



Jamii Imara Mashinani Forum Strengthens Citizen Engagement With A Forum In Isiolo County

Isiolo County residents had a unique opportunity to engage directly with government officials and other partners during the Jamii Imara Mashinani (JIM) forum held over the weekend.

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Parliament Begins Funeral Preparations Of Emurua Dikirr MP Johana Ng'eno

The Parliament of Kenya has begun funeral preparations for Emurua Dikirr Member of Parliament, Johana Ng'eno Kipyegon, following his tragic death in a helicopter crash on Saturday evening.

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Voice of the People

The Mt. Kenya Times

Daily ePAPER

PROBE UAG demands swift probe into crash that killed Emurua Dikirr MP Johanna Ngeno.

UAG Demands Independent Probe Into Helicopter Crash



6

Number of persons killed during the crash



Abve: The late Emurua Dikirr Member of Parliament, Johanna Ngeno

(L): From left; Francis Kimemia, Dr Fred Matiang'i and Rigathi Gachagua in Nyandarua yesterday. Photo | Courtesy

The United Alternative Government has called for a swift and thorough investigation into the helicopter crash that claimed the life of Emurua Dikirr Member of Parliament, Johanna Ngeno, along with five others.

Opposition leader Rigathi Gachagua urged the government to conduct a comprehensive inquiry to determine the circumstances surrounding the tragic accident, warning against any attempt to politicize the incident.

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SCAN TO REGISTER

President Ruto Pledges KSh550 Million For Alliance High School Centenary Projects

BY WMW
@themtkenyatimes

Some Of The Moments As Captured In Pictures

President William Ruto has pledged KSh550 million in government support to mark 100 years of excellence at Alliance High School in Kikuyu, Kiambu County. Speaking during the school's centenary celebrations, the President lauded the institution for imparting knowledge, discipline, and leadership, describing its alumni as among the finest in the country.

The government's investment will cover the construction of 40 classrooms (KSh60 million), a sports academy (KSh60 million), and road improvements around the school (KSh200 million).

At the neighbouring Alliance Girls High School, KSh155 million will fund a 640-student dormitory, while KSh40 million will go toward 24 classrooms.

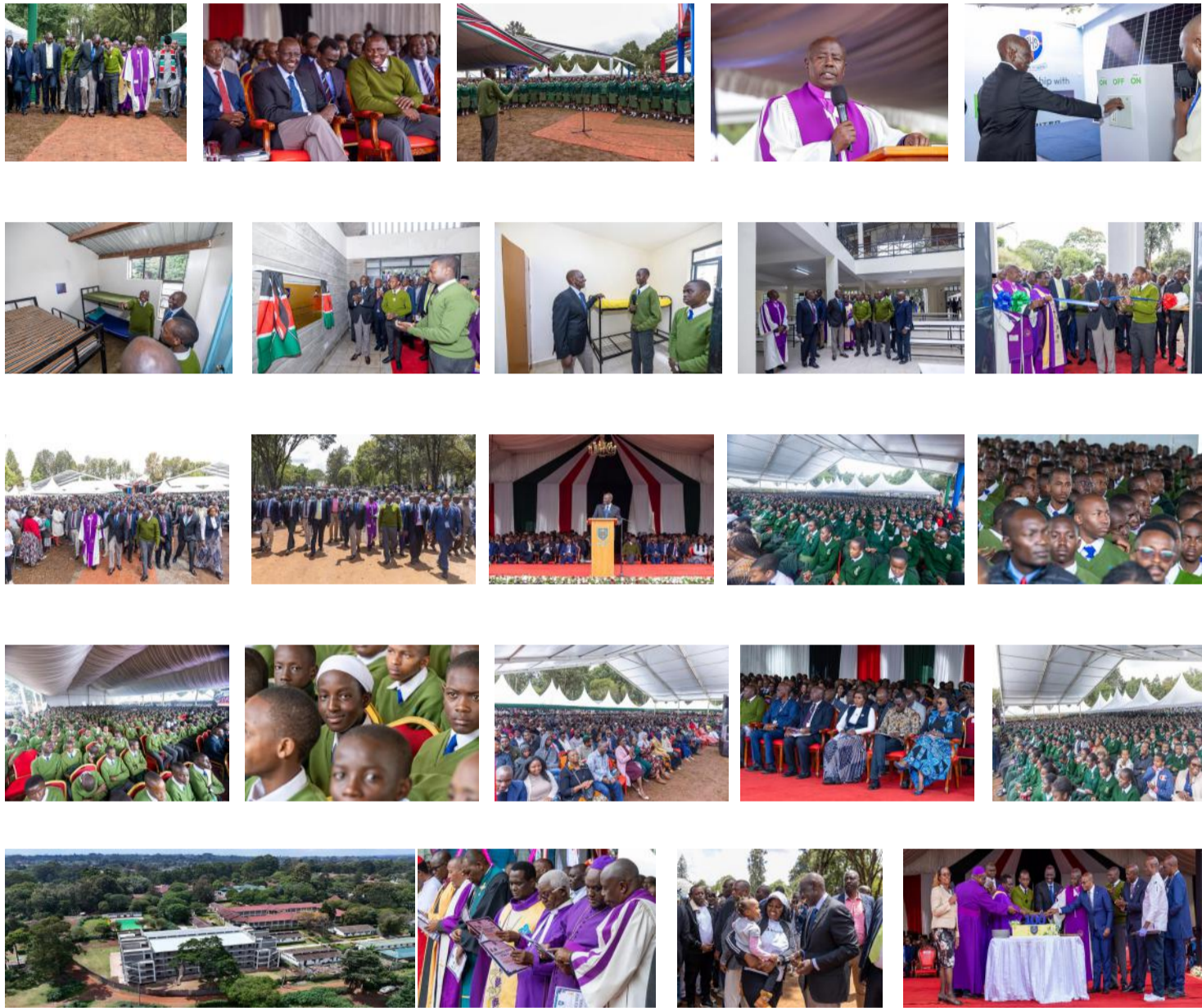
President Ruto also launched several projects aimed at enhancing learning and infrastructure, including a new dining hall and the 640-bed Centennial Hostel.

