismissal of humanities graduates reflects a superficial understanding of what actually drives innovation and organizational success in the 21st century. Kenyan employers frequently cite a "skills gap," claiming graduates cannot think critically, communicate effectively, or navigate ethical dilemmas precisely the competencies humanities education develops. Yet these same employers preferentially hire STEM graduates and then complain about their lack of soft skills. Forward-thinking global companies like Google, Microsoft, and Apple actively recruit philosophy and literature majors, recognizing that algorithmic thinking must be complemented by ethical reasoning and human insight. A 2019 LinkedIn study found that four of the top five skills companies needed most were fundamentally humanities-based: creativity, persuasion, collaboration, and adaptability. In Kenya's rush to become a tech hub the "Silicon Savannah" leaders overlook how Silicon Valley's success stems partly from its integration of humanities and technology, exemplified by Steve Jobs's famous assertion that "it's in Apple's DNA that technology alone is not enough it's technology married with liberal arts, married with the humanities, that yields the results that make our heart sing."

Kenya's most pressing challenges managing devolution, addressing historical injustices, building national cohesion, combating corruption are fundamentally questions requiring humanistic inquiry rather than technical solutions. The Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission's 2013 report documented horrific historical injustices from colonial times through post-independence regimes, yet its recommendations languish unimplemented partly because Kenyan society lacks the philosophical and historical frameworks to process intergenerational trauma. Transitional justice is not an engineering problem; it requires deep engagement with ethics, memory, forgiveness, and collective identity domains where humanities excel. Similarly, devolution's implementation struggles reflect not merely administrative challenges but profound disagreements about citizenship, community, and the relationship between individual and collective rights. Without historians



to contextualize ethnic identities, political scientists to analyze power dynamics, and philosophers to articulate principles of justice, these conversations remain superficial. As Kenyan scholar Godwin Murunga argues, "Kenya's crisis is not a lack of technical capacity but a poverty of ideas about who we are and who we want to become questions that only robust humanities can help us answer."

The marginalization of humanities also impoverishes Kenya's democracy, producing citizens who lack the analytical tools to interrogate political rhetoric or resist manipulation. Civic education was removed from the Kenyan curriculum in the 1990s, and while it has recently returned, it emphasizes procedures over critical engagement with democratic principles. Students learn how bills become law but not how to evaluate whether those laws are just. They memorize the constitution but don't study political philosophy to understand the competing visions of human nature and society embedded in constitutional design. This creates a citizenry vulnerable to ethnic mobilization, populist appeals, and misinformation precisely what Kenya has experienced in recent electoral cycles. A population educated primarily in technical subjects may produce excellent engineers but vulnerable voters who cannot distinguish demagoguery from leadership. As political theorist Michael Sandel notes in "Democracy's Discontent," democratic citizenship requires "the capacity to deliberate well about the common good" a capacity that technical education alone cannot provide. Kenya's democracy founders not be-

cause Kenyans lack technical skills but because they lack sufficient opportunity to develop the critical, ethical, and historical consciousness that humanities education cultivates.

International comparisons reveal that Kenya's humanities aversion is neither inevitable nor universal, and that successful nations value balanced education. South Korea, often cited as an economic miracle, deliberately maintained strong humanities programs even during its rapid industrialization, recognizing that innovation requires cultural creativity alongside technical prowess. The country now leads globally in both technology and cultural exports, from Samsung smartphones to Korean cinema and music. Singapore, despite its technocratic reputation, has invested heavily in arts, humanities, and liberal education at its universities, with founding Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew himself championing the study of history and philosophy. Even in sub-Saharan Africa, Ghana and South Africa maintain relatively stronger humanities traditions and, not coincidentally, have more vibrant public intellectual cultures. Rwanda, in rebuilding after genocide, established genocide studies programs, invested in national reconciliation research, and supported historians and philosophers exploring questions of identity and belonging. These examples demonstrate that the choice to marginalize humanities is a policy decision, not an economic necessity, and that Kenya's current trajectory represents a failure of vision rather than an inevitable response to development pressures.

We need a deep rethink and fundamental reconceptualization of education's purpose in Kenya, moving beyond narrow vocationalism toward human flourishing and societal transformation. Government funding formulas should recognize that a healthy society requires philosophers, historians, and sociologists as much as doctors and engineers, and allocate resources accordingly. Universities must resist pressure to become mere job training centers and reclaim their role as spaces for critical inquiry and cultural preservation. The private sector should recognize that their long-term success depends on employees who can navigate ethical complexity, understand diverse perspectives, and think creatively—competencies best developed through humanities. Parents and students need exposure to evidence that humanities graduates can succeed economically while also contributing to social transformation. Most fundamentally, Kenyan society must recover a richer conception of education's purpose: not merely to produce workers but to develop thoughtful citizens capable of building a just, creative, and cohesive nation. As the renowned Kenyan historian Bethwell Ogot once observed, "a nation that does not know its history has no future." To this, we might add: a nation that does not value philosophy, literature, and the social sciences condemns itself to repeat the mistakes of the past while lacking the imagination to envision and create a better future.

