



CS Duale: 3.1 Million Kenyans Living With Chronic Kidney Disease
 About 3.1 million Kenyans are living with Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD), the Ministry of Health has revealed, raising concern over the growing burden of non-communicable diseases in the country. **Page 12**



CS Kagwe Launches Drive To Boost Local Edible Oil Production
 The government has launched a new initiative aimed at accelerating the production of sunflower, soybean and other oil crops in a bid to reduce Kenya's heavy reliance on imported edible oils. **Page 18**

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The Mt. Kenya Times

Daily ePAPER

Justice Ruto has nominated Supreme Court Judge Njoki Ndung'u as Kenya's candidate for the ICC

Ruto Nominates Justice Ndung'u For ICC Bench



ICC

President Ruto: "Kenya is proud to present Justice Njoki Ndung'u, a jurist of integrity and courage, whose record speaks to our commitment to justice and the rule of law."



Justice Njoki Ndung'u

President William Ruto has nominated Supreme Court Judge Njoki Ndung'u as Kenya's candidate for the International Criminal Court (ICC) judicial elections, a move that thrusts the country into the heart of global judicial diplomacy. The elections, scheduled for December 2026 in The Hague, will determine six new judges to serve on the world's foremost tribunal for crimes against humanity. **Page 9**

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Kindiki Chairs Crucial Meeting Ahead Of UDA Grassroots Elections in 18 Counties Tomorrow

BY WMW
@themtkenyatimes

Some Of The Moments As Captured In Pictures

The United Democratic Alliance (UDA) will conduct grassroots elections tomorrow, across 18 counties as part of efforts to strengthen internal democracy and enhance party structures at the local level. Deputy President and UDA Deputy Party Leader Kithure Kindiki said the exercise will allow party members to elect officials who will lead the party at the polling centre level. The elections will take place in Samburu, Trans Nzoia, Vihiga, Elgeyo Marakwet, Baringo, Uasin Gishu, Nandi, Kericho, Bomet, Nyandarua, Laikipia, Meru, Tharaka Nithi, Embu, Kirinyaga, Nyeri, Murang'a and Kiambu counties. Kindiki noted that the grassroots polls are part of the party's commitment to deepening internal democracy and ensuring that leaders representing the party at all levels have legitimacy from members. He made the remarks yesterday after chairing a Grassroots Elections Preparedness Status Update Meeting at the party headquarters, Hustler Plaza, in Nairobi. The meeting reviewed logistical arrangements and readiness ahead of the exercise.

The Deputy President who chaired the meeting on behalf of Party leader, President William Ruto urged party members to participate peacefully and uphold unity during the exercise, saying strong grassroots leadership is key to strengthening the party and advancing its development agenda.



Editor's Desk

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NEWS IN BRIEF



Public Health and Professional Standards Principal Secretary Mary Muthoni said the Ministry of Health convened a stakeholders' consultative meeting in Nairobi to strengthen preparedness and response to flooding caused by the ongoing long rains. The floods have disrupted health services, displaced communities, damaged infrastructure and increased the risk of disease outbreaks in several regions. The health sector has developed the Long Rains Flood Contingency Plan 2026 focusing on coordination, disease surveillance and outbreak control, search and rescue, laboratory support, emergency relief and resource mobilization. National and county governments, humanitarian

partners and other stakeholders met to review the situation and enhance coordinated action to protect lives and maintain essential health services and acknowledged support from partners.



Mathira parliamentary aspirant Peter Githinji, popularly known as Tropical (in green coat) yesterday met and distributed maize seedlings to farmers in various parts of the constituency. Among the areas he visited are Kirimukuyu and Magutu wards as part of his ongoing farmers' empowerment programme aimed at boosting food production. He noted that the initiative complements efforts already underway to support farmers through soil testing and improved farming practices. He said the seedlings would help farmers take advantage of the ongoing rains

being experienced across the constituency. He emphasized that agriculture remains the backbone of the constituency's economy and supporting farmers will help revive the sector, expand opportunities and stimulate growth for other local businesses.



Kisii University Chancellor Dr. Sara Ruto (center) confers a Doctor of Philosophy degree to a graduand during the university's 15th graduation ceremony held at the main auditorium yesterday. Looking on is Council of Governors Education Committee Chairperson and Kericho Governor Dr. Erick Mutai. Dr. Ruto challenged the 346 graduands, who received various degrees, to use their knowledge to actively engage in global discourse and innovation.



Kenya's State Department for Immigration and Citizen Services has developed a Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) Implementation Plan to address migration challenges in Kenya and the wider African region. The Global Compact for Migration docu-

ment (2023–2025), currently under stakeholder review, will be presented at the International Migration Review Forum in May 2026 in New York. Principal Secretary Belio Kipsang reaffirmed Kenya's commitment to the GCM, emphasizing that migration governance is anchored in national policies that protect migrants' rights and support their integration. The plan aims to improve migration data collection, protect vulnerable migrants, and strengthen laws against human trafficking and smuggling. Kipsang called for collaboration among government agencies, civil society, international organizations, academia and the private sector to mobilize resources and effectively implement the GCM's 23 objectives.



Prime Cabinet Secretary, and Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs Musalia Mudavadi share pleasantries with the King Charles Charles III of the United Kingdom during the Commonwealth Day Celebrations in London, on Tuesday night.

Grief has engulfed Kihuro village in Kiharu Constituency, Murang'a County, after two brothers died on the spot following a road accident that occurred last night along the Gakonya–Mahuaini road. It is reported that the two were travelling on a motorcycle at around midnight when they were hit by a lorry that was allegedly being driven at high speed. Reports indicate that the lorry driver fled the scene immediately after the accident. Area residents say there have been repeated complaints about the lorry being driven at high speed while transporting sand at night.



Kenya Editors Guild President Zubeidah Kananu (centre), Prof. Mary Mbithi of the University of Nairobi (right), and Dr. Lucy Wakiaga of the African Population and Health Research Center (left) consult during a Press Club forum on "Women Cultivating Opportunity: Advancing Rights, Justice and Action for Women Farmers and Agripreneurs in Kenya" held in Nairobi yesterday.



A Sh600 million solarization project at Baricho Water Works in Kilifi County is nearing completion, with 90 percent of the work done. The project, involving 6,716 solar panels generating 4.3 megawatts, aims to cut electricity costs for pumping water by about 20 percent. Coast Water Works Development Agency currently spends between Sh60 million and Sh70 million monthly on electricity. The solar system will operate as a hybrid with national grid power to pump water from eleven boreholes and distribute it to Kilifi and Mombasa counties. A second phase will add 4.7 megawatts, while a third phase will introduce lithium battery storage. Leaders say the project will reduce costs and improve regional water supply reliability. Cabinet Secretary for Water, Sanitation and Irrigation visited the area.



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Agribusiness The seedlings were issued under the national coffee revitalization programme being implemented through the New KPCU

Baragwi Cooperative Distributes 30,000 Coffee Seedlings To Boost Production In Kirinyaga

BY MKT Correspondent
@themkenyatimes

Coffee farmers in Kirinyaga County have received a major boost after Baragwi Coffee Farmers' Cooperative Society distributed at least 30,000 improved coffee seedlings aimed at increasing production and revitalizing the sector.

The seedlings were issued under the national coffee revitalization programme being implemented through the New Kenya Planters Cooperative Union (New KPCU) as part of government efforts to strengthen the coffee industry and support farmers to improve productivity.

Speaking during the distribution exercise, Felix Murithi Mwai, chairperson of the national coffee cooperative committee formed by the Cabinet Secretary for Cooperatives and MSMEs Development, Wycliffe Oparanya, said the programme seeks to increase coffee production across the country by providing farmers with improved seedlings through cooperative societies.

Mwai noted that the seedlings had arrived at a crucial time when farmers in the region are working to expand coffee farming and boost output. He said Baragwi Cooperative is among the leading coffee societies in the country in terms of production, adding that the new seedlings will further enhance farmers' productivity.

He revealed that the cooperative is targeting to increase its annual production to about 130 metric tonnes, noting that

improved coffee varieties will help farmers achieve higher yields and better quality coffee.

Mwai explained that the seedlings will be distributed through cooperative societies, which will allocate them to individual farmers. He also called on the national government to continue supporting cooperative societies, saying strong farmer organizations play a key role in improving farmers' livelihoods.

He cited countries such as Colombia and Ethiopia, where strong cooperative movements have enabled farmers to benefit from improved bargaining power, better support systems and increased productivity.

Kirinyaga East Sub-County Deputy County Commissioner Kamau Maina said the government remains committed to supporting farmers through programmes aimed at promoting agricultural productivity and rural economic development.

Maina urged farmers who received the seedlings to take good care of them in order to achieve the intended production targets and increase their incomes.

He said the seedling distribution initiative forms part of the government's Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda, which focuses on empowering farmers and other grassroots groups.

The administrator also warned individuals involved in theft of farm produce, particularly coffee berries and macadamia nuts, saying se-



Farmers receiving seedlings.

curity agencies will take firm action against those engaging in the illegal activities.

Baragwi Coffee Farmers' Cooperative Society Chairperson Albert Muchiri Murage wel-

Baragwi Coffee Farmers' Cooperative Society distributed at least 30,000 improved coffee seedlings aimed at increasing production and revitalizing the sector.

”

comed the programme, saying it will help increase coffee production among farmers affiliated with the cooperative.

Murage noted that government support to the coffee sector has significantly contributed to reviving coffee farming. He said the cooperative received about Sh200 million last year through the Coffee Cherry Fund, which has enabled farmers to access affordable credit for farm maintenance and purchase of farm inputs such as fertilizers and chemicals.

He revealed that the seedlings distributed include the Batian variety, which is re-

sistant to common coffee diseases and matures faster than traditional varieties.

Coffee farmer Mugoh wa Gikombe from Gichugu said the programme will help farmers increase production while reducing the cost of establishing new coffee farms.

He explained that the Batian variety takes about two years to begin producing, compared to older varieties that take up to three years, and is more resistant to diseases, reducing the cost of maintaining the crop.