He inspected the ongoing construction of a new church on the school grounds, highlighting the school's commitment to holistic education.

Additionally, the President inaugurated the Solarisation Programme for Basic Education Institutions, which aims to expand access to clean energy, reduce school energy costs, and generate up to 150 megawatts of solar power.

The initiative, already piloted in 266 schools, is expected to create green jobs, strengthen climate action, and support Kenya's green growth agenda.

President Ruto urged the school to continue upholding its motto, "Strong To Serve," as it enters its second century of educating future leaders.



Editor's Desk

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Group Executive Chairman
M. Danson
LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/dan-mwangi-1b47446b/>

Our Contacts
P. O. Box 101 675 - 00101 Nairobi, Cell: 0700 161 866, 0705 215 262
Editorial Desk: editorial@mtkenyatimes.co.ke, **Adverts:** ads@mtkenyatimes.co.ke,
News Desk: news@mtkenyatimes.co.ke, **Web:** www.mtkenyatimes.co.ke

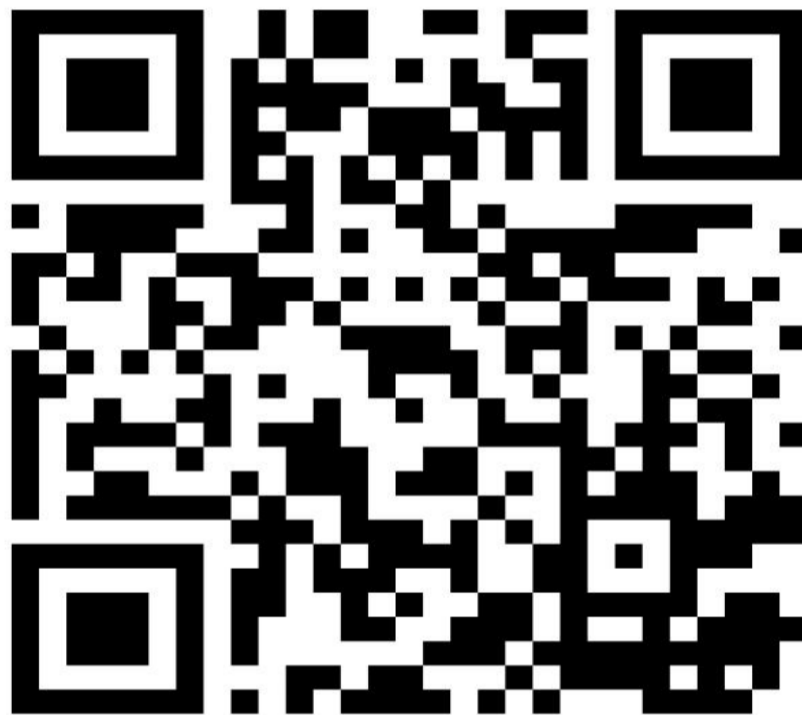
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NEWS IN BRIEF



Kalenjin secular artists have mourned the passing of Emurua Dikirr MP Johana Ngeno, who died in a helicopter crash on Saturday in Chepkiep, Mosop, Nandi County, along with the pilot and four others, including journalist Nick Koskey. Led by Kapkatet-based artist Lorna Koech, also known as Swag Lady, the musicians expressed shock and highlighted Ngeno's role in nurturing local talents through the Kalenjin Music Festival, mentoring musicians, comedians, and content creators. Ngeno was also a strong advocate for Mau Forest evictees and the resolution of land disputes over 6,000 hectares at Ang'ata Barigoi. The bodies were first taken to Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital and later moved to Lee Funeral Home in Nairobi.



Residents of Kamwaha village in Ki-haru have welcomed the upgrade of the 11.56-kilometre Kabuta-Mahua-ini road, describing it as transformative for economic activities and access to essential services. Previously impassable during rains, the road hindered transport, market access, and emergency travel, affecting farmers, traders, and expectant mothers. The project, implemented by the Kenya Urban Roads Authority (KURA) since 2024, links key agricultural zones to Murang'a town and major transport corridors, reducing post-harvest losses, transport costs, and improving pedestrian safety. Residents say the

improved road has opened up the area, facilitated trade, and enhanced connectivity across Murang'a County and neighbouring counties.



Farmers in Busia have been urged to follow expert advisories to maximize productivity and improve yields. Dr. Martin Mwirigi, Director of the Biotechnology Research Institute at KALRO, emphasized that advisories are based on scientific research tailored to local farming challenges, including soil testing, climate variability, and weather forecasts. Speaking during the KALRO Open Week at Alupe, he encouraged farmers to adopt modern technologies, diversify into high-value crops like oil palm, and consult extension officers for technical guidance. Dr. Mwirigi cautioned against planting crops based on trends in other regions, stressing the importance of expert advice for optimal results and strengthened food security.



The State Department for Wildlife has endorsed paragliding in Elgeyo Marakwet, highlighting its potential to boost adventure tourism, create jobs, empower youth, and promote environmental conservation. Speaking during the relaunch in Kerio Valley, Margaret Githaiga emphasized the sport's role in raising biodiversity awareness and fostering cultural exchange, while County Secretary Lazarus Chebii noted its contribution to sports tourism and local development. Local paraglider Kiplagat Kerich, active since 2014, urged the county to support the sport by providing equipment to nurture talent, citing high costs as a barrier for aspiring athletes.



The Principal Secretary for Public Investments and Assets Management, Cyrell Wagunda, met with the Suba Council of Elders from Migori to discuss public investments, government assets, and local economic empowerment. The consultative session focused on transparency, accountability, protection of state assets, and promoting youth and women participation in investment initiatives. Elders shared community concerns and development priorities to align with the government's economic transformation agenda. Wagunda emphasized prudent asset management, inclusive growth, and collaboration with local leadership. Later, at a Kindu SDA Church empowerment event in Sakwa, he urged youth to leverage government opportunities for economic growth and positive societal change.



