



Kenya secures duty-free access to China, unlocking major opportunities for agricultural exports
Kenya's agricultural exports to China will enter the Chinese market duty-free starting May 1, a move expected to significantly expand opportunities for Kenyan farmers and agribusinesses. **Page 12**



Opposition condemns arrest of Nairobi hospital directors as political storm deepens
Opposition leaders under the United Alternative coalition have strongly condemned the recent arrest of senior officials linked to Nairobi Hospital, accusing the government of attempting to interfere with the management **Page 18**

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The Mt. Kenya Times

Daily ePAPER

Russia - Ukraine war The Kenyan government told Russian authorities that enlistment of Kenyan nationals in foreign armed forces is illegal

Move to rescue Russia-Ukraine war victims



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Kenyans recruited into the Russian military operations linked to the war in Ukraine



Kenya has demanded an immediate halt to the recruitment of its citizens into Russia's military operations, with Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi urging Moscow to disengage Kenyan fighters and facilitate the safe repatriation of the injured and dead. The government estimates show at least 252 Kenyans were recruited into the Russian military operations linked to the war in Ukraine, with some believed to be former officers from Kenya's disciplined services.

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Kenya's Foreign Minister Musalia Mudavadi, left, shakes hands with Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov during a joint press conference following their talks in Moscow. Photo | Courtesy

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Leaders mourns matriarch, condemns government interference in Nairobi Hospital

BY MKT Correspondent

@themtkenyatimes

Some Of The Moments As Captured In Pictures

Kiambu Senator Karungo wa Thang'wa's mother, Mama Lucia Wangui Thang'wa, was laid to rest in Githunguri, Kiambu County, with tributes pouring in from political leaders.

DCP party leader Rigathi Gachagua described her as an "extraordinary matriarch" who served God and her community, leaving a lasting mark through her kindness and humility. He extended his condolences to the Thang'wa family, praying for strength and her eternal rest.

During the burial, Gachagua also addressed pressing political issues, condemning the alleged illegal takeover and arrests of Nairobi Hospital directors. He called on the government to respect private sector autonomy, accusing it of pressuring the hospital amid ongoing investigations and highlighting potential corruption in the Nairobi Railway contract.

Opposition leaders joined the call for transparency. Eugene Wamalwa stressed that the United Alternative's focus remains on replacing the Ruto administration while protecting private institutions. Kalonzo Musyoka warned against foreign investors undermining local businesses through illegal schemes.

The burial thus became both a solemn farewell and a platform for opposition voices advocating integrity, private sector independence, and protection of Kenyan interests.

Scores of leaders from different parts of the country attended the burial.



Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times



The Mt Kenya Times is a Kenyan Newspaper that provides a unified view of Kenyan news, entrepreneurship, events, opinions, analysis, and a historical background to current affairs in a way that is both creative and innovative. It is published by **Exponential International Limited**, a Private Limited Liability company incorporated in Kenya to provide Communications and Media services.

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NEWS IN BRIEF



Enos Njeru, chairman of KTDA Holdings, and Director Bethuel engaged farmers on the potential global economic impacts of tensions involving Iran, Israel, and the United States, highlighting effects on international trade and agriculture, and encouraged prayers for peace. They also joined community forums to offer condolences to the family of Fr. John of Orthodox Kanja on the passing of his wife, Ruth Njura, and comforted the family of the late Mr. Kithinji of Nthuhiyari Village, wishing eternal peace for both.



Esther Muoria, Principal Secretary for the State Department for Technical and Vocational Education and Training says enrollment in Technical and Vocational Education and Training institutions has risen from 297,000 to over 800,000 trainees nationwide. The government is targeting two million trainees by the end of 2026, reflecting the growing importance of technical skills in driving economic growth. Muoria noted that projects under the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda have created employment opportunities for thousands of TVET trainees, strengthening the link between skills training and job creation across the country.



Davis Chirchir, Kenya's Roads and Transport Cabinet Secretary, inspected the Kibos SGR site in Kisumu on March 16, 2026, ahead of the groundbreaking ceremony for the extension of the Standard Gauge Railway from Naivasha to Malaba. William Ruto and Yoweri Museveni are expected to preside over the ceremony on Saturday, which could attract over 20,000 people. The 369-kilometre railway extension aims to strengthen regional trade and transport links across East Africa. Chirchir said the government is ensuring logistical, security and organisational readiness for the event. The project is expected to improve movement of goods and passengers, easing reliance on trucks along the busy Northern Corridor and enhancing connectivity from the Port of Mombasa to western Kenya and neighbouring countries.



William Kabogo, Cabinet Secretary for the Ministry of Information, Communications and the Digital Economy yesterday received a briefing on the progress of the proposed amendments to the Kenya Information and Communications Act and 15 draft regulations aimed at strengthening governance and efficiency in Kenya's ICT sector. The proposed amendments seek to enhance regulatory oversight, improve coordination across the sector, and align existing laws with evolving technology and industry demands. Kabogo provided guidance and recommendations on the way forward. Officials present included ICT and Digital Economy Principal Secretary John Kipchumba Tanui, Broadcasting and Telecommunications Principal Secretary Steve Isaboke, Secretary of Information Temesi Mukani, and representatives from the Communications Authority of Kenya. The reforms aim to support digital growth, protect consumers, promote fair competition, and attract more investment into Kenya's digital economy.

Kimani Ichung'wah, Majority Leader in the National Assembly, has urged the Ministry of Education to standardize school uniforms across all levels to reduce the financial burden on parents. He highlighted that the current practice of different uniforms for junior and senior students increases costs for families. Ichung'wah also called for senior secondary schools to stop selling uniforms directly to parents, noting that some schools overprice them, further straining households already facing high school fees. The move aims to make education more affordable and equitable for all students.



About 1,500 vulnerable Muslim families in Mombasa received food donations from the Mombasa Somali Community Association to support them during the remaining days of Ramadan and the upcoming Eid al-Fitr celebrations. The distribution was held at Mbaraki Grounds in Mvita Sub-County. Treasurer Ibrahim Mohamed said the initiative aims to ease the burden on struggling families amid the high cost of living and thanked sponsors including KCB Bank, Absa Bank and Takaful Insurance. Each family received essential food supplies expected to last through the rest of Ramadan. Secretary General Abdii Diiriye said this is the programme's second edition, with plans to expand support to 3,000 families next year.

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Health Nyeri county governor, Dr Mutahi Kahiga, presided over the signing of the MoU

Nyeri county, Outspan Global University sign MoU to boost Clinical training for Health students

BY WMW

@themkenyaintimes

The County Government of Nyeri has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Outspan Global University establishing multiple avenues for collaboration.

Nyeri county governor, Dr Mutahi Kahiga, presided over the signing of the MoU between his government and the institution, paving the way for students to undertake clinical placements and practical training across county health facilities.

The agreement is expected to strengthen hands-on medical training by allowing students to gain real-world experience under the mentorship of healthcare professionals in public health facilities.

The governor said the partnership will help nurture

skilled healthcare workers while improving the future of healthcare services in the region.

Representing the university at the signing ceremony which took place at the governor's office were Chairman Dr. G. M. Kiruhi, Vice Chancellor Prof. Paul Mungai Mbugua, Deputy Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Research Dr. Lydia Muthoni, Deputy Vice Chancellor for Planning, Administration and Finance David Macharia, and Dean of Students Silas Muguongo.

The partnership comes just four days after Commission for University Education (CUE) granted the institution a Letter of Interim Authority, allowing it to begin offering university-level education in Kenya.

The milestone was marked during a ceremony held at the university's main campus on



County and university officials after the signing ceremony yesterday. | Photo: Courtesy

the outskirts of Nyeri town, presided over by Agriculture and Livestock Development Cabinet Secretary Mutahi Kagwe.

The Letter of Interim Authority confirms that the institution has met the basic requirements set by the national university regulator to operate as a university.

With the approval, Outspan Global University becomes the 84th university in Kenya, reflecting continued expansion of the country's higher education sector.

University officials said the recognition supports their vision of establishing an institution focused on addressing emerging healthcare needs



From left: University founder Dr Macharia Kiruhi, CS Mutahi Kagwe and CUE CEO Mike Kuria last Wednesday.

while producing professionals capable of serving both local and global communities.

The university builds on more than two decades of healthcare delivery and training through the well-known Outspan Hospital.

CUE Chief Executive Officer

Mike Kuria said the interim authority marks an important step toward full accreditation, noting that universities must continue developing academic capacity, infrastructure and governance structures to meet regulatory standards.



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PUBLIC NOTICE

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO.1 OF 2023 ORGANIZATION OF GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA

Reference is made to Executive Order No. 1 of 2023 on the Organization of the Government of the Republic of Kenya, the Certificate of Registration No. 520 of 1956, and the report of the meeting held between the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of State for National Heritage, and the members of the Mau Mau War Veterans Association at KNADS Conference Room on Thursday, 31st May 2007.

The Mau Mau organization operates under three main departments, namely:

1. Kenya National Archives and Documentation Service
2. National Museums of Kenya
3. NGO Coordination Board

The Mau Mau movement was officially inaugurated on 30th December 2003 by the late Hon Mwai Kibaki, C.G.H.

Following the general election and swearing in held on 13th September 2022, Hon William Samoei Ruto, PhD, C.G.H. automatically became Patron No. 1 of

the Mau Mau Veterans and Associates. Hon Rigathi Gachagua, E.G.H. serves as Patron No. 2, Hon Musalia Mudavadi as Patron No. 3, and Hon Kithure Kindiki, E.G.H. as Patron No. 4, in accordance with the Public Benefit Organizations Act No. 18 of 2013 and the National Administration Villages Policy 2024.

The Mau Mau Veterans Associates hereby notify the public that the Annual General Meeting, elections, and compensation will be the main agenda items and will be held as follows:

Venue: Kakamega Golf Club
Date: 22nd -28th March 2027 Registration

For more information, contact:

1. Bungoma county-Arapmwok psongoywa psambu, 0722373859
2. Kakamega county-Grace Nasimiyu Molenje, 0720531444
3. Vihiga county- Jairus orange kivuli, 0746761933
4. Kisumu County - Judith Adhiambo Otieno, 0720644145

5. Siaya County - Abubakar Odour, 0740100957
6. Homabay County - Dan Agua, 0721691996
7. Migori county - Joseph Onyango Opiyo, 0728365662
8. Nyandarua County - John Ngumo Murere, 0727939506
9. Nairobi County - Charles Evans Okumu, 0720644819
10. Joyce Ndirangu- 0726 880 248
11. Emmah Kasis- 0722 138 349

International observers, members of the media, Public Benefit Organizations, the Regulatory Authority, and Maumau Veterans are invited to attend.