*The writer is a social commentator*

## Worth Noting:

- Kenya's unemployment crisis has intensified pressure on students to choose "practical" courses, creating a vicious cycle that devalues humanities further. With youth unemployment hovering above 35%, families understandably push their children toward degrees perceived as offering clearer career paths.
- However, this narrow focus ignores compelling evidence that humanities graduates develop transferable skills—critical analysis, communication, cultural intelligence—that are increasingly valuable in a complex global economy.
- A 2023 study by the Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis found that humanities graduates were actually more likely to be self-employed entrepreneurs than their STEM counterparts, having developed the creative and analytical skills necessary for innovation.



# U.N. Mission Backs Ceasefire Mechanism On Eastern DR Congo Conflict

By: Xinhua  
@themtkenyentimes

The United Nations peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), known as MONUSCO, has said that it supports a ceasefire monitoring mechanism agreed in Qatar-facilitated talks between the DRC government and the March 23 Movement (M23) rebel group.

The statement came a day after representatives of the M23 and envoys from Kinshasa met in Doha under Qatari mediation, with officials from the United States, the African Union, and MONUSCO attending as observers, in renewed diplomatic efforts to contain persistent fighting in eastern DRC. Qatar, which has served as mediator between the DRC government and the rebel group since March 2025, said the two sides reached an

agreement on detailed terms of reference to operationalize a mechanism to monitor and verify a “permanent” ceasefire.

In a statement, MONUSCO reiterated its call for an immediate cessation of hostilities, recalling that under U.N. Security Council Resolution 2808, the mission is explicitly mandated to support the implementation of a permanent ceasefire. MONUSCO also welcomed the sustained engagement of Qatar, the United States, the African Union and its mediator, the East African Community, the Southern African Development Community, and other partners, urging them to maintain and strengthen their support for peace and security efforts in eastern DRC.

According to the statement, the U.N. mission has reinforced its internal preparedness to support the ceasefire monitoring and verification architecture in a progressive and adaptable manner. “MONUSCO stands ready to support a credible ceasefire mon-



itoring and verification mechanism, within the limits of its mandate defined by the Security Council and in full respect of the sovereignty of the DRC,” said Vivian van de Perre, deputy special representative of the U.N. secretary-general and acting head of MONUSCO. Qatari officials have said MONUSCO would monitor and

verify a ceasefire in Uvira, a strategic city near the border with Burundi that briefly fell under M23 control in early December 2025 before the armed group withdrew and Congolese government forces retook the city. No further operational details have been disclosed. The M23 seized the eastern city of Goma, the capital

of the North Kivu province, in January 2025, and Bukavu, the capital of the South Kivu province, the following month. In recent days, clashes have been reported near the town of Minembwe in South Kivu province, according to local sources.

# Man Sentenced To Life In Prison For Attempting To Assassinate Trump

By: Xinhua  
@themtkenyentimes

A man who had plotted to assassinate U.S. President Donald Trump at his Florida golf course in September 2024 was sentenced to life in prison.

Ryan Routh, 56, was convicted on Wednesday by a jury last September of five charges, including attempting to assassinate a presidential candidate and assaulting a federal officer. U.S. District Judge Aileen Cannon handed down the sentence in a Florida courtroom, plus a mandatory additional seven years for a firearm offense for Routh.

“It’s clear to me that you engaged in a premeditated, calculated plot to take a human life,” Cannon said.

Routh, in a court filing, denied any intention to kill, arguing that no crime occurred because he never fired a shot at Trump.

Routh was arrested on Sept. 15, 2024, after a Secret Service agent saw the barrel of a rifle poking from the bushes, a



Ryan Routh

few hundred yards from where Trump was golfing at his West Palm Beach golf club.

Routh fled the scene, but was arrested shortly after.

The incident occurred two months after a bullet fired by a gunman grazed Trump’s ear at a campaign rally in Butler, Pennsylvania.

Both incidents took place in the run-up to the November 2024 election in which Trump regained the presidency after being defeated four years earlier by Democrat Joe Biden.

# Traditional Pubs In UK Grapple With Economic Strains

By: Xinhua  
@themtkenyentimes

Industry figures show that pubs and bars across Britain have been closing at an average rate of one a day, with the total number of licensed premises down by around 25 percent since 2000.