However, Mugoh urged the government and New KPCU to increase the number of

seedlings distributed, noting that demand among farmers remains high as many want to replace aging coffee trees with improved varieties.

He also praised the Coffee Cherry Fund for enabling farmers to access affordable credit at about three percent interest, compared to high-interest bank loans previously used by farmers.

Farmers expressed optimism that continued support from the government and cooperative societies will help revitalize the coffee sector and increase production in Kirinyaga County.

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COURTS

Othaya Imam Denies Sexual Abuse Charges Before Sentencing



Iddi Ali Koitat

BY MKT Correspondent
@themtkenyatimes

An Othaya imam accused of sexually abusing minors attending his madrasa classes has denied the charges, days after initially pleading guilty.

The 43-year-old, Iddi Ali Koitat, had on Tuesday last week admitted to seven counts of committing indecent acts against boys and girls aged between six and 15 years, including sodomy, masturbation, and other indecent acts. He had also pleaded guilty to an eighth count of abuse of trust, with prosecutors saying he exploited his position as a religious leader to commit the offences.

However, before sentencing on Wednesday, the court read the charges to Koitat again, and he formally denied all eight counts before Othaya Principal Magistrate Sandra Ogot.

According to a report filed by Othaya Sub-County Children Officer Susan Wambui, the alleged offences occurred on various dates between 2022 and November 2025 at the imam's house within the Oth-

aya Community Mosque compound.

The report indicates that the suspect allegedly enticed minors with sweets and manipulated religious teachings to silence them, warning that anyone who disclosed the incidents would go to hell, while those who kept the secret would be rewarded with a place in heaven.

Initially, 12 children were reported to have been affected.

Further investigations revealed that three of the remaining five children were beaten after resisting the suspect's alleged advances. One victim is a six-year-old autistic girl who cannot give a verbal account, while another is said to be the suspect's son. Investigators are yet to obtain medical records to confirm the claims.

Koitat, who has no legal representation, also applied for favourable bond and bail terms. The court directed a probation officer to prepare an assessment report before making a decision. The case will be mentioned again on March 24 for further directions.



Stakeholders during the consultative meeting hosted by Siaya governor James Orengo.

Siaya Set To Host KSh500 Billion Nuclear Power Plant Project

BY MKT REPORTER
@themtkenyatimes

Siaya County could soon become a key player in Kenya's energy sector following plans to construct a Sh500 billion nuclear power plant aimed at boosting electricity generation and transforming the regional economy.

James Orengo hosted a delegation from the Nuclear Power and Energy Agency (NuPEA) and Kenya Electricity Generating Company to discuss progress and the implementation roadmap for Kenya's nuclear power programme.

The delegation included NuPEA Chairman Lawrence Gumbe, Chief Executive Officer Justus Wabuyabo and KenGen CEO Peter Njenga. The officials briefed the county leadership on the status of the proposed project, which is expected to significantly reshape Kenya's energy landscape.

According to the agencies, construction of the plant is scheduled to begin on March 1, 2027. The project is part of the government's long-term plan to diversify the country's energy sources and introduce

high-capacity, carbon-neutral baseload power.

Governor Orengo welcomed the initiative, describing nuclear energy as critical to achieving Kenya's goal of becoming energy sufficient. He noted that the project would bring significant economic benefits to Siaya residents and the country as a whole.

He said the development is expected to create thousands of job opportunities and stimulate infrastructure growth within the county. During the construction phase, the project is projected to generate about 10,000 jobs, while the operational phase will sustain approximately 1,200 permanent positions.

Orengo added that reliable and affordable electricity from the plant would attract investors to the region and support industrial development.

In its first phase, the nuclear power facility is expected to generate about 2,000 megawatts (MW) of electricity, helping stabilize the national power grid, reduce outages and support Kenya's growing energy demand.

NuPEA Chairman Prof. Gumbe said the broader nuclear energy programme could eventually generate up to 6,000MW of electricity na-

tionwide. He explained that the project will be implemented in phases to ensure the national grid can safely integrate the additional power while maintaining strict operational and safety standards.

Meanwhile, the Siaya County Government, working with NuPEA and KenGen, plans to roll out a comprehensive stakeholder engagement programme to educate residents about nuclear energy.

The initiative will focus on public awareness, addressing safety concerns and ensuring the local community actively participates in the project's development.

Several county officials attended the meeting, including CECM for Governance Agunda Ochanda, County Secretary Joseph Ogutu and Energy Chief Officer Nicholas Kut Ochogo, highlighting close collaboration between the county and national governments in advancing the landmark energy project.

Justice Justice Ndung'u, a veteran jurist and human rights advocate, has served on Kenya's Supreme Court since 2011.

Ruto Nominates Justice Njoki Ndung'u For ICC Judicial Elections

The elections, scheduled for December 2026 in The Hague, will determine six new judges to serve on the world's foremost tribunal for crimes against humanity.

BY MKT REPORTER

[@themtkenyatimes](#)

President William Ruto has nominated Supreme Court Judge Njoki Ndung'u as Kenya's candidate for the International Criminal Court (ICC) judicial elections, a move that thrusts the country into the heart of global judicial diplomacy. The elections, scheduled for December 2026 in The Hague, will determine six new judges to serve on the world's foremost tribunal for crimes against humanity.

Justice Ndung'u, who has sat on Kenya's Supreme Court since 2011, is no stranger to international law and governance. Her nomination places her alongside a formidable slate of contenders: Tanzania's Deo John Nangela, Uganda's Rosette Muzigo, Ghana's Everlyn Ankumah, Switzerland's Guénaél Mettraux, Japan's Yoshimitsu Yamauchi, and Colombia's Diana Carolina Olarte.

Announcing the nomination at State House, President Ruto declared: "Kenya is proud to present Justice Njoki Ndung'u, a jurist of integrity and courage, whose record speaks to our commitment to justice and the rule of law." His words underscored Nairobi's determination to secure a seat at the ICC's judicial table, a position that carries both prestige and influence.

The ICC's Assembly of States Parties will convene from 7 to 17 December 2026 to elect the judges. Article 36 of the Rome Statute stipulates that candidates must be "persons of high moral character, impartiality and integrity" with qualifications equivalent to appointment

to the highest judicial office in their home countries.

Justice Ndung'u's credentials are extensive. She holds a Master of Laws in Human Rights and Civil Liberties, a diploma in Women's Rights, and has served as State Counsel in the Attorney General's office, Programme Officer at the Institute for Education in Democracy, National Protection Officer at the UNHCR, and Political Analyst in Conflict Management at the African Union. Her legislative legacy includes the Sexual Offences Act 2006, reforms to the Employment Act introducing paid maternity and paternity leave, and provisions in the Political Parties Act promoting women's participation.

Speaking after her nomination, Justice Ndung'u said: "This is not just a personal honour but a recognition of Kenya's contribution to international justice. I will carry the voices of those who believe in fairness, accountability, and the dignity of all people."

Her candidacy has drawn praise across the continent. Uganda's nominee Rosette Muzigo remarked: "This election is about strengthening global justice. Each candidate brings unique experience, and together we reflect the diversity of the international legal community." Ghana's Everlyn Ankumah added: "The ICC must remain a beacon of impartiality. Our collective responsibility is to uphold its credibility."

The ICC has tightened vetting procedures in recent years. A permanent due diligence mechanism, established under ICC ASP/22/Res.3, ensures transparency, while the International Organization for Migration maintains a confidential channel for reporting misconduct allegations against nominees.

Justice Ndung'u's track record also includes service in the Pan African Parliament and Kenya's 9th National Assembly, where she sat on committees for Defence, Foreign Affairs, and Constitutional reform. She was a member of the Committee of Experts that drafted Kenya's 2010 Constitution, a landmark achievement in the country's democratic evolution.

Her accolades are numerous: UN Person of the Year in Kenya (2006), Jurist of the Year by the International Commission of Jurists (2006), and presidential honours as Elder and Chief of the Burning Spear.



Justice Njoki Ndung'u

“Announcing the nomination at State House, President Ruto declared: “Kenya is proud to present Justice Njoki Ndung'u, a jurist of integrity and courage, whose record speaks to our commitment to justice and the rule of law.” His words underscored Nairobi's determination to secure a seat at the ICC's judicial table, a position that carries both prestige and influence.

Diplomatic analysts note that Kenya's lobbying efforts will be crucial. Regional solidarity among African states could prove decisive in securing her election. Nairobi is expected to mount a vigorous campaign, leveraging Justice Ndung'u's reputation as a reformist and human rights champion.

Civil society voices have also weighed in. The Kenya Human Rights Commission praised her nomination, stating: "Justice Ndung'u has consistently advanced the rights of women and marginalized groups. Her presence at the ICC would amplify Africa's voice in global justice."

International observers see the elections as a test of the ICC's credibility. With criticism over selective prosecutions and political pressures, the court's ability to attract judges of unimpeachable integrity is paramount. Switzerland's Guénaél Mettraux noted: "The ICC must remain above politics. Judges must embody independence and fairness, or the institution risks losing legitimacy."

For Kenya, the nomination is more than symbolic. It signals a renewed commitment to international law, even as the country continues to grapple with its own history of contested justice. Justice Ndung'u's candidacy reflects a broader ambition: to position Kenya as a leader in shaping the future of global accountability.

In closing her remarks, Justice Ndung'u stated: "Justice is not a privilege; it is a right. If elected, I will serve with impartiality and integrity, ensuring the ICC remains a court for all humanity."

Her nomination underscores Kenya's ambition to play a central role in shaping international justice. Whether she secures a seat will depend on the votes of the Assembly of States Parties, but her candidacy has already placed Kenya firmly on the global judicial stage.

Justice may be blind, but it is never silent—and Kenya has chosen a voice determined to be heard.

Courts Motorists have a relief after the High Court issued orders barring the enforcement of instant automated traffic fines.