James Mahuria Njuguna,
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Faith The group led by Muthumbi Mwangi and Kamau Kirigi refuted claims that they have mutilating their female members including school-going children

Mihiriga Kenda group refute FGM allegations, agitate for freedom of worship

They spoke after authorities raided their shrine in Juja, Kiambu County on Saturday, on suspicions that the group is a criminal sect and has been perpetrating the outlawed practice. Several members of the organization were arrested.

BY John Kamau
@themkenyetimes

Members of Mihiriga Kenda-a traditional organization based in Juja-have rebuffed allegations of conducting and perpetrating female genital mutilation (FGM) that was illegalized by the government.

The group led by Muthumbi Mwangi and Kamau Kirigi refuted claims that they have mutilating their female members including school-going children, noting that it is a fallacy that has been peddled for long to tarnish and discredit the group.

They spoke after authorities raided their shrine in Juja, Kiambu County on Saturday, on suspicions that the group is a criminal sect and has been perpetrating the outlawed practice. Several members of the organization were arrested.

"We do not engage, promote or condone female genital mutilation because it is a criminal offence. We emphasize that anyone who commit this crime must be investigated and held personally accountable by the law," Kirigi said.

He noted that there have been relentless efforts to malign the group through false allegations which has driven a wedge between its members and other members of the community.

They also took issue with the authorities, especially a local chief, who allegedly forcibly subjected a



Kamau Kirigi and other members of Mihiriga Kenda group speaking to journalists in Juja, Kiambu County.

minor to an invasive genital inspection, to ascertain whether she has been subjected to FGM. The girl was later examined in a health facility and confirmed that she is not a victim.

"This act violated the law, degraded the child and infringed on her constitutional rights, bodily integrity and dignity as guaranteed in our constitution. No child should ever endure such treatment and no circumstances justify this abuse," Kirigi said.

The group also refuted claims that they have been operating as a criminal sect with affiliations with the outlawed Mungiki sect. They noted that they are duly registered with the Registrar of Societies under the name Wicarie Society and that they engage in lawful activities including cultural, educational and spiritual work.

"We are a peaceful organization dedicated to preserving Agikuyu cultural and spiritual heritage. We do not coerce, radicalize or force anyone to participate. This blanket condemnation of cultural or spiritual organizations is unjust," Mwangi said.

He added, "We are an open organization and invite the public to join and participate in our cultural and spiritual activities, learn about our traditions and experience the values and heritage of the Agikuyu people firsthand."

"This act violated the law, degraded the child and infringed on her constitutional rights, bodily integrity and dignity as guaranteed in our constitution. No child should ever endure such treatment and no circumstances justify this abuse," Kirigi said.

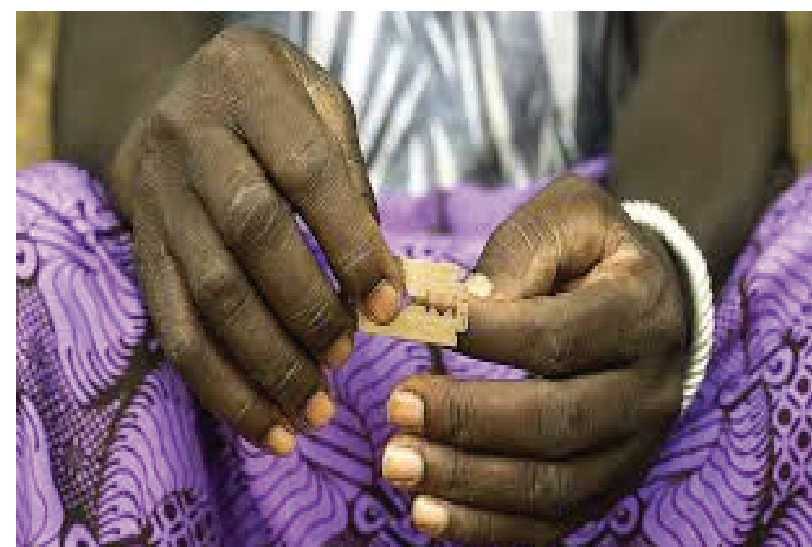
They called on the government to ensure that justice is served and that they be granted their constitutional rights to freedom of worship, culture and association. They noted that repeated raids on their shrines and premises have undermined their freedom to worship and associate.

"The truth will prevail and our organization will continue its mission of cultural preservation and lawful community service," said Wanjiru

Kiarie, a member.

Earlier, Juja MP George Koimmburi spoke to the group at Juja police station where he demanded immediate release of those in custody arguing that none was found engaging in any illegal activity.

He censured the authorities for infringing on the group's rights to associate and worship despite being a legally-acknowledged group.



Russia - Ukraine The government estimates show at least 252 Kenyans were recruited into the Russian military operations linked to the war in Ukraine

Kenya moves to rescue nationals in Russia - Ukraine war

Mudavadi raised the issue during bilateral consultations in Moscow with Russian Foreign Affairs Minister Sergey Lavrov, describing the welfare of Kenyans recruited into Russia's Special Military Operations as an urgent diplomatic concern.

BY Suleiman Mbatiah
@themkenyatimes

Kenya has demanded an immediate halt to the recruitment of its citizens into Russia's military operations, with Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi urging Moscow to disengage Kenyan fighters and facilitate the safe repatriation of the injured and dead.

The government estimates show at least 252 Kenyans were recruited into the Russian military operations linked to the war in Ukraine, with some believed to be former officers from Kenya's disciplined services.

Mudavadi raised the issue during bilateral consultations in Moscow with Russian Foreign Affairs Minister Sergey Lavrov, describing the welfare of Kenyans recruited into Russia's Special Military Operations as an urgent diplomatic concern.

The Kenyan government told Russian authorities that enlistment of Kenyan nationals in foreign armed forces is illegal under Section 68 of the Penal Code unless authorized by the President.

Officials indicated that those recruited include former members of the Kenya Defence Forces, National Police Service, National Youth Service and the Kenya Prisons Service.

Mudavadi urged Moscow to halt the recruitment of Kenyans into the operations and facilitate the safe disengagement and repatriation of those currently deployed, particularly those injured or killed in the conflict.

"Kenya has requested the immediate halt of recruitment of our nation-

als into the Russian Special Military Operations and called for disengagement of those currently serving, with safe repatriation of the injured and dignified return of the deceased," Mudavadi said.

According to Kenya's diplomatic mission in Moscow, forty four Kenyans who had been recruited into Russia's military operations have already been repatriated back home as diplomatic efforts intensify to secure the return of others still involved.

Thirty eight Kenyans are currently hospitalised in various Russian medical facilities with restricted consular access after sustaining injuries while participating in the ongoing military operations linked to the Russia Ukraine conflict.

Authorities have also confirmed that ten Kenyan nationals have been reported missing in action or killed in action, with the government seeking details of their next of kin to facilitate compensation.

Meanwhile, about one hundred and sixty Kenyan nationals are believed to still be actively involved in Russia's Special Military Operations, raising growing concern within the Kenyan government over their safety, legal status and eventual disengagement.

“

“Kenya has requested the immediate halt of recruitment of our nationals into the Russian Special Military Operations and called for disengagement of those currently serving, with safe repatriation of the injured and dignified return of the deceased,” Mudavadi said.



Foreign Affairs Minister Musalia Mudavadi and his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov in Moscow, Russia. | Photo: PCS

Mudavadi also asked the Russian government to grant Kenyan officials consular access to nationals in hospitals and civilian facilities to support evacuation, treatment coordination and their eventual repatriation back home.

The Russian authorities agreed to facilitate consular access to injured Kenyans and support the repatriation of the wounded as well as the dignified return of the remains of those killed in the conflict.

"We have agreed to place Kenya on the stop list for recruitment into the Special Military Operations and will cooperate with the Kenyan government on disengagement and compensation procedures," Lavrov said.

The Russian government also committed to begin information sharing with Kenya to help curb human trafficking and smuggling networks suspected of facilitating the recruitment of Kenyans into the conflict.

Mudavadi further asked Moscow to explore possible arrangements for two Kenyans identified as prisoners of war in Ukraine to be transferred to Russia to facilitate their eventual repatriation to Kenya.



Training Participants examined policy gaps and explored opportunities to strengthen CPD using innovative, technology-enabled delivery models.

Kenya advances teacher development with innovative App-based training

The workshop, held last week brought together education policymakers, teacher trainers, and school leaders to critically review the state of teacher education and training in Kenya.

BY MKT Correspondent

[@themtkenyatimes](#)

The Kenya Education Management Institute (KEMI), in partnership with VVOB, successfully concluded a five-day workshop on the INCREASE Programme and the Effective School Leadership for Junior Schools (ESL4JS) course at the Chaka Hotel, Machakos. The workshop, held last

week brought together education policymakers, teacher trainers, and school leaders to critically review the state of teacher education and training in Kenya.

Participants examined policy gaps and explored opportunities to strengthen Continuous Professional Development (CPD) using innovative, technology-enabled delivery models.

A key focus of the workshop was aligning all chapters of the draft Teacher Education and Training Policy with existing national education policies, legal frameworks, and regional commitments.

Organizers emphasized integrating an app-based blended CPD approach to enhance professional teacher develop-

ment across the country.

“The INCREASE programme and ESL4JS course provide a strategic pathway for building the capacity of school leaders and teachers,” said a KEMI representative. “By combining technology with proven training methods, we can improve teacher efficacy, leadership practice, and ultimately, student outcomes.”

The workshop also showcased lessons learned from three ESL4JS pilot cohorts, highlighting significant improvements in teacher leadership, management, and instructional skills. Monitoring and evaluation data, alongside real-life success stories, informed policy recommendations to embed a blended



Some of the stakeholders in a group photo.