Principal Secretary for Interior Security and National Administration, Raymond Omollo, announced that village elders will be formally recognised as National Government Administrative Officers and receive a monthly stipend of Sh3,000–Sh5,000. Speaking during an ID registration drive in Suna West, Omollo highlighted the elders' vital role in grassroots security, community engagement, and rural development. The initiative, part of the National Government Coordination (Amendment) Bill, 2024, will allocate Sh2.7 billion annually to support elders, aligning with President William Ruto's Bottom-Up Transformation Agenda. Omollo also urged youths to register for national IDs and voting to participate in governance and civic duties ahead of the 2027 elections.

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Celebrations The Friday ceremony, marked under the theme Stronger Together...

World NGO Day Celebrated In Lodwar

Chief Guest, Principal Administrative Secretary for Interior and National Coordination, Jacob Narengo

BY KNA

@themtkenyatimes

The World NGO Day celebration was held in Turkana County where the transition to the new regulatory era anchored on the Public Benefits Organizations (PBO) ACT of 2013 took centre stage.

The Friday ceremony, marked under the theme Stronger Together: Sustaining Protection and Livelihood Gains through Partnerships, was supported by Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and convened by the Public Benefits Regulatory Authority (PBORA) with national and county government, development and humanitarian partners participating.

The Chief Guest, Principal Administrative Secretary for Interior and National Coordination, Jacob Narengo cited that Kenya was hosting more than 800,000 refugees and that many NGOs were offering both humanitarian and development service to the population.

The PAS added, the day is meant to recognize, celebrate and honour the indispensable work of the Public Benefit organizations for the services rendered, urging them to work closely with the regulatory authority to align their interventions with the national priorities.

Public benefit organization regulatory authority Director



Principal Administrative Secretary for Interior and National Coordination, Jacob Narengo and other guests being taken through some of the exhibition stands to mark the day | Photo: KNA.

General, Dr. Laxmana Kip-too, said that the transition from the initial NGO coordination Act to the Current Public Benefit organizations Act was deliberately designed to emphasize on transparency, partnership, and sustainability.

He pledged that the authority will work closely with the NGOs to strengthen compliance to the new laws during the transition period without causing service breaks and disruptions.

Deputy Governor, Dr. John Erus said that Turkana was in the process of mapping all NGOs operating in the county with an aim of ensuring their interventions are not only aligned but also create sustainable impact.

According to Dr. Erus, Tur-

kana was already implementing a requirement in which NGOs operation must be streamlined within a particular sector or value chain that contributes to the realization of County's priorities.

"In my many interactions with the NGOs, we have raised the need for disclosure of revenue purse. This is meant to enable us measure the impact of their interventions against their budgets and even advise on utilization of the funds," he said.

The Country Director for the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Simon Nzioka reiterated the organization's resolve to support the Shirika plan, adding that PBO-RA had created an enabling environment for development actors to operate in the de-

velopment and humanitarian space alongside authorities of the county and national governments.

Dr. Jacob Khaoya, the Deputy Chief of Party at AM-REF said that the presence of NGOs in Turkana and Kenya as a nation had enabled seamless service delivery.

During the event, NGOs showcased their products and innovations alongside conducting side dialogue on county to county and border area peace initiatives.

Other speakers included the County Commissioner, Julius Kavita, the Camp Manager at the Department of Refugee Services, David Siele, SNV Project Advisor, Shadrack Kiprono, and peace actors from Turkana and West Pokot counties.

LSK Draws the Line: Why Kenya's Legal Body Is Opposing Admission of Foreign Advocates

BY Hadassah Karangu

@themtkenyatimes

A fresh storm is brewing in Kenya's legal fraternity after the Law Society of Kenya (LSK) formally objected to the admission of six foreign nationals to the Roll of Advocates. The applicants—two from China and four from South Sudan—had met academic and training requirements, but the Society insists that qualifications alone are not enough without reciprocity agreements.

At the heart of the dispute lies the principle of reciprocity: if Kenya allows foreign lawyers to practice locally, those countries must extend similar rights to Kenyan lawyers. LSK argues that no such agreements exist with China or South Sudan, making the admissions inconsistent with the Advocates Act. The objection has been communicated to the judiciary, including Chief Justice Martha Koome, who presides over admissions to the High Court.

For many Kenyan lawyers, the issue is not abstract. Each year, hundreds of graduates struggle to secure pupillage or establish practice in an already saturated market. Critics warn that opening the legal space without safeguards could intensify competition and undermine opportunities for local practitioners. Supporters of LSK's stance say the Society is fulfilling its statutory mandate to protect the integrity of the profession and safeguard national sovereignty.

Yet, others argue Kenya must

adapt to globalization. With rising foreign investment and cross-border disputes, demand for diverse legal expertise is growing. Analysts suggest that a more open framework could strengthen Kenya's competitiveness as a regional hub.

Still, LSK insists reform must come through Parliament, not administrative shortcuts. The current law already permits limited foreign admissions under structured conditions, particularly from select Commonwealth jurisdictions. The Society's position is therefore framed not as anti-foreigner, but pro-legal compliance.

The controversy reflects a broader national dilemma: how to balance globalization with local protection. For young lawyers, the outcome carries real implications for job security and professional identity. For policymakers, it underscores the urgency of updating outdated statutes to align with modern realities.

As the judiciary weighs the objection, the decision will set a precedent—either affirming protectionist law or signaling a shift toward liberalization. Beyond six applicants, the debate now tests how Kenya defines fairness, opportunity, and sovereignty in an interconnected world.



Chief Justice Martha Koome

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Kenya Urges Citizens To Exercise Caution As Middle East Conflict Intensifies



BY Suleiman Mbatiah

@themtkenyatimes

The Kenyan government has issued a security advisory to its citizens living in or travelling through the Middle East following a sharp escalation in hostilities involving Israel, the United States and Iran. The Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs announced that it has activated emergency consular response mechanisms and urged Kenyans in the region to register with the nearest embassies and consulates.

In a statement issued yesterday, the ministry said the advisory was prompted by fresh military exchanges that have significantly heightened tensions across the region.