Court Stops NTSA From Enforcing Instant Fines

BY **Dzuya Walter**
@themtkenyatimes

Motorists have a relief after the High Court issued orders barring the enforcement of instant automated traffic fines. In conservatory orders issued Thursday morning, Justice Bahati Mwamuye restrained the National Transport and Safety Authority (NTSA) and the Office of the Attorney General from issuing, generating, demanding or enforcing automated traffic penalties produced through algorithmic or other automated decision-making systems. The orders were issued in a constitutional petition filed by Sheria Mtaani through its lawyers, Danstan Omari and Shadrack Wambui, challenging the legality of the instant

fines traffic management system rolled out by NTSA.

Justice Bahati Mwamuye further directed that KCB Bank Kenya be enjoined in the proceedings as an interested party.

In the interim orders, the court barred the respondents and the interested party, whether acting jointly or severally, from implementing or continuing to implement the impugned automated traffic penalties system pending the inter-partes hearing of the application.

The petitioner argues that the automated instant fines system imposes penalties immediately upon detection of an alleged traffic infraction without prior notice, warning or human review.

Sheria Mtaani contends that the system violates Articles

47 and 50 of the Constitution, which guarantee fair administrative action, procedural fairness and the presumption of innocence.

Through the application filed under certificate of urgency, the petitioner states that motorists are compelled to pay fines within seven days or risk administrative sanctions, including denial of access to essential NTSA services.

It argues that the system effectively bypasses the constitutional mandate of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions by determining alleged offences and imposing penalties without instituting prosecution before a court of law.

The petitioner further argues that the automated system disregards safeguards provided under the Traffic Act, includ-

ing the requirement to serve notices and allow alleged offenders to be heard.

Sheria Mtaani also claims the system converts registered vehicle owners into automatic culprits even where they may not have committed the alleged offence.

The application further raises concerns over data protection, arguing that the decision-making process is executed solely through automated algorithms without human intervention.

According to the petitioner, this contravenes provisions of the Data Protection Act, 2019 and related regulations, which require transparency in automated decision-making and guarantee individuals the right to human review.

The lobby group also questions the collection of traffic fines through a commercial bank account linked to KCB instead of statutory government accounts, saying the arrangement raises accountability concerns over the handling of public revenue.

Sheria Mtaani told the court



that the continued implementation of the system threatens widespread harm to motorists across the country, as the automated penalties create pressure on citizens to pay fines before any adjudication is made.

Justice Mwamuye directed the petitioner to immediately serve the respondents and the interested party with the petition, application and the court orders and file an affidavit of service by the close of business on March 13, 2026.

The respondents and the interested party have been given until March 20, 2026, to enter an appearance and file their responses.

The petitioner will thereafter have leave to file a rejoinder by March 27, 2026, if necessary.

The matter will be mentioned on April 9, 2026, to confirm compliance and to give further directions on the expedited hearing and determination of both the application and the main petition.




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Forest

Tree Harvesting And Replanting Programme Begins In Murang'a Forest Stations

Apart from the plantation programme, KFS will also undertake rehabilitation and conservation activities in other gazetted government forests within Murang'a County.

BY Bernard Munyao
@themkenyaintimes

Harvesting of mature and over-mature trees has begun in three forest stations in Murang'a County as part of a nationwide programme aimed at improving plantation forest management and promoting sustainable forestry practices.

Murang'a County Forest Conservator Eunice Njoroge said the exercise is currently taking place in Kimakia, Gatere and Kiambicho forest stations. The activity is part of a national initiative targeting the harvesting of mature trees from approximately 5,000 hectares of plantation forests across the country.

Speaking on the progress of the programme, Njoroge noted that the work in Kiambicho forest station is being conducted under the category of "claims and debts." This arrangement allows contractors who had previously obtained harvesting rights but were unable to proceed following the government's 2018 logging moratorium to resume their operations.

According to the conservator, a total of 37 contractors are currently participating in the harvesting exercise

across the three forest stations. Out of these, 19 contractors are harvesting trees for timber, 17 contractors are handling fuel wood, while one contractor is involved in harvesting trees for treatment and transmission posts.

Njoroge said the exercise is progressing smoothly and is expected to be completed within 45 days.

She further revealed that the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) is in the process of tendering for additional contractors who will be allowed to harvest trees in eight other forest blocks within the county once the procurement process is finalized.

The harvesting programme forms part of a sustainable forest management plan. Njoroge explained that once mature trees are removed, foresters will prepare the land for tree restocking to ensure continuous forest regeneration.

During the ongoing long rains season, KFS plans to plant trees on about 73.4 hectares of forest plantation under the Plantation Establishment and Livelihoods System (PELIS). The programme allows local communities to participate in plantation development while benefiting from controlled farming activities within designated forest areas.

Under this plantation programme, exotic commercial species such as pine and cypress will be planted.

Njoroge added that the planting exercise will be carried out by KFS with support from several stakeholders, including the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF), KenGen, National Government Administrative Officers (NGAOs) and other partners involved in forest restoration efforts.

Apart from the plantation programme, KFS will also undertake rehabilitation and conservation activities in other gazetted government forests within Murang'a County.

As part of these efforts, the service plans to plant indigenous trees on about 40 hectares in order to restore degraded forest ecosystems and im-



Parts of Gatere forest station in Murang'a county where mature trees were harvested and put under Plantation Establishment and Livelihood System (PELIS).

“**Murang'a County Forest Conservator Eunice Njoroge said the exercise is currently taking place in Kimakia, Gatere and Kiambicho forest stations. The activity is part of a national initiative targeting the harvesting of mature trees from approximately 5,000 hectares of plantation forests across the country.**

prove biodiversity. Njoroge emphasized that indigenous tree species are essential in restoring natural ecosystems and strengthening environmental conservation.

Residents have also been encouraged to participate in on-farm tree planting to support the government's broader strategy of increasing the country's tree cover.

Njoroge urged farmers to buy seedlings from private tree nurseries and plant them on their farms to complement government conservation initiatives. She also advised farmers to seek guidance from KFS offices before planting trees along farm boundaries to avoid disputes that often arise between neighbours due to improper spacing or unsuitable species.

Farmers were further encouraged to consult forestry experts to determine the most suitable tree species for their farms depending on soil type, climate and intended use.

Meanwhile, Njoroge disclosed that a contractor tasked with producing seedlings to support the government's national target of 15 billion seedlings has already started operations in the county.

Working together with the National Youth Service (NYS), the contractor has established operations at Kimakia forest station in Gatanga Sub-County, where they aim to produce approximately 10 million seedlings to support tree planting and forest restoration programmes in Murang'a and other parts of the country.

Health The government is prioritising preventive and promotive health services, with greater emphasis on routine screening for blood pressure and blood glucose

CS Duale: 3.1 Million Kenyans Living With Chronic Kidney Disease

BY MKT Correspondent
@themtkenyatimes

About 3.1 million Kenyans are living with Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD), the Ministry of Health has revealed, raising concern over the growing burden of non-communicable diseases in the country.

Health Cabinet Secretary Aden Duale said the condition is largely driven by the increasing prevalence of hypertension and diabetes, which are among the leading causes of kidney damage.

Speaking yesterday during the national World Kidney Day commemoration at Kenyatta National Hospital in Nairobi, Duale noted that non-communicable diseases (NCDs) account for about 43 per cent of all deaths in Kenya, underscoring the urgency of strengthening prevention and early diagnosis.

“The government is prioritising preventive and promotive health services, with greater emphasis on routine screening for blood pressure and blood glucose at community and primary healthcare levels,” he said.

According to the CS, early screening will help detect kidney disease in its early stages and reduce complications associated with the condition.

Duale said the government is also expanding access to specialised kidney care through the Social Health Authority (SHA).

So far, the authority has processed over Sh104 billion in healthcare claims, supporting essential services such as dialysis, nephrectomy and kidney transplantation.

To further improve access to transplant services, the Ministry has partnered with ac-



CS Adan Duale yesterday | Photo: Courtesy.

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credited healthcare providers, allowing patients to undergo kidney transplantation at Aga Khan University Hospital Nairobi under SHA-approved benefit packages.

The CS said the ministry is also strengthening oversight in organ donation and transplantation.

This follows concerns raised last year regarding transplant procedures.

As part of the reforms, the Ministry has established an independent review committee and initiated the development of a National Transplant Registry to enhance transparency, accountability and proper coordination within the country's transplant programme.

In addition, the government is investing in specialised training and infrastructure to strengthen kidney care services.

Initiatives such as the East Africa Centre of Excellence in Urology and Nephrology are helping to build local expertise, while additional renal units are being rolled out across counties to improve access to treatment.

The Ministry is also finalising the Kenya National Guidelines for Kidney Diseases

2026, which will standardise quality care for kidney patients across the country.

The guidelines will be supported by integrated health data systems under the government's Digital Superhighway initiative, aimed at improving health information management and service delivery.

Meanwhile, the Ministry urged Kenyans to adopt healthier lifestyles to reduce the risk of kidney disease and other non-communicable illnesses.

Citizens were encouraged to undergo regular medical check-ups, maintain physical activity, ensure adequate hydration, and reduce salt intake as part of preventive measures.

The event was attended by Director-General for Health Dr Patrick Amoth, Kenyatta National Hospital CEO Dr Richard Lesiyampe, Kenya Renal Association Chairperson Dr Jonathan Wala, and Director of the Kenya National Blood Transfusion and Transplant Services Dr Martin Sirengo, among other health sector leaders.

Legal Battles Justice Josephine Wambui Mong'are declined to grant interim orders sought by Tuju and his company, Dari Limited

Raphael Tuju Risks Losing Prime Karen Properties As Court Declines To Stop Auction

BY MKT REPORTER
@themkenyatimes

Former Cabinet Secretary Raphael Tuju faces the possibility of losing several prime Karen properties after the High Court declined to immediately stop the execution of an earlier ruling that cleared the way for the assets to be auctioned.

In directions issued at the Milimani Law Courts, Justice Josephine Wambui Mong'are declined to grant interim orders sought by Tuju and his company, Dari Limited, that would have temporarily halted the implementation of a decision delivered on March 9, 2026.

The March 9 ruling struck out Tuju's amended plaint and lifted interim court orders that had previously stopped the defendants from dealing with the contested properties.