CPD framework into Kenya’s national teacher development strategy.

The INCREASE Programme, a five-year initiative developed by VVOB in Kenya and KEMI, supports the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC)

at the Junior School level. ESL4JS serves as the flagship course under this initiative, targeting school leaders to strengthen their skills and drive system-wide impact.

Stakeholders at the workshop affirmed that integrating innovative, evidence-based,

and scalable training models is critical for sustaining quality education in Kenya and ensuring that teachers and school leaders are equipped to meet evolving classroom and leadership demands.




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Politics Mararo engagements included a visit at Karatina Market where he interacted with traders and listened to their experiences running businesses

Nick Mararo eyes Nyeri Senate seat, steps up grassroots engagement across the county

The traders shared the practical challenges they face and opportunities they see for growth.

BY MKT REPORTER
@themkenyatiimes

Nick Mararo, the Chief Executive Officer of Lipa Likes, has signaled his intention to contest for the senatorial seat in Nyeri County, even as he steps up grassroots engagements with residents across the county.

Over the weekend, Mararo met traders, church leaders, youth groups and transport operators in various locations, holding discussions on economic opportunities, community development and policies that support local enterprise.

His engagements included a visit at Karatina Market where he interacted with traders and listened to their experiences running businesses that serve the local community.

The traders shared the practical challenges they face and opportunities they see for growth.

Mararo said such conversations provide important insights for shaping policies that improve market infrastructure and create a more reliable environment for small businesses to thrive.

He attended Mass at St. Patrick Kyanyange Church the church where he grew up in Ganerock area near Nyeri town, describing the visit as a moment of reflection on the values that have shaped his life. During the visit, he also joined his mother and other congregants in a fundraiser to support church activities.

Mararo also paid a courtesy call to Father Dr. Mukundi at Giakaibei Catholic Church where he met members of the Catholic Women Association preparing for an upcoming convocation. He commended the group's commitment to



Nick Mararo engaging with market traders. | Photo: Courtesy.

service and noted that faith institutions continue to play an important role in strengthening communities.

Over the weekend, Mararo met traders, church leaders, youth groups and transport operators in various locations, holding discussions on economic opportunities, community development and policies that support local enterprise.



Nick Mararo during a fundraising ceremony at Gamerock on Sunday.

During the visit, he observed subsistence farming initiatives being undertaken by church leadership, noting that such efforts contribute to food production and strengthen local resilience.

In Kieni, Mararo spent time with members of Joy Uniter Sacco in Mbiriri, where discussions focused on scaling community businesses and strengthening cooperative institutions through improved access to credit and supportive policies.

He also met Fikisha Cab Operators in Nyeri Town to discuss improving safety and professionalism in the transport sector. Among the ideas explored were first-on-scene medical response training, defensive driving skills and stronger advocacy against gender-based violence.

Mararo also had an engagement with youth in Kieni, emphasizing the importance of listening to young people's aspirations and challenges in shaping practical solutions for the future.

Through initiatives under Lipalikes, he also highlighted ongoing programmes focused on youth empowerment through business and sports development.

Trade The removal of tariffs is part of broader efforts to deepen agricultural trade and improve market access for Kenyan products.

Kenya secures duty-free access to China, unlocking major opportunities for agricultural exports

The zero-tariff arrangement is expected to enhance the competitiveness of Kenyan agricultural commodities in China's market of over 1.4 billion consumers.

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

Kenya's agricultural exports to China will enter the Chinese market duty-free starting May 1, a move expected to significantly expand opportu-



Cabinet Secretary Mutahi Kagwe with Chinese Ambassador to Kenya Guo Haiyan | Photo: Courtesy.

nities for Kenyan farmers and agribusinesses.

Cabinet Secretary for Agriculture and Livestock Development Mutahi Kagwe announced the development following a meeting with Chinese Ambassador to Kenya Guo Haiyan, noting that it marks the implementation of trade agreements reached during President William Ruto's state visit to China.

The removal of tariffs is part of broader efforts to deepen agricultural trade and improve market access for Kenyan products.

Previously, key exports faced import duties that ranged widely: tea and coffee between 6 and 15 percent, macadamia nuts 10 to 15 percent, fresh horticultural produce and vegetables 10 to 25 percent, and cut flowers around 4 percent.

The zero-tariff arrangement is expected to enhance the competitiveness of Kenyan agricultural commodities in China's market of over 1.4 billion consumers.

Among the products set to benefit are tea, coffee, fresh and frozen avocados, macadamia nuts, cut flowers, fresh horticultural produce, vegetables, herbs, and other agricultural commodities. Ambassador Guo highlighted that Kenya is already an important agricultural exporter to China, citing 2025 export figures: coffee and tea exports reached USD 24.46 million, accounting for 10.8 percent of Kenya's agricultural exports to China, while avocados and macadamia nuts totaled USD 19.9 million, also representing 8.8 percent of total agricultural exports, reflecting year-on-year growth.

Under the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) framework, China has pledged to expand agricultural cooperation with Kenya by supporting market access, strengthening value chains, and enhancing technical cooperation and capacity building. CS Kagwe urged Kenyan exporters to leverage the new access by boosting production, focusing on value-added products, and partnering with Chinese firms to establish agro-processing industries locally. Such initiatives aim to transition Kenya from exporting raw commodities to processed goods, creating jobs and increasing farmer incomes.

The Cabinet Secretary stressed the need for strict adherence to quality standards, urging the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS) to ensure Kenyan exports meet Chinese phytosanitary requirements. He also highlighted potential collaboration in technology transfer and agricultural training, including internships for students from the Kenya School of Agriculture.

KEPHIS CEO Prof. Theophilus Mutui, who oversees export certification and compliance, participated in the meeting. CS Kagwe emphasized that duty-free access to China could mark a turning point for Kenya's agricultural sector, opening one of the world's largest consumer markets and strengthening Nairobi-Beijing economic cooperation.

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Tragedy According to the Kenya Red Cross, initial reports indicate that 10 people were inside the building when the structure came down.

Two hospitalised, six missing after Shauri Moyo building Collapse

BY Davis Ayega
@themkenyaintimes

Six people remain unaccounted for after a building collapsed in Blue Estate in Shauri Moyo on Monday, with rescue teams racing against time to search through the rubble. According to the Kenya Red Cross, initial reports indicate that 10 people were inside the building when the structure came down. Two of them managed to escape by jumping out moments before the collapse. “Initial reports indicate that 10 people were inside the building at the time of the collapse. Two managed to escape by jumping out,” the Red Cross said in an update. Rescue teams later pulled out two more people from the debris and rushed them to Kenyatta National

Hospital for treatment. “Two people have been rescued and taken to Kenyatta National Hospital for medical attention. Six people remain unaccounted for,” the humanitarian agency said. Emergency responders, including volunteers from the Red Cross Action Team, have been providing first aid at the scene as search and rescue operations continue. “First aid has been provided at the scene by RCAT volunteers as search and rescue efforts continue,” the Red Cross added. The Ministry of Interior and National Administration said the building collapsed following an attempted demolition earlier in the day. The structure is among those located along the Nairobi River riparian corridor and had been earmarked for removal under the Nairobi Rivers Commission’s river regeneration

programme. “The Kenya Defence Forces, National Police Service, National Government Administrative Officers and the Kenya Red Cross have been rapidly deployed to the scene and search and rescue operations are currently underway,” the ministry said in a statement. Simon Osumba, the Nairobi North County Commissioner, said authorities are closely monitoring the situation as rescue teams continue their work. “The Office of the County Commissioner, Nairobi North, is actively monitoring the situation and will provide updates as rescue and assessment operations progress,” Osumba said. He urged members of the public to stay away from the site to allow rescue teams to work without interference.

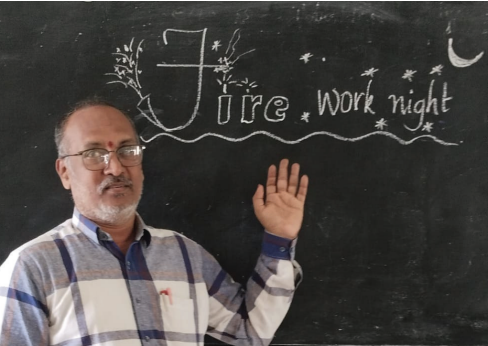


Shauri Moyo building collapse.

“Members of the public are strongly urged to stay clear of the affected area to allow emergency teams to operate without obstruction,” he added.



If you see a ghost



All of a sudden you are in trouble
It makes you think but you are in wobble.

You try to shout for help
But your voice wouldn't come out.

You try to run away from there
But your legs are not cooperating fairly.

Your hopes and efforts all in vain
A sudden jerk wakes you up .

You think about the blur image
And you come out from your dream.

Rajesh Kanna B N

RAJESH KANNA.B N
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GMHSCHOOL,
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Creative Writers.

Dear feelings



Don't love anyone who can't love you

stop chasing hearts that don't know how to love
They are cruel, not kind
they won't see your worth,
They don't understand the true feelings

Don't waste your tears, they're not worth for it
they are the curse on this earth.
They are mere shadows,
They go invisible in the dark,

They only deserve smiles, not your genuine love
Don't shed tears for them
keep that love and feelings inside,
Save it for those who'll love you truly,

you deserve to be loved with pure heart
They don't deserve your precious time and pain,
So stop falling for them,
break the chain for them

Keep your heart safe, don't let it break
Love yourself first, that's where true love
emerges.

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

I Am Unique



I am unique, I am the one,
The only one like me, under the sun.
Seven people alike, they may say,
But a person like me, comes only once this way.

Ties may try to bind, but I'll break free,
Tears can't melt me, nor anger shatter me.

Apologies won't come easy, I won't pretend,
I'll stand my ground, my values I'll defend.

I dance with colours, a vibrant hue,
Combined yet distinct, like morning dew.
I face the blues, but I'm not defined,
Compared to none, I'm one of a kind.

You can't touch me, you can't ignore,
My presence is felt, forever more.
That's my superpower, don't you see,
I'm uniquely me, empowered and free.

RAJITHA D
BT Assistant (English)
GGHSS PADAPPAI
KANCHIPURAM
TAMILNADU
INDIA

Air – The Soul of Life



Air is the life of every soul,
It flows gently through our nose.
We breathe in the gift of oxygen,
And breathe out carbon dioxide again.