At this rate, between 300 and 400 pubs are expected to call last orders this year.

Official data underscore the scale of the long-term contraction. The number of pubs stood at around 65,000 in 2000, but has since fallen to roughly 40,000. The government has recently announced a 15 percent cut in business rates for pubs.

While the move has been welcomed by the sector, many licensees argue that it is not enough to stem the pace of closures.

Dawn Hopkins, a publican of 25 years and licensee of the 170-year-old Rose Inn in Norwich, told Xinhua in an interview that the outlook for 2026 is deeply concerning.

Pubs are facing a “huge barrage of cost increases,” she said,



Britons enjoying themselves. Photo/File

warning that operators have little option but to pass rising costs on to customers.

Hopkins noted that many operators are no longer able to invest in their businesses or staff and are instead focused on survival.

Ignazio Cabras, a professor at Northumbria University, said the loss of one in four pubs over the past quarter century has serious implications for communities and local economies alike.

“Pubs are often the only places where people can meet and socialise, particularly in rural areas,” Cabras told Xinhua.

“Once they disappear, they are very difficult to replace. They also provide employment and opportunities for young people entering the labour market.”

Despite the bleak outlook, Cabras believes that British pubs will not disappear entirely but will need to adapt to survive.

Many are already diversifying their services, shifting towards food and family-oriented offerings or partnering with local businesses to cut costs and draw in customers, he said.





# Students’ Accommodation Challenges In Higher Education

Across the country, the question of student housing has become a pressing concern that institutions can no longer afford to ignore. Statistics indicate that nearly 70 percent of students reside outside school compounds, compelled to seek rental houses due to inadequate hostel facilities. This reality has transformed the areas surrounding universities and colleges into booming rental markets, where demand consistently outstrips supply.

The imbalance has created fertile ground for exploitation. Landlords and landladies, aware of the desperation that accompanies every new intake, routinely hike rent prices. Students, faced with limited options, are forced to accept housing that is often substandard. Poor maintenance, unreliable water and electricity, and inadequate sanitation are common features of these rentals, yet the costs continue to rise. For many young people, the dream of higher education is overshadowed by the daily



struggle to secure decent living conditions.

This situation raises broader questions about equity and responsibility. Should the pursuit of knowledge be accompanied by indignity in housing? Institutions must recognize that accommodation is not a peripheral issue but a central component of student welfare and academic success. Governments and regulators, too, have a role to play in enforcing standards and curbing exploitative practices in off cam-

pus rentals. Without deliberate intervention, the cycle of exploitation will persist, undermining both the quality of education and the dignity of learners.

The time has come for universities, policymakers, and communities to treat student housing as a priority, ensuring that the pursuit of education is matched by humane living conditions.

By *Mc Gathuku Independent Journalist*

# Ignored Warnings, Manufactured Disasters

Across the globe—and increasingly within our borders—disasters are too often portrayed as unavoidable acts of fate. Floods, economic shocks, political unrest, and environmental breakdown are framed as sudden misfortunes beyond human control. Yet the uncomfortable truth is that most disasters are not surprises; they are the consequence of ignored warnings.

From climate driven floods devastating communities to rising living costs and overstretched public institutions, the signals are rarely hidden. Experts issue alerts, data accumulates, and patterns repeat. Still, action is delayed because truth is inconvenient. Illusion is easier—the belief that tomorrow will mirror yesterday, that danger will fade, that preparation can wait.

This tendency transcends borders. Human nature gravitates toward comforting narratives rather than difficult realities. Change is resisted until pain makes it unavoidable. By the time danger becomes obvious, prevention is no longer possible; only damage control remains.



Leadership, therefore, matters most before crisis strikes. True leadership is not about reassurance or popularity—it is about foresight. Those entrusted with power must anticipate risks the public may dismiss, planning not for ideal conditions but for worst case scenarios.

Recent events reinforce this lesson. Climate scientists have long warned of extreme weather. Economists have cautioned about debt and inequality. Security analysts have flagged unrest driven by economic pressure

and declining trust. Yet responses remain reactive—emergency funds, task forces, statements of concern—rather than preventative measures that could have reduced harm.

Preparation is rarely dramatic. It is quiet, costly, and often unpopular. But history is clear: societies that prepare early suffer less later. Disaster is not destiny—it is denial’s final stage.