As a result, the respondents, Garam

Investment Auctioneers and Knight Frank Kenya, are no longer barred by court orders from proceeding with actions related to the properties while the case continues.

The dispute revolves around several high-value assets, including L.R. No. 1055/165, which hosts Tamarind at Dari Business Park along Ngong Road, and L.R. No. 11320/3, home to Entim Sidai Wellness Sanctuary in Nairobi.

After the amended suit was struck out, Tuju returned to court through an application dated March 11 seeking urgent relief to stop the execution of the ruling and to obtain permission to appeal.

In the application, Tuju argued that the respondents were now free to auction, transfer or otherwise dispose of the properties in what he termed an irregular and unlawful process.

He warned that unless the court in-

tervened urgently, the planned appeal would be rendered useless if the properties were sold before the appeal was heard and determined.

However, Justice Mong'are only certified the application as urgent but declined to grant temporary orders stopping the implementation of the ruling.

Instead, the judge directed Tuju to serve the application on the respondents and ordered that the matter be mentioned before the presiding judge of the division on March 17 for further directions.

"Since this court is on transfer, let the application be served and be mentioned before the presiding judge of the division on 17/3/2026 for directions," the judge ruled.

Despite declining the interim stay, the court granted Tuju leave to appeal the March 9 decision that struck out the amended plaint.

The earlier ruling had also vacated



Former Cabinet Secretary Raphael Tuju during a past address | Photo: Courtesy

orders issued on October 28, 2024, which had restrained the respondents, their agents or employees from advertising, attaching, selling or otherwise interfering with the ownership of the Karen properties.

Tuju had argued that the intended appeal raises substantial legal issues, including claims that the court failed

to determine a pending contempt application accusing the respondents of violating earlier court orders.

The matter will now be mentioned before the presiding judge on March 17 to determine the next steps regarding the application and the intended appeal.



Pain Of Life



We are amazing in life, others think.

But we know how much pain and scoldings we suffer.

Our pillow knows our fading feelings more than others.

And many nights we cry in silence.

But one day all your sufferings become success,

when we stay patient and calm in tough situations.

It is tough, and we know it.

But tough times make a person more successful in life.

One day all your pain becomes strength.

Your crying becomes fire.

And our success becomes an unbelievable matter in the world.

V. S. NITHIYASRI

VII

JOHN DEWEY MATRIC HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL, PANRUTI, CUDDALORE DISTRICT, TAMILNADU.

Let Them Go



If a person is avoiding you, probably it is not your fault.

It may mean their chapter in your life is over.

They were not meant to be in your next chapter.

So let them go, and do not stop them.

Sometimes we can replace a character with others, but sometimes we cannot.

Do not worry too much about it.

It is your life.
You should live it for yourself,
not only for others.

V. S. NITHIYASRI VII

JOHN DEWEY MATRIC HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL, PANRUTI, CUDDALORE DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

My Favourite Game Cricket



Cricket is my favourite game.
It boosts my energy and fame.

Every match I happily play.
In the cricket ground I like to stay.

Without wings it makes me fly above the clouds.
Sometimes I play on streets and roads.

Cricket is my sweetest memory.
My friends and I play cricket happily.

Cricket is my true emotion.
And I play it with devotion.

You bat or bowl, play with your might.
Cricket thrills day and night.

Stumps fly high, the crowd cheers loud.
A joyful game, played proud.

By

S. Hemanath
VIII Std

PUMS Chinna Obulapuram
Gummidipoondi
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Tamilnadu, India.

"Kelajak Markazi" – A Place That Turns Dreams Into Professions And Talent Into Excellence



In today's era of globalization and rapid technological development, organizing young people's free time in a meaningful way and guiding them toward education and professional skills has become one of the most important tasks. After all, the future of society depends on the knowledge, experience, and skills of today's youth. In this regard, the Kelajak Markazi is emerging not only as an educational institution but also as a crossroads of dreams and opportunities.

The main goal of the Kelajak Markazi is to teach young people modern professional skills, discover their hidden talents, and encourage every young man and woman to find their own path of personal development. Here, young people do not only gain knowledge – they also develop self-confidence, responsibility, and the spirit of striving toward their goals.

The clubs and programs organized in the center are formed based on the interests of the youth. Information technology, foreign languages,

fundamentals of entrepreneurship, handicrafts, and creative fields – all of these encourage young people to keep pace with the modern world. Each lesson awakens in young hearts the confidence that says, "I can do it too!"

Most importantly, the Kelajak Markazi aims to educate young people not only as professionals but also as spiritually mature, broad-minded, and initiative-driven individuals. A special place is given to the system of encouragement and motivation. Motivation is the force that further ignites the enthusiasm within young hearts. Today, every young person stands at the center of life's crossroads. Ahead lie opportunities, challenges, and choices. The Kelajak Markazi can become a reliable companion on this journey.

Are you looking for a guiding light, support, and a source of inspiration for your children's development? Then welcome to the Kelajak Markazi!

The future is not something to wait for – it is something to create.

A profession gives strength to the hands, knowledge brings light to the heart, and talent brings progress to society.

The attention given to youth today is the foundation of tomorrow's prosperous life. Therefore, every young person should recognize their potential and take bold steps forward. If we can become like-minded and act together on this path, then deep thoughts, clear goals, aspirations, and the highest achievements will undoubtedly begin at the Kelajak Markazi.

Romitan District "Kelajak Markazi"
Leader of the "Journalism and Public Speaking"
Club: Jamolova Shahnoza.

Queen Of My World



You are the one
Who introduced me to this world.
You gave me life,
And then taught me how to live it.
You are the backbone of our family,
My strength,
My shelter,
My everything.
Without you, I am nothing.
You taught me how to fight in this world.
Not with fear —
But with courage.
Not with pride —
But with dignity.
We remember those sleepless nights.
You worked without rest
To feed us,
To educate us,
To raise us carefully
With love and stubborn strength.
You were born into comfort,
Yet you chose struggle without complaint.
Not even for a single day
Did you live for yourself.
You buried your dreams
So ours could rise.
Behind your simple smile

Lives a universe of sacrifice.
Behind your silence
Are stories of pain you never shared.
You stood like a wall
So no one could break your children.
You shaped us with discipline,
Lifted us with determination,
And protected us like a warrior queen.
If today we stand
In a position others may envy,
It is not luck.
It is your hard work.
Your tears.
Your endless effort.
Sleeping on your lap
Is the safest place on earth.
Food from your hands
Is the sweetest blessing.
One tight hug from you
Can wipe away every worry.
You didn't just raise us —
You built us.
All that we are today
Is because of you.
Your pain became our strength.
Your sacrifices became our success.
And today we proudly say —
Our greatest achievement
Is being your children.
You are our Queen.
Now and always. 👑 ✨

BY
ZAHETHA R
BT ASST
GHS PAPPANTHANGAL
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Empowerment The county distributed 8,300 avocado seedlings and 2,000 macadamia seedlings to 35 Community Investment Groups

Waiguru Boosts Kariti Residents With Socio-Economic Empowerment Items

The governor said the county government is working with farmers to increase avocado production from 172,000 metric tonnes to 300,000 metric tonnes annually, a move expected to boost farmers' incomes while creating more employment opportunities along the value chain.

BY MKT REPORTER
@themkenyatimes

Residents of Kariti Ward, Ndia, in Kirinyaga County received a major boost yesterday after Governor Anne Waiguru distributed a wide range of socio-economic empowerment items aimed at improving livelihoods, supporting farmers and expanding access to essential services.

The items issued included avocado and macadamia seedlings, water project materials, sports equipment, tents and chairs for community groups, and blankets for the elderly.

Speaking during the event, Waiguru said the initiative demonstrates the county government's commitment to uplifting communities and ensuring development reach-



Kirinyaga governor Ann Waiguru, her deputy David Githanda with other officials, stakeholders and Kariti ward residents during the handing over of various economic empowerment items yesterday.

es every household. "We have set aside significant resources under the Ward Development Fund to support projects pri-

oritized by residents. Today's distribution is part of our promise to empower communities socially and economi-

cally," she said. To support agricultural diversification and increase farmers' incomes, the coun-

ty distributed 8,300 avocado seedlings and 2,000 macadamia seedlings to 35 Community Investment Groups.


Waiguru said the high-value crops have strong demand in both local and international markets, positioning farmers to benefit from Kenya's growing avocado export market while also contributing to environmental conservation. She noted that the initiative aligns with the county's broader development agenda, including the establishment of the Sagana Agro Industrial City and the County Aggregation and Industrial Park, where value addition industries for avocado and macadamia oil processing are being set up to guarantee farmers better markets and prices.

The governor said the county government is working with farmers to increase avocado production from 172,000 metric tonnes to 300,000 metric tonnes annually, a move expected to boost farmers'

incomes while creating more employment opportunities along the value chain.

In a move aimed at strengthening community groups and easing the cost of social events, the county also issued 12 tents and 666 chairs to 15 self-help and welfare groups. The items will help residents reduce expenses during events such as weddings and funerals while enabling the groups to generate income by hiring them out thus adding to household incomes.

Efforts to improve access to clean water were also boosted through the provision of 182 UPVC pipes for the Mung'etho Water Project, which will benefit about 350 members and serve nearby schools, trading centres and churches. Another 68 UPVC pipes were allocated to the Ngando Water Project, benefiting about 300 members as well as institutions including Karima Primary School, Karima Dispensary and Karima Police Post. The county government will also rehabilitate the Ngoka borehole to further ease access to safe and reliable water in the area.




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AfCFTA Regional policymakers are pushing regulatory reforms to align veterinary medicine standards across East Africa

East Africa Moves To Harmonise Veterinary Systems To Unlock AfCFTA Livestock Trade

BY MKT Correspondent

@themkenyatimes

Regional policymakers are pushing regulatory reforms to align veterinary medicine standards across East Africa, a move expected to support the growth of livestock markets and strengthen agricultural value chains.

Experts argue that fragmented regulatory frameworks, inconsistent veterinary certification procedures and weak coordination between border authorities continue to slow livestock trade across the continent despite growing regional demand for animal products.