Air plays a silent hero's role,

Giving life to every living soul.
The earth is the mother of the world,
And air is the spirit that makes it alive.

Water, air, and earth are our friends,
They protect our life till the end.
Without these treasures how can we live?
Nature is the greatest gift to give.

Save the air, save the water, save the earth,
They are the roots of human birth.
If we protect these three with care,
Our life will bloom everywhere.

_ Written by
G. YASMINSIRAJUDHEEN
SECONDARY GRADE TEACHER
MELMALAYANUR BLOCK
VILLUPURAM DT

Delayed by time lost by choice



The trouble is, you think you have time.
Life is meant to be lived in this very moment.
Don't always think, "I can do it later."
Sometimes, when you realize you missed it,
regret becomes your only companion —
and by then, it is of no use.
Playing with your children is the best time of all.

When they grow up,
they begin to live their own life — not yours.
So enjoy every moment now.
There are no second chances for childhood.
Do what you need to do —
do it now.

Don't postpone it.
Some days never return,
just like our childhood.
If you want to change something,
start today.
Don't push it to another day.

In relationships,
if you want to say sorry — say it.
If you want to show love — express it.
Once time expires,
words lose their meaning.
The beginning should come from you,
not from "later,"
not from someone else.
Don't think of doing it later —
do it now.

If you want to help someone,
help them when they need it.
After their need has passed,
help becomes meaningless.
Timely help matters.
Timely love matters.
Timely words matter.
Because delay often turns into silence,
and silence slowly becomes ignorance.
And once ignored,
even the most sincere heart
cannot be heard again.

BY
ZAHETHA R
BT ASST
GHS PAPPANTHANGAL
TVM DIST

Life



Life is not about what we live,
but about what we do.
Life is not only about money,
it is also about character.

Life is not only about success,
but about what we learn from failure.

Life will not give success on a silver plate,
but it gives infinite opportunities.
We should use them in the proper way
and have the courage to face challenges.

Time is precious in life.
If we waste it, many problems may come.
So make good use of it.

V. S. NITHIYASRI
VII
JOHN DEWEY MATRIC HIGHER SECONDARY
SCHOOL.

Housing “I challenge my critics to tell Kenyans the plans they have if they are, indeed, intelligent people,” President Ruto said.

Ruto launches Ksh5.5bn Nasewa housing project as Western Kenya development tour kicks off

BY MKT REPORTER
@themtkenyaintimes

President William Ruto began a five-day development tour of the Western Kenya region by inspecting projects in Busia, Kakamega, and Vihiga counties.

The President arrived in Kakamega County on Sunday evening and inspected the ongoing rehabilitation and expansion works at Kakamega Airstrip.

He said upgrading the airstrip is expected to enhance regional air connectivity and spur economic growth in the region.

Yesterday, he launched the construction of the 13km Nangina-Sio Port-Okados-Mundere road in Budalang'i, Busia County, a KSh860 million project that will link Funyula and Budalang'i constituencies and unlock trade and econom-

ic activity across the region.

He also laid the foundation stone for the Budalang'i Modern Market, a KSh130 million investment.

Later, the President launched construction of the KSh5.5 billion Nasewa Affordable Housing Project in Busia County.

The 2,000-unit housing development will complement the Nasewa County Aggregation and Industrial Park, creating employment opportunities for the youth.

Still in Busia County, the President launched the construction of the KSh545 million 13km Matayos-Namwitsula Bridge-Nawesa CAIP-Shibale road, a key infrastructure project that will improve connectivity in the region.

At Nderema village in Mumias East Constituency, Kakamega, President Ruto launched a Last Mile Electricity Connectivity project,

which will take electricity to 161 homes at cost of KSh12.7 million.

He explained that the government is investing KSh2.37 billion to connect more than 36,700 households to power in Kakamega County, empowering families and unlocking new opportunities.

The President also laid the foundation stone for the KSh270 Malaha Modern Market, one of 24 such projects being implemented in Kakamega County at a cost of over KSh4.4 billion.

In Vihiga County, he launched the rehabilitation works of the 11km Chavaki-Lusiola and Shikumu-Malinya roads at a cost of KSh953 million in Sabatia Constituency.

Still in Kakamega County, the President broke ground for the rehabilitation and solarisation of the Shitoli Water Project in Ikolomani Constituency.

The KSh212 million project

is being implemented by the Lake Victoria Water Works Development Agency and will provide reliable and sustainable water supply to more than 45,000 residents, improving access to clean water and supporting livelihoods.

At the same time, President Ruto told leaders to stop cheap politics and focus on issues facing Kenyans. He told his competitors to present their alternative plans to Kenyans instead of just mere politicking and insults.

“I challenge my critics to tell Kenyans the plans they have if they are, indeed, intelligent people,” President Ruto said.

He pointed out that his critics have questionable track records, noting that this was why they were engaging in rhetoric.

“When they had the opportunity to serve, they failed the people by abusing power and undermining the very human rights they now claim to de-

fend. We shall neither be distracted nor deterred,” he said.

The President said Kenyans can differentiate between development conscious leaders and political theatre.

“The people of Kenya are not foolish. They can see through the empty sloganeering of our competitors. When the time comes, they will deliver their verdict on who truly has a better track record,” he pointed out.

He noted national transformation has been delayed and slowed down by leaders without vision, saying that era was now behind us.

“Today, we are moving the country forward with deliberate investments in critical sectors, ensuring that no part of our nation is left behind,” he explained.

The President pointed out that the government has a clear and demonstrable track record in delivering housing, health, education, roads, and

other critical infrastructure.

“Across the country, we are transforming the delivery of development to the people of Kenya, ensuring that progress reaches every sector and every community, leaving no one behind. Our plan is credible, practical, and proven through decisive action,” he said.

President Ruto said Kenya has no room for the politics of ethnicity, name calling, insults and exclusion, and expressed satisfaction that Kenyans have rejected division, hatred, and empty rhetoric.

“Kenyans want leaders who can explain to them the plans, and the agenda they have for them. Sloganeering cannot change their lives,” he said.

Governors Paul Otuoma (Busia), Fernandez Baraza (Kakamega) and Wilberforce Otichilo (Vihiga) said the investments in housing and modern markets have transformed lives of the residents of the region and Kenyans in general.

Cabinet Secretaries Wycliffe Oparanya (Cooperatives and MSMES) and Alice Wahome (Lands and Housing), MPs and other leaders accompanied the President.



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Tech Today, over 60 million people in Kenya, across Africa, and beyond use the service monthly, according to Safaricom.

From servers to smartphones: How China accelerates Kenya’s M-Pesa success story

BY Xinhua News Agency
@themkenyatomes

M-Pesa, Kenya’s premier mobile money platform, stands as one of the most remarkable stories of innovation born out of Africa. Launched in 2007 by Safaricom and UK-based telecom company Vodafone, M-Pesa has evolved from a simple mobile money transfer platform into a comprehensive service that empowers millions to access banking, credit, and digital payments worldwide. Today, over 60 million people in Kenya, across Africa, and beyond use the service monthly, according to Safaricom.

At the center of this transformation lies not just the ingenuity of Safaricom and Vodafone, but also the critical support of Chinese technology, expertise, and devices. Safaricom selected Chinese technology firm Huawei to upgrade its mobile money payment system. Through its partnership with Safaricom and Vodafone, Huawei expanded M-Pesa’s service capabilities. The company’s experts supported infrastructure enhancements that enabled the system to handle massive transaction volumes and introduce new services, including real-time bill payments.

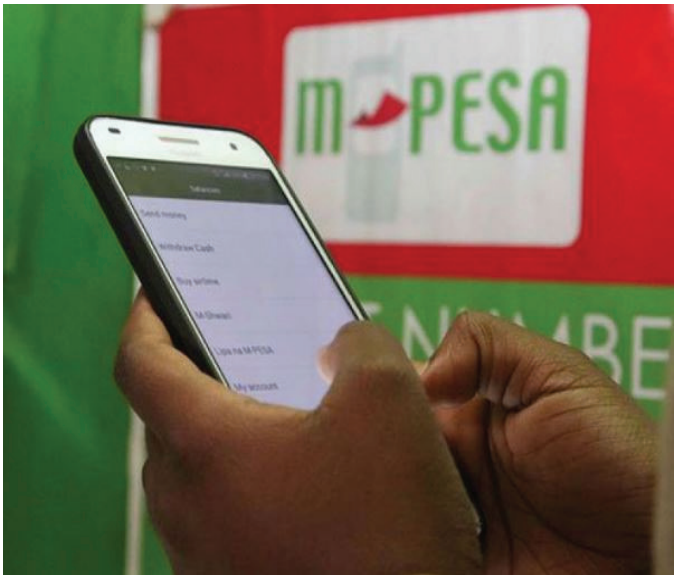
A long-running partnership between Safaricom and Huawei saw the Chinese tech giant assist in relocating M-Pesa’s servers from Germany to Kenya in 2015. Bernard Mwaso, a Nairobi-based IT consultant, told Xinhua that moving the servers to Kenya was a pivotal step that stabilized the platform and accelerated its growth. “The challenge with having servers in a different jurisdiction is that it takes longer to deal with issues like downtime if they arise. This degrades the customer experience,” he said. He observed



Pedestrians walk past a Safaricom shop along Kenyatta Avenue in Nairobi. | Photo: Xinhua/John Okoyo.

that M-Pesa blossomed after the server migration, racking up more subscribers as it diversified into banking services, real-time bill payments, and global transfers. “You cannot deny the fact that the Chinese have had a huge impact on the success of M-Pesa. This is not only because of the expertise they offer but also the mobile devices that Kenyans use,” Mwaso noted in a recent interview. Across the capital Nairobi, Chinese-made smartphones rule the roost. A visit to various shops revealed that popular budget brands, including Infinix, Tecno, Itel, and Xiao-