*Pascal Okoth Laikipia University*

# Embracing Innovation: How Technology Is Transforming Our Community

Technology has become the defining force of modern society, reshaping how communities interact, learn, and grow. In our local landscape, the rise of innovative startups has not only boosted the economy but also addressed pressing social challenges. TechSmart Solutions, for example, has pioneered digital literacy programs for seniors, enabling them to navigate smartphones and social media with confidence. EcoTrack, another standout, promotes energy efficiency through smart home applications that empower households to monitor and reduce consumption.

Beyond entrepreneurship, technology has enhanced accessibility in everyday life. Initiatives such as WiFi for All have democratized internet access, offering free high speed connectivity in public spaces. This has proven invaluable for students conducting research and job seekers exploring opportunities. Public transit authorities have



also embraced digital tools, introducing mobile apps that provide real time bus updates, making commuting more predictable and efficient.

Education remains a cornerstone of this transformation. Programs like STEM for Everyone are equipping young learners with coding skills, inspiring future innovators from diverse backgrounds. Local libraries, once traditional bastions of books, now host workshops on 3D printing and graphic design, ensuring that residents of all ages can participate in the digital revolution.

Equally important is the role

of social media in strengthening community ties. Platforms allow residents to share information, promote local businesses, and rally around common causes. The Chamber of Commerce’s digital marketplace exemplifies this, offering entrepreneurs a platform to reach wider audiences.

As innovation continues to unfold, the promise of technology is clear: a more connected, inclusive, and forward looking community.

*Angela Mwanga Laikipia University*

# A Degree Is Not “Just A Paper”

Whoever claims that a university degree is “just a paper” has likely never endured the realities of student life in Kenya’s public universities. Such a statement dismisses the countless mornings when students walk to class at dawn, battling thick fog, biting cold, and empty stomachs. At 6:30 a.m., while many are still wrapped in blankets, students are already on the road, hoodies pulled tight, hands buried in pockets, yet the cold still cuts through like a thief of comfort. Even the trees seem to tremble in protest.

This is not merely education—it is survival training. University life extends beyond lectures, assignments, and exams. It is a test of endurance. By graduation, a student holds more than a certificate; they hold proof of resilience against poverty, hunger, loneliness, and harsh weather, all while striving to meet academic expectations.

The Higher Education Loans Board (HELB), designed to support students, often falls short of meeting real needs. Many struggle to afford warm clothing, decent meals, or ba-



sic necessities. In cold regions, a cup of tea becomes a luxury, and a blanket more valuable than lecture notes. Perhaps HELB should consider a “hardship allowance” for students in extreme environments, because education should not feel like punishment.

Behind every degree lies sacrifice: mornings fueled only by hope, nights of sleepless cold, unanswered loan appeals, second hand jackets from Gikom-

ba, and dreams that refused to die.

A degree is not just paper. It is evidence of mental strength, emotional endurance, and unwavering commitment in the face of adversity.

*By Gilbert Kipaya, Laikipia University*



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Sports >> \*World Anti-Doping Agency chiefs will investigate claims male ski jumpers are injecting their penises in a bid to improve sporting performance, if a complaint is made.

How Penis Injections Became A Winter Olympic Talking Point



The Winter Olympics ended in a blaze of colour

World Anti-Doping Agency chiefs will investigate claims male ski jumpers are injecting their penises in a bid to improve sporting performance, if a complaint is made.

In January, German newspaper Bild, external reported that jumpers were injecting their penises with hyaluronic acid before being measured for their suits.

Hyaluronic acid, which is not banned in sport, can be used to increase penis circumference by one or two centimetres.

This would increase the surface area of their suits during competition, which, according to FIS, the international ski and snowboard federation, could increase their flight in the air.

“Every extra centimetre on a suit counts. If your suit has a 5% bigger surface area, you fly further,”

said FIS ski jumping men’s race director Sandro Pertile.

Asked about the claims in Bild at a press conference at the Milan-Cortina Winter Olympics, Wada director general Olivier Niggli said: “I am not aware of the details of ski jumping, and how that could improve performance.”

“If anything was to come to the surface, we would look at it and see if it is doping related. We don’t address other [non-doping] means of enhancing performance.”

Clearly entertained by the question, Wada’s Polish president Witold Banka joked: “Ski jumping is very popular in Poland so I promise you I’m going to look at it.”

Before the start of each season, ski jumpers are measured using

3D body scanners, in which they must wear only “elastic, body-tight underwear”.

Rules state their suits must have a tolerance of only 2-4cm, and as part of the measuring process, their crotch height is also measured.

The crotch height of their suit must conform to the athlete’s crotch height, with the addition of 3cm for men.

Hyularonic acid injected into the penis can last up to 18 months.

There have been previous attempts to improve performance through manipulations of the suits.