The latest flare-up followed reported strikes by Israeli and US forces on targets inside Iran, which were met with retaliatory missile and drone attacks targeting Israel and US-linked installations in several Gulf states.

The advisory applies to Kenyans residing in or travelling through Iran, Israel, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Iraq, as well as other neighbouring areas potentially affected by the unfolding security situation.

Kenyans in these countries have been urged to exercise extreme caution, avoid non-essential movement and steer clear of high-risk locations such as military facilities and crowded public spaces that could be targeted. The ministry emphasized the importance of adhering to guidance issued by local authorities and closely monitoring official updates from host governments regarding safety and travel arrangements.

The government also warned of potential disruptions to flights and airspace as several countries reassess security protocols in response

to the intensifying confrontation.

Travellers have been advised to confirm flight schedules with airlines and relevant authorities before making or altering travel plans, given the likelihood of cancellations, delays or airspace closures.

In addition, Kenyans who have not yet registered with their nearest embassy or consulate have been asked to do so immediately.

The ministry said registration would enable diplomatic missions to provide timely information and assistance in case of emergencies.

Citizens requiring urgent help have been directed to use official contact numbers provided by Kenyan missions in the region.

The latest escalation began after Israeli and US forces reportedly carried out air strikes on strategic sites in Iran. Iranian authorities confirmed retaliatory attacks targeting Israeli territory and US-linked facilities in parts of the Gulf.

The exchanges have raised concerns about broader regional instability and potential spillover effects affecting civilian populations and international travel.

Iranian state media also reported the death of the country's Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, in what was described as a joint US-Israeli strike on his compound.

The development, which followed remarks by US President Donald Trump, has further intensified global attention on the crisis and heightened fears of a prolonged conflict.

The Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs said it continues to monitor the evolving situation in coordination with Kenya's diplomatic missions and pledged to issue further updates through official communication channels. The government reiterated its commitment to safeguarding the welfare of Kenyans abroad during the ongoing crisis.



Union SG Roba Duba and other officials addressing the media. | Photo: Courtesy.

Counties Face Pressure Over KSh40 Billion Pension Arrears And Delayed CBAs

BY WMW

@themtkenyatimes

County governments are under mounting pressure to clear more than KSh40 billion in outstanding pension contributions to workers, with the Kenya County Government Workers Union (KCGWU) warning of decisive action if the arrears are not remitted.

Union General Secretary Roba Duba said the total pension arrears across the 47 counties stand at KSh40 billion and could rise to KSh42 billion after accounting for penalties and interest. The arrears relate to deductions made from employees' salaries but not forwarded to the Local Authorities Pension Fund (Lapfund) and the Local Authorities Pension Trust (Laptrust).

"Nairobi County is among the biggest defaulters, with arrears nearing Sh22 billion," Duba revealed, noting that while the county has begun paying current deductions, historical debts remain largely unsettled. He emphasized that delayed remittances violate the Re-

tirement Benefits Act, putting workers' retirement security at risk.

Duba warned that some counties are negotiating with pension schemes to reduce interest and penalties, but he insisted that the principal amounts must be fully paid. He added that if counties fail to clear the arrears and regularize contributions, workers will remain vulnerable despite consistent salary deductions.

The union leader also criticized the slow negotiation and implementation of collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) since devolution in 2013. The last centrally negotiated CBA was in 2012, and counties have since negotiated independently with the union.

Duba described progress as deliberately slow in some regions, though Nairobi and Mombasa have made significant strides, and Kisumu is reportedly next in line for concluding negotiations.

Talks are ongoing in Kajiado, Kilifi, and Embu counties.

Duba dismissed governors' claims of insufficient revenue, noting that counties' income has doubled since the start of devolution.

He emphasized that the government, though not profit-making, has an obligation to honor workers' rights, including promotions, which have stagnated for many employees over three years.

The union also expressed concern over the casualization of county employment, stressing the government's responsibility to provide permanent positions. Duba announced plans to form regional assemblies to ensure counties comply with labor laws and finalize pending CBAs.

He concluded by warning county governments that the union would push aggressively for full compliance with pension remittances and labor regulations. "We are putting them on notice. We will push until they play within the law," he said, signaling a firm stance ahead of further negotiations and enforcement actions.

The ongoing impasse highlights challenges in governance, fiscal management, and labor rights at the county level, raising urgent questions about accountability and protection of public sector workers' entitlements.

Education The President also launched the KSh45 billion National Solarisation Programme for Basic Education Institutions at Alliance High School.

President Ruto Pledges KSh550 Million Boost As Alliance High School Marks 100 Years

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyatimes

President William Ruto yesterday joined the Alliance High School community in Kikuyu, Kiambu County to celebrate the institution's centenary, praising its long-standing tradition of academic excellence. The President commended the school for producing some of Kenya's finest leaders and professionals and reiterated the government's commitment to supporting its continued growth and infrastructure development.

To mark the milestone, President Ruto announced a total government investment of KSh550 million in Alliance High School. This includes KSh60 million for the construction of 40 new classrooms, KSh200 million to improve roads surrounding the school, and KSh60 million for a sports academy under the Ministry of Sports. Earlier, the government had also funded a 640-bed dormitory worth KSh155 million and a dining hall costing KSh88 million, both now handed over to the school.

At Alliance Girls High School, the President confirmed KSh155 million for a 640-bed dormitory, KSh40 million for 24 classrooms, and KSh100 million for the completion of a science complex.

He emphasized that the substantial funding reflects the school's national importance and the role it plays in educating children from across Kenya.

President Ruto highlighted the government's commitment to enhancing research and innovation, noting that funding will increase from 0.8 per cent to 2 per cent of GDP.

He stressed the critical role of science and technology in driving national development and announced that the Kenya Advanced Institute of Science and Technology University at Konza Technopolis, Makueni County, will receive a government Charter to offer postgraduate studies in science, technology, and innovation.

"We will select the best First Class Honours graduates from all universities to build human capital that can solve local problems and innovate for Kenya's progress," he said.

The President also launched the KSh45 billion National Solarisation Programme for Basic Education Institutions at Alliance High School.