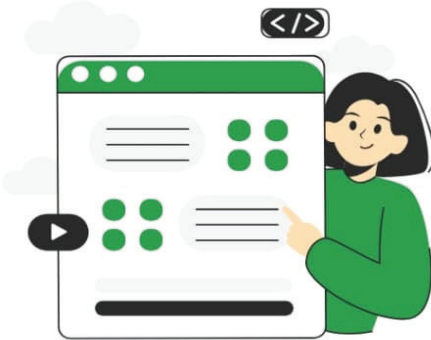
mi, retail for as low as 4,000 shillings (about 30.9 U.S. dollars) despite their impressive versatility. These affordable devices have enabled millions of Kenyans to own smartphones, facilitating access to various digital services such as online shopping and banking, which in turn fuels the growth of M-Pesa. “I own an Oppo phone that I bought for 92.8 dollars. I use it for online shopping, doing online freelance jobs, and taking loans from mobile apps. The money from the latter two comes directly into my M-Pesa wallet,” Beatrice Ngwiri, a graphic designer in Nairobi, told



Xinhua. In his book, “Silicon Elsewhere: Nairobi, Global China and the Promise of Techno-Capital,” Andrea Pollio, an Italian researcher and professor, notes that while M-Pesa’s success depended on “financial infrastructures that were used to collateralize mobile money” and thousands of agent kiosks, the affordability of Chinese devices has been critical. These smartphones facilitated the growth of “lending wallets, pay-go kits, and gig-work platforms.” M-Pesa’s transition into a global digital payment network has also been shaped by collaborations with Chinese digital payment platforms such as Alipay and WeChat Pay, which have expanded its reach into international e-commerce and cross-border transactions. These partnerships have helped customers easily shop online by eliminating the need for complex foreign exchange conversions, thereby solidifying M-Pesa’s international payment capabilities. Mwaso observed that integrating M-Pesa with established global networks has ensured secure, regulated, and trustworthy transactions. “With these partnerships, Kenyan consumers and businesses can participate in global e-commerce without needing credit cards or complex banking arrangements. Freelancers can also work for firms in China and other parts of the world and get paid with ease,” he said.



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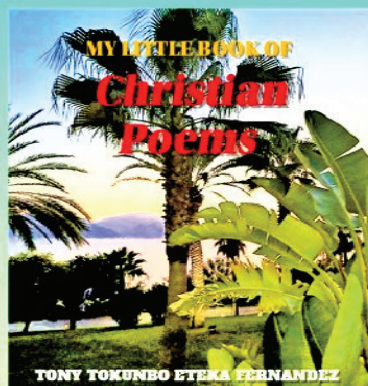
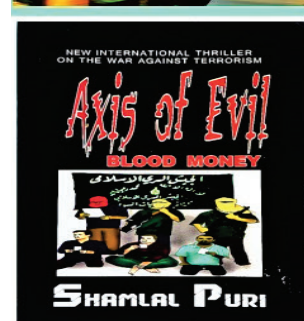
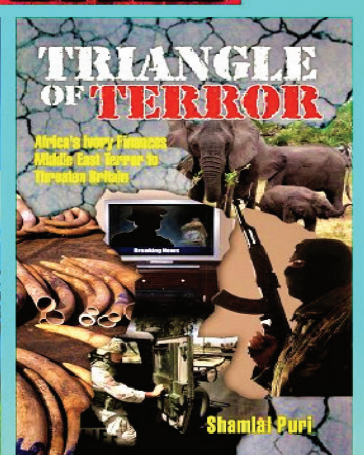
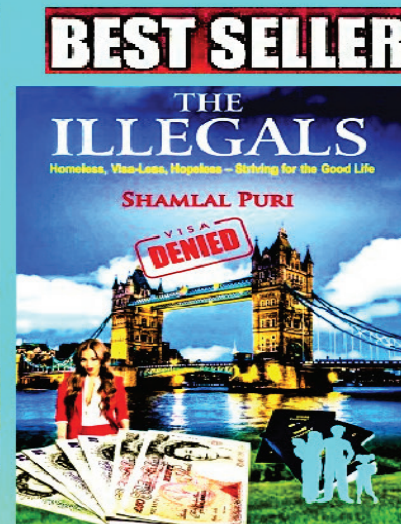
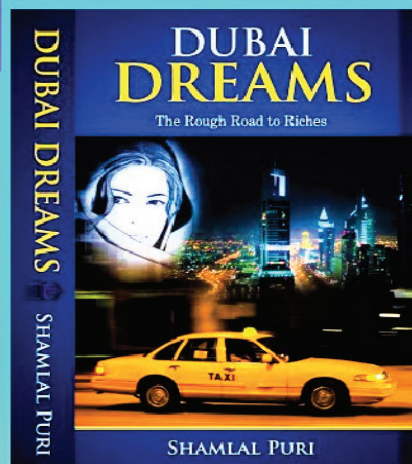
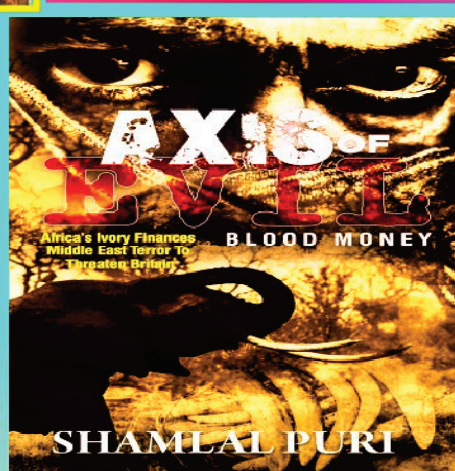
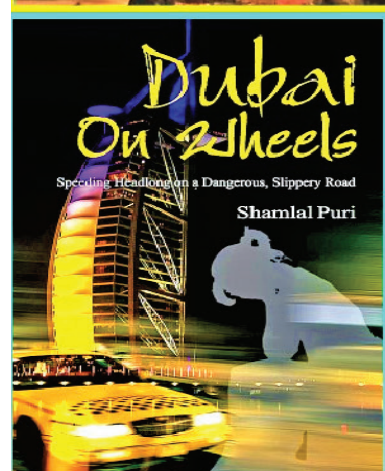
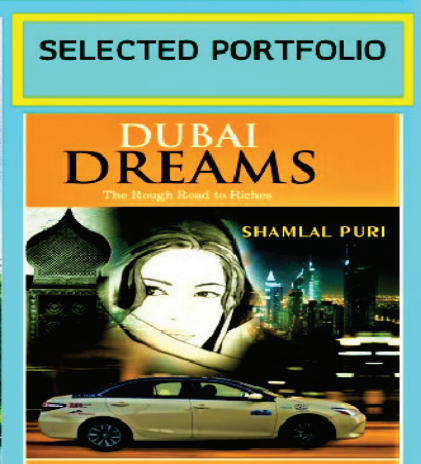
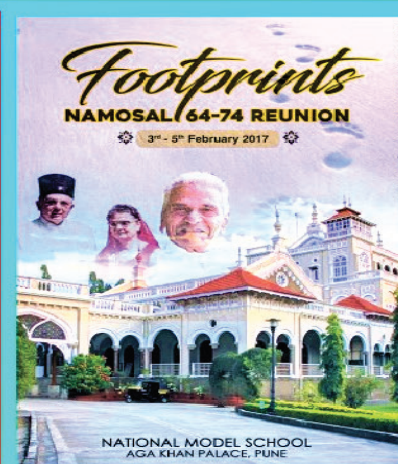
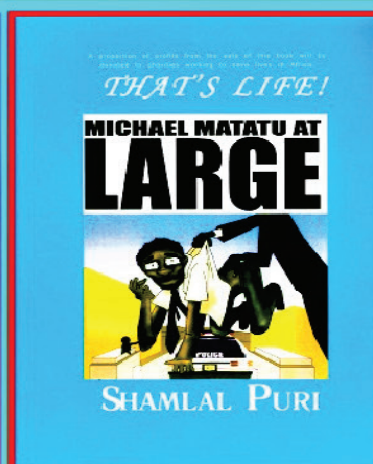
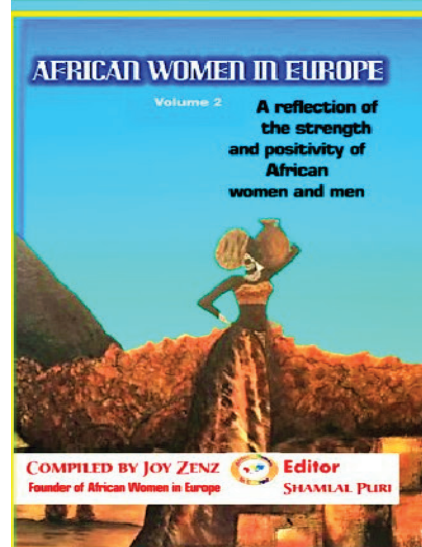
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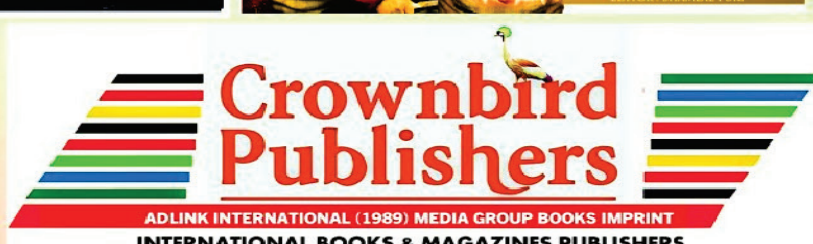
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Politics Opposition leaders under the United Alternative coalition have strongly condemned the recent arrest of senior officials linked to Nairobi Hospital

Opposition condemns arrest of Nairobi hospital directors as political storm deepens

BY MKT Correspondents

@themkenyatimes

Opposition leaders under the United Alternative coalition have strongly condemned the recent arrest of senior officials linked to Nairobi Hospital, accusing the government of attempting to interfere with the management of one of the country's leading private medical institutions.

Speaking during a burial service in Githunguri Constituency, Kiambu County, leaders led by former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua criticized what they described as an illegal takeover attempt targeting The Nairobi Hospital, a facility operated by the Kenya Hospital Association. They argued that the hospital remains a private institution and should not be subjected to political pressure or state interference.

The controversy follows the arrest of several hospital board officials over the weekend, including directors and senior consultants who were later presented before the Milimani Law Courts.

Among those detained were Dr. John Obwaka, board vice-chairman Samson Kinyanjui and former director Chris Bichage. The officials told the court that they were not immediately informed of the reasons for their arrest, raising further questions about the circumstances surrounding the operation.