This emerged during regional technical consultations in Naivasha bringing together veterinary regulators, trade officials and livestock sector experts from the Horn of Africa and the Sahel to discuss mechanisms for facilitating cross-border livestock trade under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

The meeting, organised under the African Pastoral Markets Development (APMD) Platform led by the African Union's Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR), is designed to translate policy commitments on livestock trade into operational systems that can be implemented along regional trade corridors.

Dr Adelaide Ayoyi, East African Community Coordinator for Mutual Recognition Procedures, said aligning veterinary medicine registration systems across partner states will help reduce duplication while accelerating access to animal health products.

"We are working toward a system where one scientific assessment of a veterinary medicine can be trusted across EAC partner states to



Participants at the regional technical workshop in Naivasha on policy harmonization, mutual recognition and corridor-trade facilitation for accelerating cross-border livestock trade under AfCFTA. | Photo: Courtesy.

accelerate trade and improve access to safe and effective animal health products," said Dr Ayoyi.

She explained that the regional Mutual Recognition Procedure (SOP) enables one country to evaluate a veterinary medicinal product while other partner states review and adopt the assessment, significantly shortening approval timelines.

The initiative is part of broader efforts to harmonise regulatory frameworks governing livestock trade in order to improve disease control, ensure product safety and strengthen livestock value chains across the region.

Sanitary and phytosanitary compliance remains a central pillar of livestock trade, requiring exporting countries to certify that animals and animal products meet the importing country's health and safety standards.

Daniel Karugu, a sanitary and phytosanitary measures expert, said strengthening disease surveillance systems, veterinary certification procedures and inspection regimes is critical to facilitating safe

livestock trade.

"Effective SPS systems based on science and international standards are essential for ensuring healthy animals, safe food products and predictable livestock trade across borders," said Karugu.

Under international livestock trade rules, consignments must be accompanied by veterinary certificates confirming the disease status of animals, results of inspections and compliance with sanitary requirements.

Experts say inconsistent implementation of sanitary and veterinary certification requirements across African countries has created significant technical barriers, slowing livestock trade and limiting the ability of producers and traders to access expanding regional markets.

Standardisation of livestock production practices, veterinary systems and food safety requirements is increasingly emerging as a key pillar in efforts to strengthen animal health safeguards, build consumer confidence and expand intra-African livestock trade.

Liliane Kamanzi, Project

Coordinator at the African Organisation for Standardisation (ARSO), said harmonised continental standards are helping build regulatory frameworks that support competitive livestock markets.

"Harmonised African standards are essential for reducing technical barriers, strengthening food safety systems and enabling livestock producers to access regional and international markets," said Kamanzi.

ARSO has already coordinated the development of numerous African standards covering livestock production systems, feed safety, meat

hygiene, traceability and sustainability in animal agriculture.

The Naivasha consultations are also examining mechanisms for improving governance of cross-border livestock movement along key trade corridors linking countries in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel.

These include proposals to develop mutual recognition agreements covering livestock movement permits, vaccination records and sanitary certificates as well as standard operating procedures for livestock trade corridors.

Officials say the reforms are expected to reduce regulatory fragmentation at border points, speed up livestock movement and support the formalisation of livestock trade across the continent.

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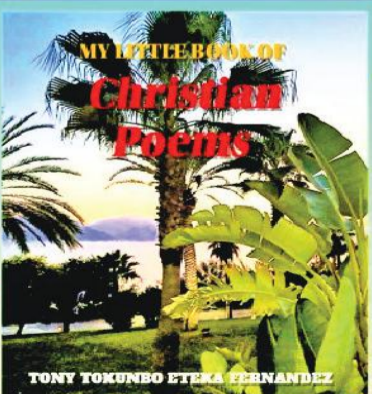
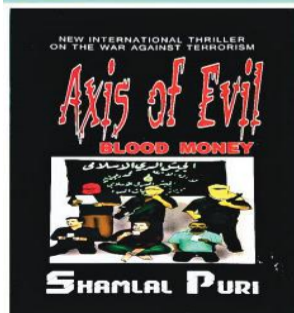
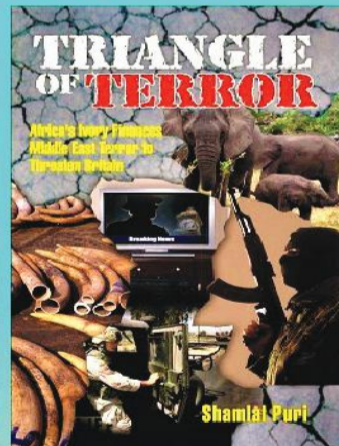
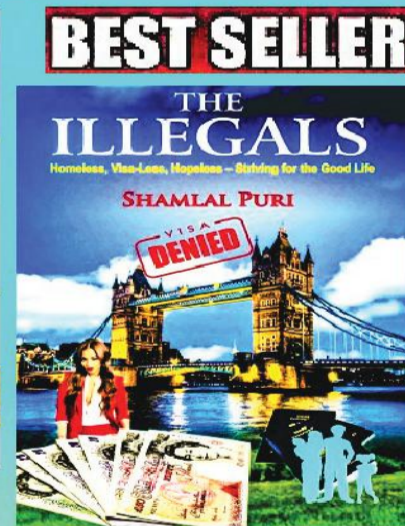
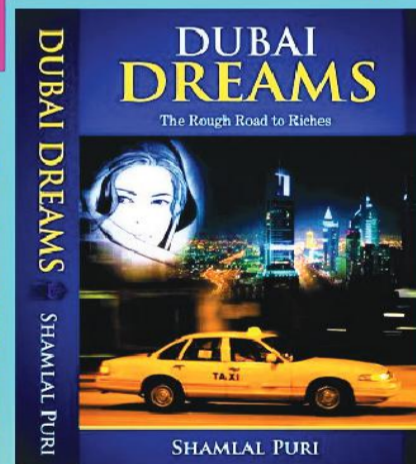
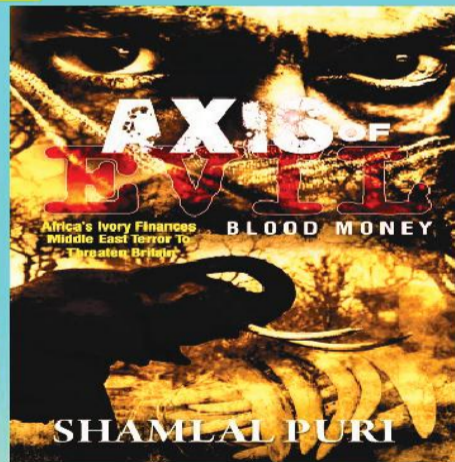
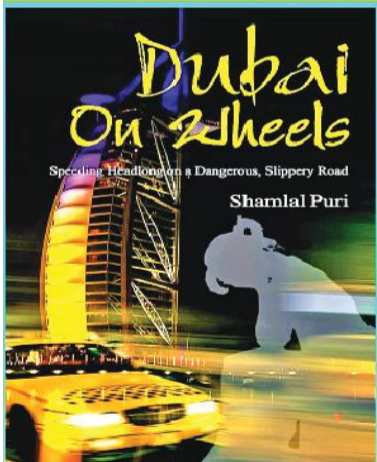
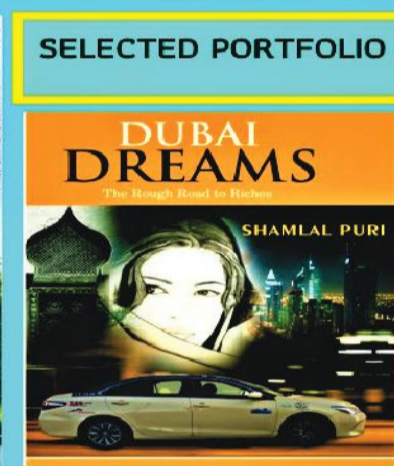
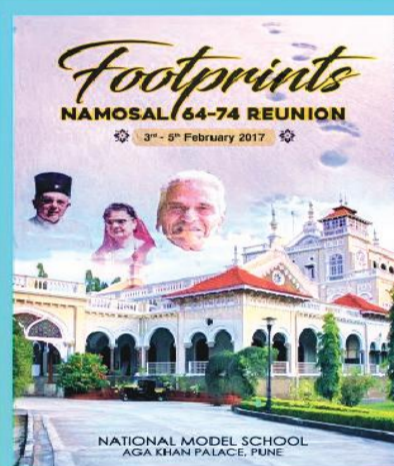
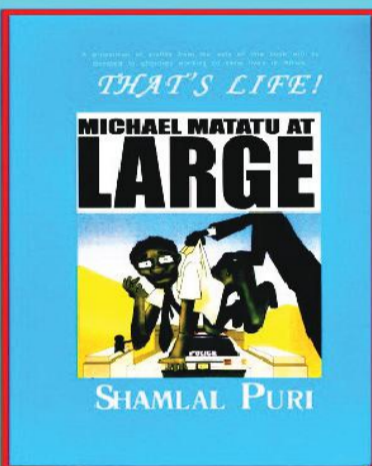
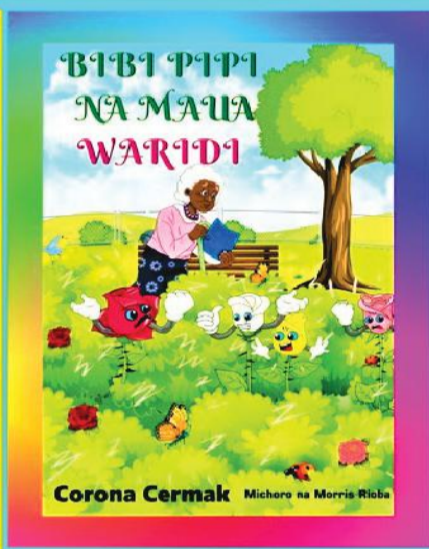
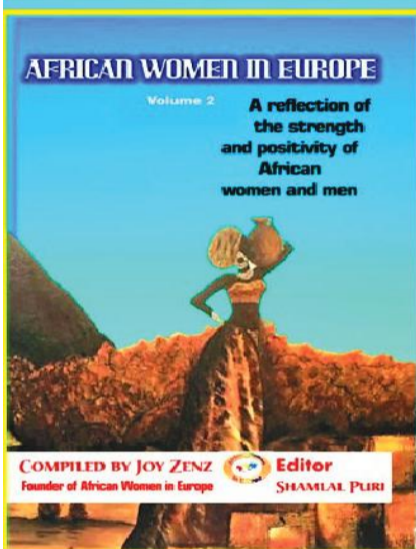
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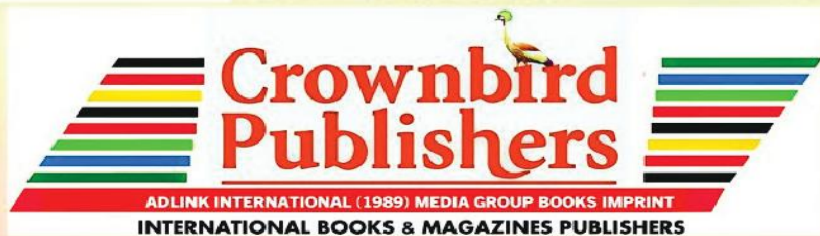
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Agriculture Kagwe said scaling up local production of oil crops would help cut the import bill, support agro-processing industries and increase incomes for farmers