The initiative aims to transition schools from firewood to solar energy for cooking and lighting, reduce energy costs, expand access to reliable renewable power, and generate up to 780 megawatts of solar energy. The programme is expected to create green jobs, strengthen climate action, and accelerate Kenya's journey towards sustainable growth. The pilot phase has 266 schools already solarised, with a target of 3,213 schools by June.

During the event, Senate Speaker Amason Kingi lauded President Ruto for remarkable achievements in education over the past three years, including the employment of 100,000 teachers, construction of 23,000 classrooms, and streamlining of university funding. National Assembly Majority Leader Kimani Ichung'wah also commended the President for improving infrastructure in Alliance High School and other institutions in Kikuyu Constituency.

President Ruto inspected the ongoing 1,140-unit Kikuyu Affordable Housing Project, which has employed over 1,000 young people. He highlighted the broader national agenda, including the construction of 250,000 affordable housing units across the country. In Kiambu County alone, the government has invested KSh43 billion in 17,000 housing units, 30 modern markets, and 8,000-bed capacity hostels.

On infrastructure, KSh18 billion has been allocated for county roads and KSh22 billion for the Muthaiga-Kiambu-Ndumberi dual carriage-way to ease traffic congestion.

On healthcare, the President highlighted the Social Health Authority's coverage of over 1.3 million residents in Kiambu County, with KSh5.5 billion disbursed in the past 15 months.

President Ruto also took a swipe at the opposition, urging them to present a clear agenda to Kenyans

550M
Total
government
investment



President William Ruto and other guests arriving at Alliance High School yesterday. | Photo: Courtesy.

instead of relying on "politics of personalities."

He emphasized that the government's transformative initiatives in education, infrastructure, housing, and healthcare are tangible evidence

of economic growth and stability.

The centenary celebrations at Alliance High School reflect not only its historical significance but also the government's broader commitment to investing in education, innova-

tion, and sustainable development to drive Kenya's future.



President William Ruto being welcomed at Alliance High School by Kikuyu MP and Majority Leader Kimani Ichung'wah

Agriculture Livestock Principal Secretary Jonathan Mueke has called on the Senate to support key policy and legislative reforms

Livestock PS Urges Senate To Back Agriculture Policy And Legal Reforms

O The PS urged senators to ensure that counties allocate at least 10 per cent of their budgets to agricultural services

BY MKT REPORTER

[@themkenyatimes](#)

Livestock Principal Secretary Jonathan Mueke has called on the Senate to support key policy and legislative reforms aimed at strengthening Kenya's agricultural sector and enhancing national food security.

Speaking at a Senate retreat in Naivasha, Mueke, representing Mutahi Kagwe,

highlighted that the Ministry of Agriculture has lined up several legislative and policy proposals designed to boost food production and improve the livelihoods of farmers.

The PS urged senators to ensure that counties allocate at least 10 per cent of their budgets to agricultural services, emphasizing the importance of investment at the grassroots level to spur productivity.

He also acknowledged gaps in the implementation of agricultural extension services, citing weak coordination and insufficient liaison mechanisms between the national government and counties.

"Agriculture is a devolved function, but there is a big

disconnect in its implementation," Mueke said, stressing the need for liaison offices in every ward to improve coordination. He noted that the Ministry has already earmarked funds to operationalize these offices.

Among the draft bills prepared by the Ministry and slated for Parliament are the Veterinary Services Bill and the Animal Products and Technology Bill. These measures aim to provide a legal framework for sustainable livestock and agricultural development.

However, concerns were raised by senators regarding the government's support to the sector. Senate Committee

on Agriculture Chairperson David Wakoli criticized the national government for limited practical interventions, noting that irrigation development has lagged behind pre-election promises and that fisheries and the blue economy remain underdeveloped. "If you visit most fish landing sites, beach management committees have hardly felt the impact of government policies," he said.

Senator Catherine Mumma questioned the frequency of intergovernmental sectoral meetings and urged the government to support counties without encroaching on devolved functions. She also called for mechanisms to ensure counties have access to quality farm inputs.

Other senators echoed calls for stronger policy measures.

Wahome Wamatangi stressed the need for fair producer prices to protect local farmers, while Joyce Korir advocated for zero-rating animal feeds to reduce production costs. Senator Beatrice Ogola urged



PS Jonathan Mueke in Naivasha during the Senate retreat | Photo: Courtesy

the government to strengthen regulation to ensure the safety and quality of animal feeds. The retreat concluded with a consensus that comprehensive policy support, legal reforms, and improved coordination

between national and county governments are critical to achieving a more productive and sustainable agricultural sector in Kenya.

Polls A new survey by Mizani Africa shows incumbent Othaya MP Wambugu Wainaina holding a narrow lead

Wambugu Wainaina Leads In Othaya As Tight Race With Antony Gitonga Intensifies

BY MKT Correspondents

[@themkenyatimes](#)

A new survey by Mizani Africa shows incumbent Othaya MP Wambugu Wainaina holding a narrow lead in what is shaping up to be one of the most competitive parliamentary contests in the region.

According to the poll released last week on, Wainaina commands 29.2 per cent support, edging out challenger Antony Gitonga, who trails closely at 28.7 per cent.

The slim 0.5 percentage point margin effectively frames the contest as a tight two-horse race, with the rest of the candidates registering single-digit support.

Patrick Ngunjiri garners

8.3 per cent, former area MP Gichuki Mugambi follows at 8.1 per cent, lawyer-cum-blogger Wahome Thuku stands at 4.9 per cent, Edmond Kimaru has 4.3 per cent, and Lawrence Kagwi posts 1.1 per cent. Notably, 15.4 per cent of voters remain undecided, leaving significant room for late shifts that could alter the final outcome.

While Wainaina's lead underscores the power of incumbency, the broader party landscape introduces additional complexity.