“

The controversy follows the arrest of several hospital board officials over the weekend, including directors and senior consultants who were later presented before the Milimani Law Courts.



Opposition leaders in Kiambu yesterday.

The arrests have intensified an already simmering leadership dispute at the multi-billion-shilling facility, which has in recent months been embroiled in legal battles over governance, board appointments and alleged financial mismanagement. The dispute has also drawn national attention due to the hospital's prominent role in Kenya's private healthcare sector.

Addressing mourners during the funeral of Lucia Wangui, the mother of Karungo wa Thangwa, the Senator for Kiambu County, Mr. Gachagua accused the government of orchestrating intimidation tactics against hospital directors in order to gain influence over the institution.

He claimed the situation had raised concerns among Kenyans about the protection of private investments and institutions.

According to him, the government should clearly state its position following reports linking President William Ruto to ongoing investigations surrounding the hospital's leadership dispute.

Gachagua further alleged that the administration is under pressure after claims surfaced that senior gov-

ernment officials were seeking control of the hospital's management. He also accused the government of engaging in what he termed a wider looting spree after losing public support among citizens.

The opposition leader also alleged that there was a scheme to award the Nairobi Railway City Project contract to the highest bidder, claiming

the government was attempting to push through questionable deals involving public assets. He assured the public that opposition leaders would continue exposing alleged corruption while safeguarding public resources.

Other opposition figures echoed his concerns. Eugene Wamalwa, leader of the Democratic Action

Party – Kenya, said the coalition would maintain pressure on the administration until political change is achieved. He emphasized that private institutions such as hospitals must be allowed to operate independently without interference from the state.

Similarly, Kalonzo Musyoka, leader of the Wiper Democratic Movement, warned that the opposition would resist any attempts to allow foreign investors to participate in what he described as irregular investment deals.

Musyoka accused the government of allegedly using foreign entities to outcompete local investors, warning that such moves could undermine domestic enterprise and weaken the country's economic sovereignty.

However, the government has dismissed claims of a planned takeover of the hospital. Health Cabinet Secretary Aden Duale stated that Nairobi Hospital is owned by members of the Kenya Hospital Association and is not for sale, adding that allegations of state interference were unfounded.

Medical professionals have also expressed concern over the arrests. The Kenya Medical Association warned that the detention of senior clinicians linked to the hospital could damage the reputation of the country's healthcare sector and discourage professionals from taking up leadership roles in private health institutions.

The unfolding dispute has sparked a wider debate about governance and accountability within private institutions, as well as the boundaries of state oversight. With court cases ongoing and political tensions rising, analysts say the controversy surrounding Nairobi Hospital could have significant implications for Kenya's healthcare sector and investor confidence.



THE NAIROBI HOSPITAL

Book Montsho’s work as a writer goes across various genres such as children’s books, poetry, short stories, fiction, self-help, and biographies

Merging books with community service & literary activism: Stan Montsho

BY Paula O.M.Otukile
@themtkenyetimes

Book lovers, authors and literary promoters knows him across the continent! Stan is a quiet supportive writer and has given his life to be an agent of change in Africa. Stan Montsho is an award winning author, publisher, and writing coach from South Africa. He holds a BA Degree in International Relations and Industrial Sociology as well as Batchelor of Education Honors Degree from Wits University. He also holds a PostGrad Diploma in International Relations and Diplomacy from the University of South Africa. He has studied Media Management, Marketing, and Advertising courses from AAA School of Adver-



Stan Montsho



tising. He recently obtained a certificate in Policy Development and Management from the University of Pretoria. Montsho’s work as a writer goes across various genres such as children’s books, poetry, short stories, fiction, self-

help, and biographies. Montsho’s work extends beyond writing, as he actively engages in community service and advocacy. His books aim to inspire change, educate, and promote awareness on social issues. As a publisher, he has also worked with young talent to produce high-quality publications. He writes in various languages, and ten of his books have recently been translated into Braille by the South African Library for the Blind ensuring that his work is also accessible to people living with visual impairments. He is a well traveled author, and can’t stop promoting books and motivating wherever he goes. If you want to get a copy of one of his books so that you feel the passion of books at it’s best, contact Stan Montsho on Facebook messenger! He is an example of what a man with a purpose should be in terms of his dedication and focus on the book world. Keep Shinning Bro Stan!

Motswana author passionate about present parenting!

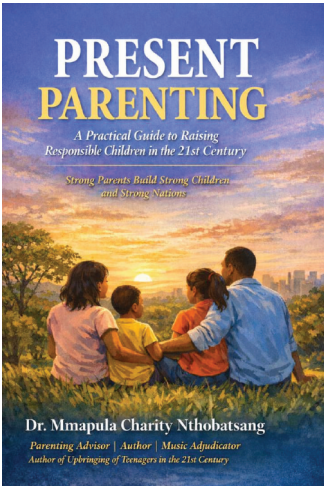
BY Paula O.M.Otukile
@themtkenyetimes

Dr Mmapula Charity Nthobatsang is a dedicated educator, parenting advisor, author, and community leader from Botswana. She has served as a primary school teacher for over 26 years under the Ministry of Basic Education and Child Welfare Services, where she has consistently produced outstanding academic results, including excellent Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) results for more than ten consecutive years. Dr Nthobatsang is especially recognized for her ability to work effectively with learners who have educational and learning challenges. Through patience, innovative teaching strategies, and strong commitment to inclusive education, she has helped many students with special educational needs improve their reading, writing, and overall academic performance, producing excellent results and transform-

ing struggling learners into confident achievers. She is widely known as an all-round education professional. In addition to classroom teaching, she is a music trainer, national music adjudicator, choir trainer, guidance teacher, and sports coach specializing in volleyball and netball. Her passion for holistic child development has made her an influential figure in both academic and extra-curricular activities. Dr Nthobatsang is also an author and parenting advocate who focuses on empowering parents and educators to raise responsible and confident children in the modern world. Her leadership, initiative, and proactive approach to education continue to contribute meaningfully to the development of learners and communities in Botswana and beyond. Her dedication, versatility, and commitment to excellence make her a respected professional and a valuable asset to the education sector.



Dr Mmapula Charity Nthobatsang



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IPC The closing ceremony, themed "Italian Souvenir," was staged at Cortina Curling Olympic Stadium

Milan-Cortina 2026 Winter Paralympics closes as China tops medal tally

Host Italy finished fourth with seven golds, seven silvers and two bronzes. Para cross-country skier and biathlete Cai Jiayun and wheelchair curler Wang Meng served as China's flagbearers at the closing ceremony.

BY Xinhua News Agency
@themtkenyatimes

International Paralympic Committee (IPC) President Andrew Parsons declared the Milan-Cortina 2026 Paralympic Winter Games closed on Sunday.

The closing ceremony, themed "Italian Souvenir," was staged at Cortina Curling Olympic Stadium, a historic venue that hosted the 1956 Winter Olympics and returned to the Olympic and Paralympic stage in 2026, spanning seven decades. The Games officially opened on March 6 and featured 79 events across six sports in three competition clusters. Para alpine skiing, para snowboard and wheelchair curling took place in Cortina. Para biathlon and para cross-country skiing were held in Val di Fiemme, while para ice hockey was staged in Milan. With over 600 athletes from 55 delegations, the 2026 Winter Paralympics marked the 50th anniversary of the inaugural edition in 1976. It was also the first time the Games had returned to Italy since Turin 2006. El Salvador, Haiti, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Portugal all made their Winter Paralympic debut at Milan-Cortina. "These



Paralympic Winter Games have been a record-breaking success. The biggest golds, seven silvers and two bronzes. Para cross-country skier and biathlete Cai

Gold medalist Cai Jiayun of China poses with team members after the para biathlon men's sprint pursuit standing at the Milan-Cortina 2026 Paralympic Winter Games in Tesero, Italy, last Friday. | Photo: Xinhua/Hou Zhaokang

and most beautiful Winter Paralympics with more athletes, more nations, more women and more global broadcast and digital coverage than ever before," Parsons said in his closing speech. "Every race and every match told a story - a story of resilience and a story of possibility. A story that will inspire long after these Games close. Change starts with sport and the true power of these Games goes far beyond competition," he added.

China topped the medal table with 15 gold, 13 silver and 16 bronze medals, marking its best-ever performance at an overseas Winter Paralympics. Runner-up the United States won 13 golds, five silvers and six bronzes, followed by Russia in third with eight golds, one silver and three bronzes. Host Italy finished fourth with seven

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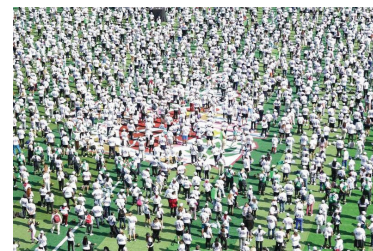
Jiayun and wheelchair curler Wang Meng served as China's flagbearers at the closing ceremony. The 25-year-old Cai won China's first gold medal of the Milan-Cortina Winter Paralympics and finished with three para biathlon golds in total. In wheelchair curling mixed doubles, a

her teammate Yang Jinqiao, 24, won a historic gold for China. "As the Paralympic flame is extinguished, the spirit it represents does not fade. It travels home with every athlete, every spectator, and every viewer, every one of them watching tonight inspired by these remarkable days," Parsons said. The ceremony also revisited emotional moments from the Games and paid tribute to organizers, volunteers and all participants. The Paralympic flag was handed over to the hosts of the French Alps 2030 Winter Games. "I call upon Paralympic athletes from all over the world to meet again in the French Alps in four years' time when, once again, Paralympic sport will transform the world," Parsons said.

Mexico sets Guinness record for world's largest football class ahead of 2026 World Cup



Mexico City mayor Clara Brugada (c) holds the Guinness World Record for the world's largest soccer class in the Zocalo of Mexico City, Mexico's capital, on March 15, 2026. | Photo: Xinhua/Francisco Canedo



People participate in the soccer class. | Photo: Xinhua/Francisco Canedo



People participate in the largest soccer class in the world, in the zocalo of Mexico City, Mexico's capital, on March 15, 2026. | Photo: Xinhua/Francisco Canedo

BY Xinhua News Agency
@themtkenyatimes

Mexico broke a Guinness World Record on Sunday by holding the world's largest football class, just months before the country hosts the FIFA World Cup for a record third time.