CS Kagwe Launches Drive To Boost Local Edible Oil Production

Cabinet Secretary for Agriculture and Livestock Development Mutahi Kagwe unveiled the programme during the opening of the Kilimo Biashara Expo 2026 held at the Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO) Seeds headquarters, Thika yesterday.

BY WMW

@themkenyatimes

The government has launched a new initiative aimed at accelerating the production of sunflower, soybean and other oil crops in a bid to reduce Kenya's heavy reliance on imported edible oils.

Cabinet Secretary for Agriculture and Livestock Development Mutahi Kagwe unveiled the programme during the opening of the Kilimo Biashara Expo 2026 held at the Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO) Seeds headquarters, Thika yesterday.

Kenya consumes about 600,000 metric tonnes of edible oils annually, yet more than 90-95 percent of the demand is met through imports.

In 2022 alone, the country spent over Sh145 billion importing edible oils, highlighting the need to strengthen domestic production.

Speaking during the launch, Kagwe said scaling up local production of oil crops would help cut the import bill, support agro-processing industries and increase incomes for farmers across the country.

"We must move towards producing more of what we consume locally. Expanding sunflower, soybean and other oil crops will not only reduce imports but also create new opportunities for farmers, processors and agribusiness investors," he said.

The ministry is implementing the programme in partnership with KALRO and other stakeholders in the agricultural sector. The initiative will focus on promoting high-yield seed varieties, improving seed multiplication and distribution systems, and supporting farmer groups and



CS Mutahi Kagwe (in shirt) with other stakeholders led by KALRO chairman Dr Thuo Mathenge (left) at the Seeds Centre, Thika yesterday. | Photo: Courtesy.

cooperatives involved in oil crop production.

It will also seek to attract private investment in agro-processing and value addition while strengthening

market linkages between farmers and processors to ensure reliable markets for produce.

Kagwe noted that expanding production of industrial crops such as

sunflower and soybean would play a key role in building a more resilient agricultural sector while enhancing food security and rural livelihoods.

The Kilimo Biashara Expo, hosted

at the KALRO Seeds centre in Thika, serves as a platform for farmers, researchers, agribusiness firms and investors to interact and explore emerging opportunities in agriculture.

Yesterday, the CS was taken through the seeds centre by Kalro leadership led by chairman Dr Thuo Mathenge.

The event showcases a range of agricultural innovations including improved seed varieties, farm mechanisation technologies and digital agriculture solutions aimed at modernising farming and improving productivity.

Dr Mathenge noted that the expo also highlights the growing importance of industrial crops as Kenya works to strengthen its agricultural value chains and reduce reliance on imports.

Data from agricultural stakeholders shows that more than 90 percent of edible oils consumed in the country are imported, underscoring the urgency of boosting local production.

The new initiative is expected to expand opportunities for farmers, youth, women and agribusiness entrepreneurs, while supporting the growth of agro-processing industries and helping lower the country's edible oil import bill.

Agriculture officials say that with improved technologies, better seed systems and stronger market connections, Kenya has the potential to significantly increase domestic edible oil production and transform the sector into a competitive agribusiness industry.

“We must move towards producing more of what we consume locally. Expanding sunflower, soybean and other oil crops will not only reduce imports but also create new opportunities for farmers, processors and agribusiness investors,” he Kagwe.



Some of different seeds demonstration farms at the Seeds Centre, Thika

ODM The verdict will decide not only Sifuna's fate but also whether ODM can rise above factionalism or sink under the weight of its own contradictions.

ODM Wrangles Deepen As Tribunal Prepares To Rule On Sifuna Case



Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna.

BY MKT REPORTER
@themkenyatimes

The Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), Kenya's oldest and most established opposition party, is once again in the throes of internal turmoil. The Political Parties Disputes Tribunal has set March 26 as the date to deliver its ruling on the contested removal of Secretary General Edwin Sifuna, a decision that could reshape the party's leadership and future trajectory.

Earlier this year, ODM's National Executive Council (NEC) voted to oust Sifuna, citing alleged indiscipline and violations of party protocols. The move sparked immediate controversy, with Sifuna insisting that the NEC had acted outside the bounds of the party constitution and the Political Parties Act. "This was a political ambush, not a lawful process," Sifuna told reporters after the decision, arguing that ODM's internal rules were ignored.

ODM lawyers countered

during tribunal proceedings that Sifuna should have first exhausted internal dispute resolution mechanisms before seeking external redress. Party stalwarts defended the NEC's decision, framing it as necessary to restore discipline. One senior ODM official remarked: "No party can thrive if its leaders disregard collective responsibility. The NEC acted to protect ODM's integrity."

The tribunal has already issued conservatory orders preventing ODM from implementing the removal and barred the Registrar of Political Parties from gazetting the decision. This temporary reprieve has allowed Sifuna to continue serving as Secretary General while the matter is fully heard.

Political analysts say the wrangles expose deeper fissures within ODM. The party, once united under Raila Odinga's charismatic leadership, has struggled to maintain cohesion in the post 2022 political landscape. With Odinga's influence waning and succes-

sion debates intensifying, internal disputes have become more frequent. Dr. Fredrick Owino, a political scientist at the University of Nairobi, observed: "ODM's current crisis is symptomatic of a party grappling with transition. Leadership contests are inevitable, but the manner in which they are handled will determine whether ODM remains a national force or fragments into regional outfits."

The Sifuna case has also reignited debate about the role of party constitutions in Kenya's political culture. While the Political Parties Act requires internal mechanisms for dispute resolution, many parties have been accused of bypassing due process. Civil society groups argue that ODM's handling of the matter reflects a broader trend of weak institutionalization. The Kenya Human Rights Commission noted: "Political parties must respect their own constitutions. Otherwise, they undermine democracy at its very foundation."

Sifuna's allies insist his re-

moval was politically motivated, linked to factional battles over ODM's future direction. Some point to his outspoken style and willingness to challenge party elders as reasons for his targeting. "Edwin represents a younger, more assertive generation within ODM. His removal is an attempt to silence reformist voices," said one Nairobi legislator aligned with Sifuna.

On the other hand, ODM insiders loyal to the NEC argue that Sifuna's confrontational approach has alienated key stakeholders. "Leadership requires discipline and respect for structures. The Secretary General cannot operate as a lone ranger," an NEC member

told The Mt Kenya Times.

The tribunal's ruling will carry significant implications. If Sifuna is reinstated, it will embolden reformist factions and potentially weaken the NEC's authority. If the removal is upheld, ODM risks alienating younger members and reinforcing perceptions of intolerance to dissent.

Beyond the immediate dispute, the wrangles highlight ODM's precarious position ahead of the 2027 elections. With rival parties consolidating and new movements emerging, ODM's ability to project unity will be critical. Analysts warn that prolonged internal battles could erode its grassroots support. "Ken-

yan voters punish disunity. ODM must resolve its leadership crisis quickly or risk irrelevance," cautioned political commentator Wycliffe Nyongesa.

The tribunal's decision on March 26 will thus be more than a legal ruling; it will be a litmus test for ODM's resilience. For Sifuna, it is a fight for political survival. For ODM, it is a struggle to prove that it can manage internal democracy in a way that strengthens, rather than weakens, its national standing.

As the countdown begins, the stakes could not be higher. ODM's wrangles are no longer just an internal affair—they are a mirror reflecting the fragility of Kenya's party politics.

In the end, the verdict will decide not only Sifuna's fate but also whether ODM can rise above factionalism or sink under the weight of its own contradictions.

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War The conflict quickly escalated into a broader regional crisis. The effective closure of the Strait of Hormuz, a vital energy corridor

Living The Unseen War: Egyptians Feel Ripple Effects Of Iran Conflict

Egypt raised domestic fuel prices by between 14 percent and 17 percent across key petroleum products early Tuesday

In response to the crisis, the Egyptian government has introduced a series of measures aimed at reducing public spending and conserving energy. Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly announced Monday that authorities will cancel certain government events, reduce official travel, and limit training programs to cut expenditures.

BY Xinhua News Agency
@themtkenyatimes

Samira Abdo, a 61-year-old cleaner, woke up early on Tuesday to begin what she expected to be another ordinary commute across the Egyptian capital. Instead, she was greeted with an unwelcome surprise: higher transportation fares. The increase followed a government decision to raise fuel prices earlier in the day as part of austerity measures aimed at coping with the economic repercussions of the ongoing U.S.-Israeli war on Iran.

"This morning, the minibus fare went from 18 Egyptian pounds (about 0.35 U.S. dollars) to 20 pounds, and the microbus jumped from 9 to 10 pounds," Abdo told Xinhua. "I take at least four rides every day." For Abdo, the change means spending six additional pounds daily just to travel between home and work, a seemingly small amount that adds up quickly for someone living on a modest income. "I'm bracing for higher electricity and gas bills, and more expensive food," she said with concern. "We see mis-

sile strikes and attacks on TV, while the effects of the war are reaching us here." Food prices are also beginning to climb. Tomatoes, a staple in Egyptian kitchens, have risen to between 20 and 25 pounds per kilogram from around 18 pounds. Yogurt now costs about 12 pounds per cup. "What are we supposed to do? Everything is getting more expensive," Abdo said in frustration.