In August, Norwegian Olympic medallists Marius Lindvik and Johann Andre Forfang accepted three-month suspensions for their part in the tampering of suits during the men’s large hill

event at the World Ski Championships in Trondheim, Norway, in March.

While it later transpired the athletes themselves were not aware of the tampering, FIS said their team had “tried to cheat the system” by putting reinforced thread in their jumpsuits.

Both athletes are set to compete at these Winter Olympics, which officially start on Friday.

The men’s ski jumping competition begins on Monday.

BBC Sport has contacted FIS for comment.

BBC



**Sports >>>** \*Kenya Rugby Union (KRU) have warned fans of unscrupulous individuals who are circulating fake tickets to the HSBC World Rugby Division 2 Tourney in Nairobi.

# BEWARE! KRU Warn Kenyans Of Fake Tickets To Division 2 Tourney In Nairobi



Kenyan fans cheering Shujaa at the Stade de France during the Paris 2024 Olympic Games. Photo/NOC-K/KELLY AYODI

Kenya Rugby Union (KRU) have warned fans of unscrupulous individuals who are circulating fake tickets to the HSBC World Rugby Division 2 Tourney in Nairobi. In a statement, KRU say fake tickets have been circulating online, warning that all the tickets have been sold out. “We’ve noticed reports of fake tickets circulating on social media, with some individuals claiming to be selling tickets. Please note that all tickets for the 2026 HSBC SVNS2 are fully sold out and were available only through

our official ticketing partner, TIKOHUB,” the union said. The union further distanced itself from any responsibility for fans who will fall victims to the tricksters. “Any tickets bought from third parties are strictly at the buyer’s own risk, and the Union will not be responsible for any losses. Stay alert, avoid misinformation, and let’s keep things clean as we head into this exciting Valentine’s weekend,” KRU added. The update comes amidst a countdown to the two-day tour-

ney, set for February 14-15 at the Nyayo Stadium. Tickets to the event have been selling like hot cake for the past one month and were totally sold out in the past one week. With a capacity of 18,000, Nyayo is expected to fill to the rafters as Kenyans of all walks of life gather to cheer on the men’s and women’s national teams — Shujaa and Lionesses, respectively. Ten other teams will be in contention in the tournament, which will be played in a round-robin format.

*Capital Sport*

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# Crystal Leonardi Stories Of Strength, Voice And Resilience



By: Anila Bukhari  
@themkenyaintimes

## Worth Noting:

- Born in Cairns, Crystal grew up surrounded by the contrasts of tropical beauty and real-world challenges. These early experiences fostered a strong sense of observation, empathy, and resilience that would later define her writing. Even from a young age, she was drawn to stories—not only as a form of creative expression, but as a way to understand hardship, identity, and hope. This curiosity matured into a calling: to give voice to stories that are often overlooked or misunderstood.

- Crystal is the founder of Bowerbird Publishing, an independent publishing house created to champion meaningful, authentic narratives. Under her leadership, Bowerbird Publishing has become a platform for writers whose stories matter—particularly those living with illness, disability, or life-altering experiences.

Crystal Leonardi is a multi-award-winning author, publisher, and advocate whose work has become a powerful voice for people navigating illness, disability, and adversity. Based in Queensland, Australia, Crystal's life and career are deeply shaped by place, purpose, and an unwavering belief in the power of storytelling. From her early years in Far North Queensland to her current life in the rainforest community of Julatten, she has built a body of work that is both deeply personal and widely influential.

Born in Cairns, Crystal grew up surrounded by the contrasts of tropical beauty and real-world challenges. These early experiences fostered a strong sense of observation, empathy, and resilience that would later define her writing. Even from a young age, she was drawn to stories—not only as a form of creative expression, but as a way to understand hardship, identity, and hope. This curiosity matured into a calling: to give voice to stories that are often overlooked or misunderstood.

Crystal is the founder of Bowerbird Publishing, an independent publishing house created to champion meaningful, authentic narratives. Under her leadership, Bowerbird Publishing has become a platform for writers whose stories matter—particularly those living with illness, disability, or life-altering experiences. Crystal's approach to publishing is grounded in integrity and care; she believes that stories should be handled with respect, and that authors deserve guidance, encouragement, and empowerment throughout the creative process.

As an author, Crystal is best known for her debut memoir, *Boy of Steel, Little Sebastian's Big Miracle*. The book tells a deeply moving story of courage, love, and survival, centering on the journey of her son Sebastian and the extraordinary challenges he faced early in life. Written with honesty and compassion, the memoir explores themes of medical trauma, parental resilience, and the strength found in community and hope. The book has resonated strongly with readers across Australia and beyond, earning critical acclaim for its emotional depth and authenticity.



Crystal Leonardi .