Guinness World Records judge Alfredo Arista confirmed the record set in Mexico City after 9,500 people participated in a 35-minute football lesson in the capital's main square, the Zocalo, smashing the previous record of 1,038 participants. Mexico City Mayor Clara Brugada and Mexico's Secretary of Tourism Josefina Rodriguez led the class, accompanied by former football players Oscar "Conejo" Perez, Miguel Espana, and Francisco "Kikin" Fonseca, among others. The thousands of participants in the event came dressed in green, white, or red jerseys - the colors of the national flag - bearing the slogan "The ball is coming home," a reference to the two prior times Mexico has hosted the

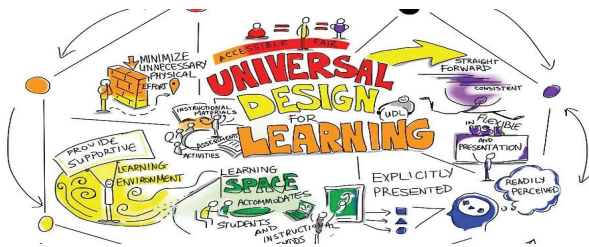
World Cup, in 1970 and 1986. The Zocalo was transformed into a giant football pitch, with artificial turf carpeting the concrete plaza around the flagpole and the monumental national flag, surrounded by the historic buildings that line the square, including the National Palace and City Hall. Soccer balls bounced around as participants practiced football moves and techniques such as the drop kick, shoulder feint, backheel and cushioning. Ilse Aviles, a midfielder for the amateur Chilangas football team, welcomed the event and government policies promoting the inclusion of women. "The classes were very good, very organized, but today there really was so much energy, so much excitement among everyone," she said. Mexico is set to cohost the 2026 FIFA World Cup in June and July of this year, along with the United States and Canada, becoming the first country in the world to host three World Cup tournaments.



The global gradebook: Navigating the future of Universal learning

The race to redefine education in 2026 is no longer about dusty transcripts or PDF attachments—it’s about a living, breathing ledger of skills. The Global Gradebook is here, and it’s powered by blockchain and international data standards that promise to upend how learning is verified, shared, and owned.

At the protocol layer, universities are gravitating toward Hyperledger Fabric, a permissioned fortress that keeps sensitive student data private while publishing cryptographic “fingerprints” of grades. Verification is instant, but control remains with the student. On the other end, independent certifiers—from Google to coding bootcamps—favor Ethereum and Layer 2 solutions. Credentials issued as Soulbound Tokens create a permanent, public



skills profile recruiters can scan in seconds.

The real breakthrough, however, lies in standards. With Open Badges 3.0, a badge is no longer a digital sticker but a metadata-rich credential linking directly to evidence of learning. Meanwhile, W3C Verifiable Credentials allow students to carry a digital wallet of achievements, choosing what to reveal and when. This is academic self-sovereignty in action.

The implications are profound. Credits earned in Nairobi or Berlin can now be de-

posited into an Academic Bank of Credits, forming a global savings account of knowledge. Verification times shrink from weeks to seconds, and ownership shifts decisively from institutions to learners.

The next frontier? AI-driven synthesizers that don’t just record what you’ve learned but predict what you should learn next. The Global Gradebook isn’t just a ledger—it’s a compass. And in this new era, education finally belongs to the student.

By Magdaline Amusugut, Laikipia University

Girl child challenges in the university

The promise of higher education should be a gateway to empowerment, yet for many young women in our universities, it is a battlefield of hidden struggles. The girl child, despite the rhetoric of equality, continues to face barriers that undermine her academic journey and personal wellbeing.

Harassment remains a grim reality. Female students report unwanted advances from peers and, disturbingly, from lecturers who exploit their authority. The coercion into sexual relationships for marks or favors not only erodes trust in institutions but often results in unintended pregnancies, stigma, and in some cases, dropping out altogether. This is not just misconduct—it is a betrayal of the very mission of education.

Academic discrimination compounds the problem. Women are still underrepresented in STEM courses, dis-



couraged by systemic bias and the absence of relatable role models. The message is clear: the doors may be open, but the pathways remain uneven.

University life also brings social pressures. Many young women are pushed into unhealthy lifestyles—partying, substance abuse, or risky relationships—simply to fit in. Peer pressure chips away at self-esteem, forcing them to compromise values, identity, and even safety.

Yet when the girl child is sup-

ported, the transformation is profound. Protecting her rights within the university is not charity; it is an investment in a society that thrives on the contributions of educated women. The challenge is urgent, and the responsibility collective.

The girl child deserves not survival in the university, but success—and when she succeeds, the nation rises with her.

By Emmaqulet Ajwang Ogin-ga

Is nature warning us? Understanding today’s rain in the context of the end times

When the skies open and rain pours relentlessly, many wonder: is this just weather, or is nature sending a deeper message? Throughout history, storms and floods have been interpreted as omens, reminders of humanity’s fragility, and even signs of the end times. Today’s downpours are no exception, sparking both spiritual reflection and scientific debate.

Religious traditions, particularly Christianity, speak of natural upheavals preceding the world’s final days—famine, wars, and unusual weather among them. For believers, heavy rains and floods can feel like divine warnings, urging repentance and spiritual readiness. The Bible itself points to disturbances in nature as markers of humanity’s moral crossroads.

Yet science offers a sobering counterpoint. Climate ex-



perts attribute erratic rainfall and extreme storms to global warming, deforestation, and pollution. Human activity has destabilized weather systems, making floods and droughts more frequent. In this view, nature is not predicting apocalypse but reacting to our neglect.

Still, symbolism persists. Rain embodies duality: destruction through floods, renewal through fertile soil. It warns and heals, devastates and nourishes. That paradox forces us to confront both our spiritual

values and our environmental responsibilities.

The lesson is clear. Instead of fearing every storm as the world’s end, we should see it as a call to action—protecting the planet, strengthening moral integrity, and preparing wisely for the future. Today’s rain may not herald doom, but it does demand change. Ignore it, and the real disaster will be of our own making.

By Sylvia Onyango, Laikipia University

Why Kenyans need awareness on financial literacy

The auctioning of a former Jubilee Secretary General may have grabbed headlines, but behind the spectacle lies a quieter tragedy: thousands of Kenyans endure similar financial nightmares daily, often without support or sympathy. The common thread is not malice or intent to default—it is a lack of financial literacy.

Loans are the lifeblood of many enterprises, yet too often borrowers rush into agreements without grasping the fine print. Hidden clauses, ignored terms, and misunderstood repayment schedules only reveal their sting when creditors come knocking. What begins as a lifeline quickly morphs into a trap, leaving families financially, emotionally, and mentally drained.

Seeking legal or financial advice before signing loan documents may seem costly, but it is far cheaper than the ruin of auctioneering. Professional



guidance shields borrowers from predatory contracts and equips them with strategies to manage debt responsibly. Without it, debt becomes a cage, enslaving individuals until repayment is complete.

Equally vital is defining the purpose of every loan. Borrowing without a clear repayment plan or before a project is stable is reckless. Financial literacy teaches discipline: loans should be tools for growth, not

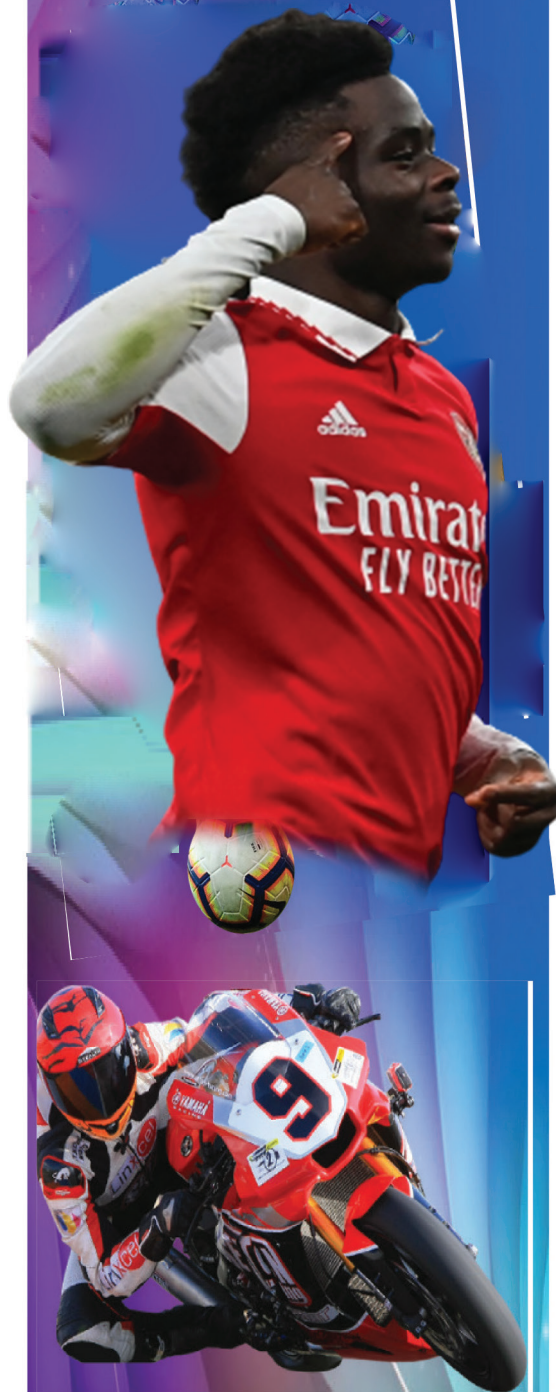
anchors of despair.

Kenya’s rising tide of auctioneering is not just an economic statistic—it is a national alarm bell. Urgent, deliberate investment in financial literacy is the only way to break the cycle. If we fail to act, debt will continue to enslave; if we succeed, knowledge will liberate.

By Daniel Maina, Laikipia University

SPORTS NEWS

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Sports >> *The Safari Rally Kenya, part of the World Rally Championship, delivered another thrilling chapter in global motorsport as the KCB Rally Team produced an impressive performance

Patel leads the way as KCB drivers shine at 2026 WRC Safari Rally

The Safari Rally Kenya, part of the World Rally Championship, delivered another thrilling chapter in global motorsport as the KCB Rally Team produced an impressive performance led by driver Karan Patel and navigator Tauseef Khan.