For many Egyptians, the economic impact is immediate and tangible. Khaled Fekry, head of the General Bakeries Division at the Federation of Egyptian Chambers of Commerce, warned that the price of unsubsidized "tourist bread" is likely to rise significantly. "Fuel price increases directly affect transportation, labor costs, and production expenses," Fekry said, adding that the price of an 80-gram loaf of the popular bread could increase by around 25 percent—a significant change for a staple consumed daily by millions of Egyptians. On Feb. 28, the United States and Israel launched strikes on Iran, prompting Iran to respond with missile and drone attacks targeting U.S. and Israeli assets across the region. The conflict quickly escalated into a broader regional crisis. The effective closure of the Strait of Hormuz, a vital energy corridor through which about 20 percent of the world's oil supply passes, has pushed global energy prices higher and raised fears of wider instability, sending economic shockwaves far beyond the battlefield.

Shockwaves from distant front

Egypt raised domestic fuel prices by between 14 percent and 17 percent across key petroleum products early Tuesday, the country's Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources said. The ministry

attributed the increase to "the exceptional situation resulting from geopolitical developments in the Middle East and their direct impact on global energy markets," noting that rising import and production costs had made the adjustment "unavoidable." The economic turbulence has also affected financial markets. Waleed Gaballah, an Egyptian economic analyst, said more than 3 billion U.S. dollars in foreign portfolio investments, commonly known as "hot money," fled the country in recent days.

The outflows contributed to a sharp depreciation of the Egyptian pound, which weakened to about 51.5 pounds per U.S. dollar on Tuesday from around 47.9 pounds before the outbreak of the conflict. The repercussions have also reached the Suez Canal, one of Egypt's most important sources of foreign currency. The waterway had begun re-



The tourism industry, another pillar of Egypt's economy, is beginning to feel the strain. After a strong recovery in 2025 driven by improved security conditions, favorable exchange rates, and the opening of the Grand Egyptian Museum, the sector had been expecting to welcome about 21 million visitors in 2026, up from 19 million the previous year.



Ships are pictured in the Gulf of Suez, Egypt, on Wednesday, March 11, 2026. | Photo: Xinhua/Ahmed Gamaa.

covering from disruptions caused by the war in Gaza and attacks on Red Sea shipping. However, the conflict involving Iran has again rattled the maritime industry. Several major shipping companies, including Maersk and CMA CGM, announced plans to reroute some vessels around the Cape of Good Hope, bypassing both the Suez Canal and the Bab El-Mandeb Strait due to rising security concerns. Osama Rabie, chairman of the Suez Canal Authority, described the shift last week as "temporary" and dependent on developments in the regional security situation.

Pressure on tourism

The tourism industry, another pillar of Egypt's economy, is beginning to feel the strain. After a strong recovery in 2025 driven by improved security conditions, favorable exchange rates, and the opening of the Grand Egyptian Museum, the sector had been expecting to welcome about 21 million visitors in 2026, up from 19 million the previous year. Now, those expectations face growing uncertainty.

Mohamed Abdelrazek, a Japanese-speaking tour guide in Cairo, said tour groups from Japan have already begun canceling or postponing trips due to disruptions at major Gulf transit hubs. "Most Asian tourists reach Egypt through Doha, Dubai, or Abu Dhabi," he explained, noting that direct EgyptAir flights from East Asia are relatively limited and expensive. Although flights in some Gulf countries are gradually resuming, concerns among travelers remain. "Restoring confidence will take time," Abdelrazek said.

Government measures

In response to the crisis, the Egyptian government has introduced a series of measures aimed at reducing public spending and conserving energy. Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly announced Monday that authorities will cancel certain government events, reduce official travel, and limit training programs to cut expenditures. Additional measures include tightening fuel consumption across sectors and accelerating the conversion of vehicles to natural

gas. President Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi also warned on Friday that individuals found manipulating prices during the crisis could face referral to military courts. He described the current economic climate as a "state of near emergency" and urged businesses not to exploit the situation. Abu Bakr Al-Deeb, an adviser at the Cairo-based Arab Center for Research and Studies, said Egypt's economy depends heavily on foreign currency inflows from tourism, the Suez Canal, and foreign investment sectors that are highly sensitive to geopolitical instability. However, he noted that Egypt has accumulated experience in managing external shocks in recent years. These include the economic fallout from disruptions to Red Sea shipping caused by Houthi attacks and the ongoing war in Gaza. "Such crises have pushed Egypt to develop response mechanisms," Al-Deeb said, particularly in securing food supplies and expanding social protection programs to shield citizens from rising inflation.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Breaking The Silence: The Unspoken Vulnerabilities Of Men

For too long, the narrative of vulnerability has been framed as a women's issue. Yet men, bound by rigid expectations of masculinity, face their own silent battles. The refusal to acknowledge these struggles has created a dangerous culture of suppression, isolation, and untreated pain.

The Pressure to be Emotionless

Society still demands that men embody strength without cracks—stoic, unyielding, and detached. This myth of invulnerability discourages emotional honesty, pushing men to bury sadness, fear, or doubt. Research shows men are less likely to seek help for mental or physical health concerns, fearing the stigma of weakness. The result is a cycle of silence that deepens internal wounds.

The Burden of Breadwinning

Equally corrosive is the expectation that men must carry financial responsibility. The breadwinner ideal piles stress onto careers and relationships, often forcing men to sacrifice balance and well-being. Burnout becomes inevitable when



identity is reduced to income.

Toxic Masculinity's Toll

Rigid norms around masculinity breed aggression, risk-taking, and substance abuse. They also erode intimacy, as men hesitate to show vulnerability in relationships. The inability to express emotions leaves many isolated, disconnected, and at higher risk of destructive outcomes.

The Consequences

The statistics are stark: men are more likely to die by suicide than women, according to the World Health Organization. Behind those numbers lie countless untold stories of men who felt they had no permis-

sion to speak their truth.

The Way Forward

Redefining masculinity means embracing compassion, balance, and vulnerability as strengths. Communities, schools, and media must normalize emotional expression and dismantle stereotypes. Men deserve spaces where honesty is not punished but celebrated.

Silence has been deadly. Breaking it may be the most radical act of strength men can make.

By Melodie Odiwuor, Laikipia University

Deadly Floods Hit Kenya

Kenya is drowning, and not just in water. In recent days, relentless rains have unleashed floods that have torn through homes, highways, and farmlands, leaving behind a trail of death and displacement. More than two dozen lives have been lost, thousands forced into makeshift shelters, and the nation's infrastructure exposed as woefully unprepared for the fury of nature.

Nairobi and other low lying regions have borne the brunt. Roads vanished under torrents, houses collapsed, and families fled in the dead of night as rivers burst their banks. The Kenya Red Cross and emergency teams have worked around the clock, pulling survivors from submerged homes and delivering food and clothing to those stranded. Yet the scale of destruction has overwhelmed even their heroic efforts.

The human cost is staggering: lost property, drowned livestock, ruined crops, and disrupted schools and markets. Flights were diverted, transport crippled, and daily life ground to a halt. The Meteorological Department warns the rains are far from over, urging residents in flood prone areas to move to higher ground.

Experts are blunt—this is not just



weather, it is climate change. Extreme rainfall events are becoming the new normal, exposing Kenya's fragile drainage systems, poor urban planning, and unchecked environmental degradation. Without urgent investment in flood control, early warning systems, and climate resilient infrastructure, the cycle of disaster will repeat.

Still, amid the wreckage, Kenyans have shown resilience. Volunteers and neighbors have rallied, prov-

ing that solidarity remains stronger than the storm. But goodwill alone cannot hold back the waters. Unless Kenya builds smarter and plans better, the next flood will not just drown homes—it will drown hope.

By Adrine Njeri Wanjiku, Laikipia University

The Concrete Jungle's Great Drowning: Why Nairobi's Infrastructure Keeps Failing The Rain Test

When the skies opened over Nairobi this March, the city didn't just get wet—it drowned. In a single weekend, 26 lives were lost, highways became rivers, and homes vanished beneath the surge. The "Green City in the Sun" once again proved that its concrete skeleton cannot withstand the rain test.

On March 6, 2026, 112mm of rain fell in 24 hours—more than the city's average for the entire month. The impact was immediate: Mombasa Road, Uhuru Highway, and Thika Superhighway collapsed into chaos, while flights at JKIA were diverted. Informal settlements like Mathare and Mukuru bore the brunt, their residents swept into despair as the Nairobi River burst its banks.

This was not simply nature's fury. Nairobi's vulnerability is man-made. The city's wetlands have been paved into oblivion, leaving rainwater nowhere to go. Drainage systems built for a million resi-



dents now strain under the weight of five million. And clogged drains, choked with plastic waste, turn every downpour into a death trap.

Governor Johnson Sakaja admits the overhaul will cost Ksh 25 billion. But the price of inaction is already being paid in lives. Riparian laws must be enforced, climate-resilient designs embraced, and early warning systems strengthened. Nai-

robi cannot afford another season of reactive disaster management.

The floods have spoken with brutal clarity: unless the city learns to live with water, it will continue to die by it.

By Benard Omurwa, Laikipia University

The Effects Of Heavy Rain

Heavy rain is both a blessing and a curse. It sustains life, feeds crops, and replenishes rivers, yet when it arrives in torrents, it can devastate communities. The paradox of rain is that what nourishes can also destroy.

Farmers know its value best. Adequate rainfall means thriving maize, beans, and vegetables, and full harvests that feed families. Rivers, lakes, and dams brim with water, powering homes and industries. Rain keeps forests alive, grasslands green, and ecosystems balanced. In short, it is nature's lifeblood.