The Democracy for the Citizens Party (DCP), under which Gitonga is running, enjoys a constituency party preference rating of 38.7 per cent, compared to 32.0 per

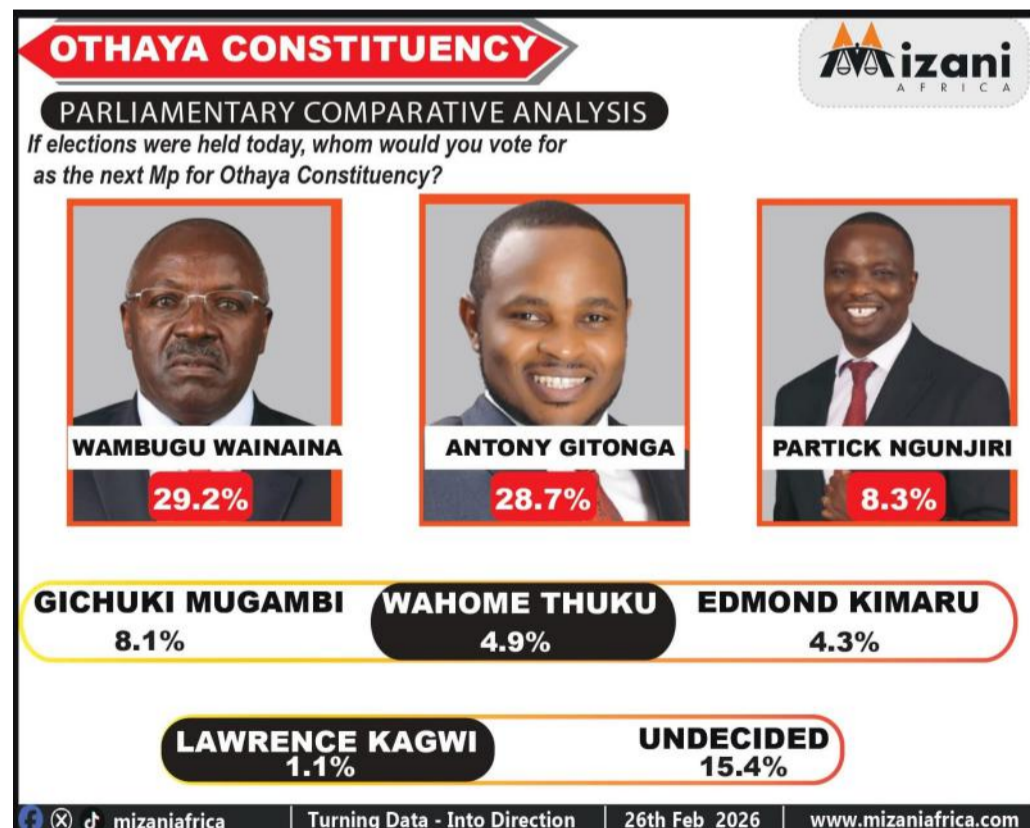
cent for the United Democratic Alliance (UDA), which is Wainaina's party.

Should DCP supporters consolidate firmly behind their candidate, the party's structural advantage could significantly tighten the race or potentially shift momentum.

However, Wainaina benefits from the visibility, grassroots networks and institutional presence that come with incumbency.

His established support base and campaign infrastructure may cushion him against party headwinds, particularly if he succeeds in retaining UDA loyalists while attracting undecided and independent-leaning voters.

With the numbers so closely



aligned, analysts suggest that turnout efficiency and party discipline could ultimately determine the winner.

In a race where less than one percentage point separates the top contenders, mobilization efforts and last-mile persua-

sion may prove decisive.

As consolidation deepens and campaigns intensify, Othaya Constituency is emerging as a battleground where incumbency strength meets party momentum.

For now, Wainaina holds the

advantage, but with a sizeable undecided bloc and a strong party machine behind his rival, the contest remains highly fluid.

Probe United Alternative Government has urged a swift probe into the helicopter crash that killed Emurua Dikirr MP Johanna Ngeno.

United Alternative Government Demands Independent Probe Into Helicopter Crash

- **Security Concerns Raised – Opposition leaders insist Interior CS Kipchumba Murkomen should step aside to allow impartial investigations.**
- **International Oversight Urged – Calls made for agencies like Scotland Yard or the FBI to step in if local inquiry lacks transparency.**
- **National Unity Emphasized – Leaders across the opposition frame the tragedy as a moment for justice and healing beyond politics.**

BY MKT Correspondents
@themkenyatimes

The United Alternative Government has called for a swift and thorough investigation into the helicopter crash that claimed the life of Emurua Dikirr Member of Parliament, Johanna Ngeno, along with five others.

Opposition leader Rigathi Gachagua urged the government to conduct a comprehensive inquiry to determine the circumstances surrounding the tragic accident, warning against any attempt to politicize the incident.

Speaking during a public engagements in Nyandarua County, Gachagua alleged that Ngeno was coerced into signing an impeachment document against him under pressure from the Presidency.

“The late Ngeno faced intimidation and duress during his tenure. These circumstances cannot be ignored while investigating his untimely death,” he said.

Gachagua further called for the Cabinet Secretary for Interior, Kipchumba Murkomen, to step aside to allow for an



Some of the opposition leaders during the Sunday service yesterday.

impartial inquiry. He noted that Murkomen had previously expressed political differences with Ngeno and had been implicated in activities that allegedly destabilized opposition politics.

The opposition leader added that if the government fails to ensure an independent investigation, international agencies such as Scotland Yard or the FBI should be invited to guarantee transparency.

In his statement, Gachagua described the crash as a national tragedy and urged unity across political divides. “This is not about politics; it is about justice for Johanna Ngeno and the families who lost loved ones,” he said.

Other leaders also expressed concern over the incident.

Former Vice President and Wiper Patriotic Front party leader Stephen Kalonzo

Musyoka called for calm and restraint, emphasizing the need for an investigation that is transparent and free from political interference.

He noted that Ngeno’s death should serve as a reminder of the dangers that public servants may face and the importance of upholding rule of law in sensitive political matters.

Former Cabinet Secretary and Jubilee Party presidential aspirant Fred Matiangi criticized the government for failing to protect leaders who serve the public, saying, “The administration has consistently taken the citizens for granted and allowed criminal elements to thrive under its watch. This has only fueled distrust and unpopularity.” Matiangi, who has often been involved in governance reforms, urged authorities to ensure accountability and justice.