The duo emerged as the highest-placed Kenyan crew in the grueling rally held in Naivasha, while also securing victory in the African Rally Championship (ARC) category to take an early lead in the 2026 continental championship standings.

Driving through the unforgiving terrain that defines the Safari Rally, Patel broke a four-year streak of retirements, successfully completing the rally for the first time since 2021.

“It has been four years of retiring but we managed to finish the rally this year,

capping it off with the ARC title. I am excited for what lies ahead and I cannot wait to participate in the coming ARC legs. The last four days have been incredibly difficult, and we could not be prouder of this achievement,” Patel said.

The two-time ARC champion has now set his sights on reclaiming the continental crown after narrowly losing the 2025 title to Uganda’s Yasin Nasser.

Sachania shines in wet conditions

Elsewhere, Nikhil Sachania and navigator Deep Patel, also representing the KCB Rally Team, delivered a strong performance despite the demanding conditions.



Karan Patel (right) and his navigator, Tauseef Khan, celebrate their success at WRC Safari Rally.

The duo began their defence of the FIA African Rally Championship

ARC3 title in style, winning their category ahead of rival Puligilla Naveen.

Sachania finished sixth overall in the ARC standings and 23rd in the WRC3

category, reinforcing his status as one of the region’s rising rally talents.

KCB-sponsored Ugandan driver Oscar Ntambi also impressed, securing victory

in the ARC2 category after beating Kenya’s Evans Nzioka.

Ntambi finished 22nd overall in the WRC classification and sixth in the ARC overall standings.

Meanwhile, Rwanda’s Queen Kalimpinya, competing in the event for the first

time, emerged as the highest-placed female driver in the Kenya National Rally Championship category.

“This was my first time ever participating in the Safari Rally. This event is not only iconic but also unforgiving. We managed to finish the rally and there is something valuable to take home. We hope to carry the same momentum into upcoming competitions,” Kalimpinya said.

However, it was heartbreak for the mother-daughter crew of Tinashe Gatimu and Caroline Gatimu, who had previously completed three consecutive Safari Rally events.

Their fourth attempt ended prematurely after mechanical issues affected their new Ford Fiesta Rally4.

The performances across the field underscore the growing strength and competitiveness of the KCB-backed rally drivers, reinforcing the bank’s continued commitment to developing motorsport talent across East Africa.

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Sports >> *

Harambee Stars defender out for long period after serious injury



Harambee Stars players Chris Erambo and Sylvester Owino during a training session. PHOTO/FKE.

Gor Mahia defender Sylvester Owino is set to spend at least six weeks on the sidelines after sustaining a serious injury during Sunday’s 3-1 victory over Ulinzi Stars in the Kenya Premier League. The setback comes at a crucial stage of the season as K’Ogalo chase their record-extending 22nd league crown.

According to team doctor Brian Odongo, Owino suffered a muscle tear that required immediate medical attention. “He was referred for further evaluation where an MRI confirmed a partial tear of the lower medial gastrocnemius muscle belly,” Odongo revealed in a statement published on the club’s official website. The diagnosis means the Harambee Stars centre-back

will undergo rehabilitation and miss several key fixtures both domestically and internationally.

The injury occurred in the first half at the Ulinzi Sports Complex, forcing an early substitution. Owino was visibly in pain and had to be wheeled out of the stadium in an ambulance, a sight that left teammates and fans deeply concerned. His absence is a significant blow to coach Charles Akonnor, who has relied heavily on the defender’s consistency and leadership at the back.

Beyond Gor Mahia’s title ambitions, Owino’s injury also impacts the national team. He has established himself as a regular starter for the Harambee Stars, and will now miss the upcoming

friendly against Estonia at the FIFA Global Series in Rwanda on March 27. His absence deprives the national side of experience and stability in defense, forcing the technical bench to rethink their strategy.

For Gor Mahia, the challenge will be to reorganize their defensive line. The responsibility now falls on Frank Odhiambo and Mike Kibwage, who are expected to step up and fill the void. Both players have shown promise, but Owino’s commanding presence and ability to marshal the back-line will be difficult to replace.

Despite the setback, Gor Mahia remain in a strong position in the league. They currently lead the standings with 53 points,

ten clear of arch-rivals AFC Leopards, who suffered a heavy 4-1 defeat to Mathare United at Nyayo Stadium on Saturday. The cushion provides some breathing space, but Akonnor will be wary of complacency as the season enters its decisive phase.

Owino’s injury serves as a reminder of the physical demands of top-flight football and the fine margins that can alter a team’s campaign. For Gor Mahia, the next six weeks will test their depth, resilience, and ability to adapt without one of their most dependable players. Fans will hope for a swift recovery, as the defender’s return could prove pivotal in the final stretch of the season.

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SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



Grace, Purpose, and Determination: The Inspiring Journey of Josie Walker



By: Anila Bukhari
@themkenyatimes

In today's world, young leaders are redefining what it means to balance ambition, compassion, and personal growth. Among these remarkable voices is Josie Walker, the reigning USOA Teen Bluegrass State, whose journey reflects dedication, academic excellence, and a deep commitment to inspiring the next generation. With accomplishments spanning academics, dance, modeling, community service, and youth advocacy, Josie represents a new generation of young women who are determined to lead with purpose and heart.

Currently holding the title of USOA Teen Bluegrass State, Josie Walker stands proudly as a representative of confidence, determination, and service. Her title gives her the opportunity to compete at the USOA Teen Nationals in Las Vegas, scheduled to take place at the end of March. For Josie, this national competition is not merely a stage for recognition; it is a platform where she can further amplify her message of empowerment and self-belief.

Behind the sparkle of the pageant crown lies a young woman deeply committed to academic success. Josie is a dedicated 4.0 Advanced Placement scholar, a distinction that reflects her strong work ethic and passion for learning. While balancing numerous extracurricular activities, she continues to challenge herself academically by taking college-level courses during high school. Her goal is clear and ambitious: she strives to graduate as valedictorian, a testament to her perseverance and intellectual curiosity.

Josie's academic discipline reveals a mindset that values both present achievement and future potential. She understands that education is a powerful tool for shaping lives and creating opportunities. Her dedication to maintaining excellence in her

studies demonstrates not only intelligence but also resilience and time management—qualities that set her apart as a young leader.

Beyond the classroom, Josie has also achieved remarkable success in the world of dance. She is a proud member of a double National Champion-winning dance team, an accomplishment that requires countless hours of practice, teamwork, and commitment. This past February, her team celebrated a significant victory at the Universal Dance Association (UDA) National Championship, where they secured first place in both the Pom and Hip-Hop divisions.

Dance, for Josie, is far more than performance—it is a form of expression and discipline that has shaped her confidence and determination. The dedication required to reach a national championship level has taught her the importance of teamwork, perseverance, and the pursuit of excellence. These lessons extend far beyond the stage, influencing every aspect of her life.

Alongside dance and academics, modeling has also become one of Josie's passions. She has had the privilege of working with NV Models, gaining valuable experience in the fashion and creative industries. Modeling has allowed her to embrace self-expression while building confidence and poise.

However, Josie's journey in modeling is not driven solely by aesthetics or recognition. Instead, she views it as another platform through which she can communicate messages of confidence, self-worth, and authenticity. Her experiences in front of the camera have strengthened her belief that every individual deserves to feel comfortable and proud in their own identity.

One of the most meaningful aspects of Josie Walker's journey is her dedication to community service and youth empowerment. At the heart of her work lies her personal platform, "Confidence in Every Stitch." Through this initiative, she encourages young people to recognize their value and embrace their uniqueness.

Over the past year alone, Josie has been able to positively impact more than 1,500 youth, offering encouragement and mentorship to students

who may struggle with self-confidence or self-doubt. Through school visits, workshops, and public appearances, she shares her message that confidence can be developed through kindness, perseverance, and self-belief.

Since October of last year, Josie has made 58 appearances within her community, demonstrating an unwavering commitment to service and outreach. Her dedication is also reflected in her remarkable record of over 350 hours of community service. These efforts illustrate her genuine desire to uplift others rather than simply seek personal recognition.

When visiting schools and youth programs, Josie focuses on inspiring students to discover their potential and believe in their abilities. Her message is simple yet powerful: every young person deserves to feel valued, confident, and capable of achieving their dreams.

Another meaningful role Josie embraces is that of a youth dance teacher. Combining her love for dance with her passion for working with children, she dedicates time to mentoring young dancers and helping them develop both skill and confidence. Teaching dance allows her to pass on the lessons she has learned through years of practice and competition.

In the studio, she encourages young students not only to improve their technique but also to believe in themselves. Through patience, encouragement, and positivity, she creates an environment where children feel supported and inspired. For Josie, teaching is not just about choreography—it is about nurturing confidence and joy.

Looking toward the future, Josie Walker carries an ambitious dream that reflects her compassionate spirit. She aspires to become a pediatrician, combining her passion for medicine with her dedication to helping children. Her academic achievements and service-oriented mindset make this goal both realistic and inspiring.

Becoming a pediatrician would allow Josie to continue doing what she loves most: caring for young people and supporting their well-being. She hopes to make a meaningful differ-



Josie Walker

ence in the lives of children by providing both medical care and emotional support to families who need it.

Whether she is studying late into the night, performing on stage with her championship dance team, teaching young dancers, volunteering in her community, or preparing for national pageant competitions, Josie Walker approaches every opportunity with determination and gratitude.

Her journey reflects a rare balance of ambition and humility. She understands that true success is not measured solely by titles or achievements but by the positive impact one makes in the lives of others.

As she prepares to step onto the na-

tional stage in Las Vegas, Josie carries with her more than just the hopes of winning a crown. She brings a message of confidence, kindness, and service—values that continue to inspire everyone she encounters.

Through her dedication to academics, dance, community service, and youth empowerment, Josie Walker is already proving that leadership has no age limit. Her story is one of passion, perseverance, and purpose—a reminder that when young people believe in themselves and serve others with heart, they have the power to shape a brighter future for everyone.