But when skies open too wide, the consequences are severe. Floods sweep away homes, roads, and bridges, displacing families and crippling economies. Urban centers, plagued by poor drainage, grind to a halt as streets turn into rivers. Businesses stall, schools close, and daily life is thrown into chaos.

The health risks are equally alarming. Stagnant water breeds mosquitoes, fueling malaria outbreaks. Contaminated floodwaters spread cholera and typhoid, especially in areas with fragile sanitation systems. What begins as a weather event quickly becomes a public



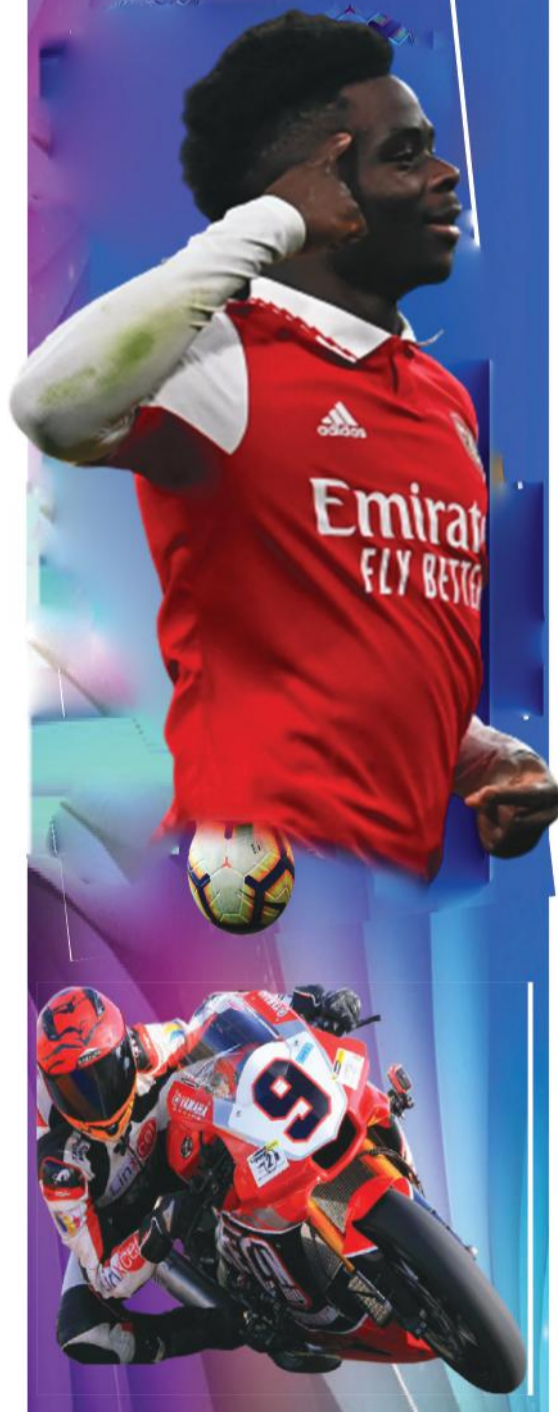
health crisis.

Solutions exist but demand foresight. Strong drainage systems, strict zoning to prevent settlement in flood-prone areas, and tree planting to absorb excess water are essential. Weather forecasting and early warning systems can save lives if communities act on them.

Rain is indispensable, but unman-

aged, it is unforgiving. The challenge is not to fear heavy rain but to prepare for it. Communities that plan ahead will not just survive the storm—they will thrive after it.

By Dorothy Wemah, Laikipia University

SPORTS
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Sports >> *Ahead of the grueling Day 2 stages of the WRC Safari Rally today, Toyota Gazoo Racing driver Oliver Solberg, who seized the overnight lead

This Year Kedong Stage Is Boring! Says Toyota's Overnight WRC Safari Rally Leader Solberg



Oliver Solberg at WRC Safari. Photo/COURTESY

Ahead of the grueling Day 2 stages of the WRC Safari Rally today, Toyota Gazoo Racing driver Oliver Solberg, who seized the overnight lead, offered a rather blunt assessment of one of the rally's most iconic tests. Solberg, fresh from mastering the rainy and muddy 24.35km Camp Moran stage where he outpaced his teammate and defending champion Elfyn Evans by nearly half a minute, described this year's Kedong stage as "very boring."

Speaking at the mixed zone yesterday evening, Solberg explained that the Kedong section, traditionally feared and revered for its punishing fesh fesh dust

and unpredictable terrain, has lost much of its character in 2026. "No no, Kedong this year is very boring rocky stage," he said. "It is the worst stage of the rally, unfortunately it's not the classic Kedong." His remarks highlighted the disappointment among drivers who often look forward to the Safari's unique blend of danger and spectacle.

Today's itinerary promises a demanding schedule, with competitors set to tackle Camp Moran 2, Loldia 1 and 2, Kengen Geothermal 1 and 2, Kedong 1 and 2, before closing with Mzabibu 2. Each stage presents its own challenges, but Kedong remains the focal point of debate.

About Kedong Stage

This year's Kedong has been reconfigured, introducing a new opening section that is particularly rough, littered with rocks, dips, and bumps. Roughly half of the stage is new, combining high-speed stretches on narrow tracks linked by junctions. Despite Solberg's criticism, the stage still retains some of its iconic features, most notably the Mbili jump. This dramatic crest launches cars high into the air, often forcing them to land sideways, a spectacle that has thrilled fans for years.

While Solberg may find the rocky terrain monotonous com-

pared to the traditional fesh fesh dust clouds that defined Kedong's reputation, the stage continues to demand precision, bravery, and endurance. For spectators, the combination of fresh sections and the famous jump ensures that Kedong remains one of the rally's most anticipated highlights, even if drivers themselves are less enthusiastic about its current form.

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *The FKF has officially launched an ambitious recruitment drive in Europe, aimed at strengthening the Harambee Stars squad ahead of the 2027 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON)

Coach McCarthy, FKF Top Brass On European Scouting Mission To Bolster Harambee Stars Ahead Of AFCON 27



Harambee Stars Head Coach Benni MacCarthy leads high delegation in scouting Kenyans abroad.

The Football Kenya Federation (FKF) has officially launched an ambitious recruitment drive in Europe, aimed at strengthening the Harambee Stars squad ahead of the 2027 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON), which Kenya will co-host alongside Uganda and Tanzania.

In a statement, FKF President Hussein Mohammed confirmed that a high-level delegation, led by vice president McDonald Mariga, is currently engaging eligible players abroad to expand the national team's talent pool.

Joining the delegation is the Harambee Stars technical bench, headed by head coach Benni McCarthy.

"These engagements are part of our wider commitment as Football Kenya Federation to build a strong, competitive squad capable of standing shoulder to shoulder with Africa's and the world's best. We are working tirelessly behind the scenes to support our team and assemble a squad that will make the nation proud," Mohammed stated.

The scouting mission has already yielded significant results, with several highly-rated players born or based in Europe and the US reportedly pledging their international future to Kenya.

Key among the new prospects is 19-year-old Andre Kenete Gitau. The FSV Mainz 05 II attack-

er, who was born in the United States, has previously represented the U.S. at the U16, U17, U18, and U20 levels. His decision to switch allegiance to Harambee Stars marks a major coup for the technical bench.

Other notable players who have committed to the Kenyan cause include Silko-Amari Thomas Otieno, the pacy Leicester City winger, the experienced Wrexham defender, Zak Vyner, Zech Obiero, Tranmere Rovers' promising midfielder and the England-born midfielder currently at Everton, Tyler Onyango.

The recruitment of dual-citizenship players is a central pillar of Coach McCarthy's strategy to

blend local talent with players exposed to elite European academies.

With Kenya set to co-host the continental showpiece in 2027, the Federation is prioritizing the integration of these players well in advance to ensure tactical cohesion.

The delegation's presence in Europe signals a proactive shift in Kenya's football administration, moving away from last-minute call-ups toward a structured, long-term scouting network.

Capital Sport

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SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



The Most Fascinating Hollywood Facts You Probably Never Knew

By: Kadrolsha Ona Carole
@themkenyatimes



Worth Noting:

- o The name “Hollywood” was coined by H. J. Whitley, who combined “holly” and “wood” to create a name he felt captured the magic of the place.
- o His vision helped transform a quiet Los Angeles neighborhood into the global symbol of entertainment we know today.
- o From 1913 to 1968, Hollywood experienced its legendary Golden Age.
- o This era saw the rise of the studio system and the emergence of icons like Humphrey Bogart and Marilyn Monroe.
- o Eventually, the system faded as New Cinema ushered in the age of the auteur—directors with bold, personal visions.

A Sign That Was Never Meant to Last

- o The iconic Hollywood Sign originally read “Hollywoodland” when it was erected in 1923.

- o It wasn’t built to celebrate cinema at all—it was a temporary real-estate advertisement for a new housing development.

The First Studio and the Birth of a Movie Empire

- o Hollywood’s transformation into a film powerhouse began early: the first movie studio opened in 1911, long before the glamour and red carpets.

- o By 1887, the area was already developing, and it eventually became home to the oldest national movie industry in the world.

How Hollywood Got Its Name

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The Golden Age: Glamour, Studios, and Stars

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“Movies” Didn’t Always Mean Films

- o Surprisingly, the word “movies” originally referred to the people who made films, not the films themselves.

- o Locals used it somewhat mockingly to describe the influx of filmmakers from the East Coast.

Wild Movie Trivia: From Oz to Superheroes

Hollywood’s history is full of quirky details, like:

- o The Wizard of Oz’s wizard has a hilariously long full name: Oscar Zoroaster Phadrig Isaac Nor-



Kadrolsha Ona Carole.

man Henkel Emmanuel Ambroise Diggs.

- o In the superhero film *Shazam!* (2019), the creepy doll Annabelle makes a cameo—because both films share the same director.

Why Hollywood’s History Still Captivates Us

Hollywood isn’t just a place—it’s a constantly evolving story. From a real-estate sign on a hill to a global cultural force, its history is filled with unexpected twists, creative

revolutions, and delightful oddities. These facts remind us that behind every blockbuster and every star lies a century of innovation, reinvention, and pure cinematic magic.

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