Speaking alongside other opposition figures, including Democratic Party of Kenya (DP) party leader JB Muturi and his DAP-K counterpart Eugene Wamalwa, Gachagua emphasized the role of faith in national healing. The team participated in a Sunday service at the AIPCA Nyandarua North Diocese, praying for divine intervention for the nation and for peace in a period of political turbulence.

After the service, they engaged with local communities in Nyahuru town, Maili Nne, and Shamata to meet constituents and discuss national and county-level concerns.

The United Opposition has vowed to form a government that will prioritize listening to citizens and safeguarding their interests.

“The people of Kenya deserve leaders who protect their welfare rather than intimidate or coerce them. We commit to ushering in a new administration guided by justice, accountability, and service,” Gachagua said.

Political analysts have warned that Ngeno’s death could heighten tensions within opposition ranks and the broader political landscape.

They called on the government to act decisively to prevent speculation and maintain public confidence in national institutions.

As investigations commence, families of the deceased and their communities are calling for transparency and accountability, emphasizing that the tragedy should not be politicized or manipulated for partisan gains.

The United Opposition’s call

for an independent probe, including the potential involvement of international investigative agencies, underscores the intensity of political scrutiny surrounding the incident and the demand for a credible and impartial inquiry.

The UAG principals were accompanied by dozens of current, former and aspiring leaders

Development Discussions focused on strengthening collaboration between national and county government structures to ensure efficient service delivery

Jamii Imara Mashinani Forum Strengthens Citizen Engagement With A Forum In Isiolo County

The JIM team began their engagement on Friday with a courtesy call at the Isiolo County Commissioner's office

BY WMW

@themkenyatimes

Isiolo County residents had a unique opportunity to engage directly with government officials and other partners during the Jamii Imara Mashinani (JIM) forum held over the weekend. The event, led by Principal Secretary for Public Health and Professional Standards, Mary Muthoni, brought together county leadership, religious institutions, parastatals, and organizations such as the Equity Group Foundation to provide updates on ongoing government projects and initiatives while addressing community concerns.

The JIM team began their engagement on Friday with a courtesy call at the Isiolo County Commissioner's office, where they were briefed on the county's socio-economic landscape, ongoing government programs under

the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), and the challenges facing the area.

Discussions focused on strengthening collaboration between national and county government structures to ensure efficient service delivery, improve health systems, and enhance grassroots development.

During the briefing, the PS Muthoni acknowledged the work of Community Health Promoters (CHPs) at the grassroots level. These health workers play a critical role in preventive and promotive health interventions, particularly in remote areas where access to formal health facilities is limited.

The use of Barazas was also emphasized as an effective platform to raise awareness on health, security, and civic engagement.

She highlighted the importance of strengthening primary healthcare systems and improving referral linkages to ensure seamless, people-centered service delivery across the county.

The forum also provided a platform for residents to discuss key issues affecting their communities.

On Saturday, over 1,000 residents attended the main public session at St. Eusebius Catholic Church Hall in Isiolo

Town.

During the session, citizens raised dozens of questions spanning health, education, water access, roads, unemployment, insecurity, and youth empowerment. Government officials responded to each query, explaining ongoing projects and future plans. Several completed and ongoing development initiatives were highlighted during the forum.

The Isiolo Township Affordable Housing project in Burat LMD is 80% complete, backed by KSh500 million. In Wabera Ward, the Public Works Affordable Housing project, with a budget of KSh1.4 billion, has commenced construction. The Isiolo Modern Market in Bulapesa Ward, aimed at enhancing local commerce, is 75% complete with KSh585 million invested.

Infrastructure projects such as the Isiolo-Kipsing Highway, implemented by Smartways and Didos contractors, are nearing completion, with 70% and 90% of the works done respectively, supported by a combined KSh230 million investment. These roads will significantly improve connectivity, facilitate movement of goods, and link agricultural zones to markets and essential services.

The Kachuru Junction-



Jamii Imara Mashinani moderator, PS Mary Muthoni and other government officials in Isiolo on Friday. | Photos/Courtesy.

Isiolo Township Affordable Housing project in Burat LMD is 80% complete



Gotu-Merti road murraming and compression project is 78% complete, costing KSh191 million, and aims to improve transport in Merti Sub-County.

Under the NYOTA Program, 282 youth across Burat, Bulapesa, Wabera, and Ngaremara wards have been identified, trained, and facilitated, receiving 50% of the promised support.

Merti and Cherab sub-counties are also implementing similar initiatives, providing training, placement, and funding opportunities for over 140 young people.

These programs aim to equip the youth with skills, financial support, and entrepreneurial opportunities to actively participate in local economic activities.

Energy projects were also showcased during the forum.

The hybrid power generation plant in Merti Sub-County is 97% complete, featuring two 90kVA and two 45kVA gensets, a photovoltaic plant, battery storage, and power con-

version systems with a total output of 259 kW.

This project will provide reliable electricity to support local industry, health facilities, and community services.

PS Muthoni noted how citizen engagement has strengthened trust between government and residents.

She emphasized that the Whole-of-Government approach ensures that agencies such as the National Employment Authority and the National Industrial Training Authority (NITA) guide youth on employment and skills development opportunities.

The forum which was 10th by the caucus also served as a platform for residents to share feedback, helping the government adjust and improve service delivery. Issues on land, water access, environmental services, and ensuring a steady supply of essential medicines through the Kenya Medical Supplies Authority (KEMSA) were discussed, with officials providing clari-

ty and solutions.

The engagement also featured media interviews, where topics such as drug abuse, infrastructure, SHA, and government service delivery were discussed through live call-in sessions.

The approach enables wider community participation, ensuring that even residents who could not attend the forum in person were informed of government activities and opportunities.

The JIM forum reaffirmed the government's commitment to bringing services closer to citizens, fostering collaboration between national and county structures, and empowering communities through development, skills training, and improved service delivery.

The event highlighted how participatory governance can enhance transparency, accountability, and citizen understanding of government programs, ultimately contributing to Isiolo County's social and economic transformation.



Jamii Imara Mashinani members in a consultative meeting with Muslim community leaders in Isiolo on Friday.



Government officials with members of public during the public forum on Saturday.

Education Gatundu North MP Elijah Njoroge Kururia confirmed the closures, warning that more schools in the constituency could face a similar fate

Student Shortage Forces Closure Of Four Secondary Schools In Gatundu North

BY John Kamau

@themtkenyatimes

The Ministry of Education has closed four secondary schools in Gatundu North Constituency, Kiambu County, following a sharp decline in student enrolment.

The affected institutions; Kamwangi, Kaibere, Miteero and Mbichi secondary schools were shut down after their student populations dropped to unsustainable levels. The remaining learners have since been transferred to nearby schools to continue their education without disruption.

Gatundu North MP Elijah Njoroge Kururia confirmed the closures, warning that more schools in the constituency could face a similar fate if the trend persists.

He explained that dwindling enrolment has significantly increased operational costs, making it economically unviable to keep some institutions open.

Speaking while issuing bursary cheques worth Sh29.6 million to over 4,000 learners in 25 day secondary schools, the MP noted that each beneficiary received Sh7,000.

He pointed out that some schools had as few as 20 students, translating to about two learners per class. In such cases, teachers were forced to handle multiple subjects for very small groups, a situation he described as costly and unsustainable for both the government and parents. "You find that a school has about 20 learners, meaning that each class has about two students who have to be taught all subjects by all teachers.

This is too costly and unsustainable," Kururia said, reiterating that consolidation was necessary to ensure efficient use of resources.

The legislator attributed the decline in enrolment partly to changing family trends in the region. He expressed concern that many young couples are opting to have only one child, while others are delaying or avoiding par-

enthood altogether. According to him, this demographic shift has significantly reduced the number of school-age children, directly affecting enrolment in local institutions.

Kururia called for coordinated intervention among stakeholders to address the root causes of the problem. He urged school boards and education officials to re-evaluate strategies to attract and retain students, warning that more schools with fewer than 100 learners could soon face closure if urgent measures are not taken.

At the same time, he appealed to parents to ensure their children attend school consistently. Through the National Government Constituencies Development Fund (NGCDF), the constituency has implemented measures to ease the financial burden on families. Day secondary school students in the area are now required to pay only Sh1,500 per term, significantly lowering fees. Kururia stated that his long-term goal is to make



Gatundu North MP Elijah Njoroge with parents after disbursing bursary cheques worth KSh29.6 million to over 4000 day secondary schools' learners.

secondary education in Gatundu North virtually free.

Parents welcomed the financial support, citing the high cost of living as a major challenge. They acknowledged that many families struggle to meet basic needs, making bursary

assistance crucial in keeping children in school. However, they also echoed concerns about declining birth rates and called for renewed emphasis on parenting and education advocacy to safeguard the future of local schools.

The Mt. Kenya Times

T KE



City Nights, Lights



Day time filled with sunrays.
The night is filled with sparkling lights.
Marketing zones fill with fluorescent lamps.
And makes the spots into bright.

A lot of shopping malls in and around the city
Neon lamps and laser shows makes the city
Party gatherings, celebrations in cities

Make the night bright.

Density of the crowd, variety of people,
different cultures, different festivals,
all around the day of the week.
Make the night as bright as day with colourful
light decoration.

Rajesh Kanna B N

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

Brain's Diet - Good Company



Protein builds bodys' strength,
Carbohydrates give us energy,
Vitamins protect and heal within,
Minerals help every function improve.

What feeds the human mind and brain?
What makes our thoughts go strong?
It's the company of good people,

Where kindness and value belong.

Encouraging words are its protein,
Laughter is its carbohydrate,
Guidance and wisdom are its vitamins,
Love and care are minerals.

So, choose your circle like your diet,
Pure, nourishing, and true,
For the company you keep,
Makes your brain strong and healthy.

M.Raddhika
Freelance content writer
Sivakasi Tamil Nadu
India

Love Without Reasons Is The Most Beautiful One



Goodbye without reasons is the most painful one.

Love is unconditional.
No reasons, no seasons to dismal.
Always evergreen sight.
Fresh and flavour to feel.

Everyday it's a brought up with care.
Love is a healer.
it is always a creator.
Everlasting with spontaneous feelings.
As growing high, touching the sky
If no reasons to realise
Facing sudden calm
No reaction and no criticize
why you want balm?
Though it is a pain
it is vain.

N. SELVARANI.
B. T. ASST.
GHS-SAKKARAKKOTTAI.
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TAMILNADU.
INDIA.

I Aspire To Dream Big And Live Big



I aspire to dream big and live big.
But when it's time to live, I am afraid.

I dared to walk on a road everyone else is afraid of.
I own nothing, yet I want to live financially
independent.
Still, I believe I can survive this and win.

I hope to achieve true independence in my life.
Yet, there is still a kid inside me who wants to try
every good thing in the world.

I was pleasing people, leaving behind my space and

emotions.
In the end, I was labeled as fake and used like an
object.

After choosing myself, I accepted hatred from
everyone.
People called me fake when I chose my happiness
over theirs.
I was made to worry that I was wrong.

Later, I understood how blessed I was to be out of
those poisonous circles.
Now, I am free. I live on my own terms.
I have no one to please or satisfy.

I'm grateful for everyone who withered away from
me.
Because of you, I can now blossom on my own
land.

Amirtha K
Research Intern at C-Dac, Bangalore.

A Petal' S Tale



A petal withered from the flower
Laid defenseless and paralyzed
At the feet of the plant;
The same petal crowned

The flower for long.
A gentle zephyr brushed it aside;
Died leaves shrouded it
As casket wraps the body.
A kind breeze exposed it again ;
It swirled in the wind
And screamed for help;
Fainted at last, it almost
Touched the edge of death.
A little girl's little hands
Picked the fallen petal.
After days, the petal felt its presence
Cosily within the pages of a book.

By
Shyni. S. S,
English Teacher,
GHSS, Rameshwaram.

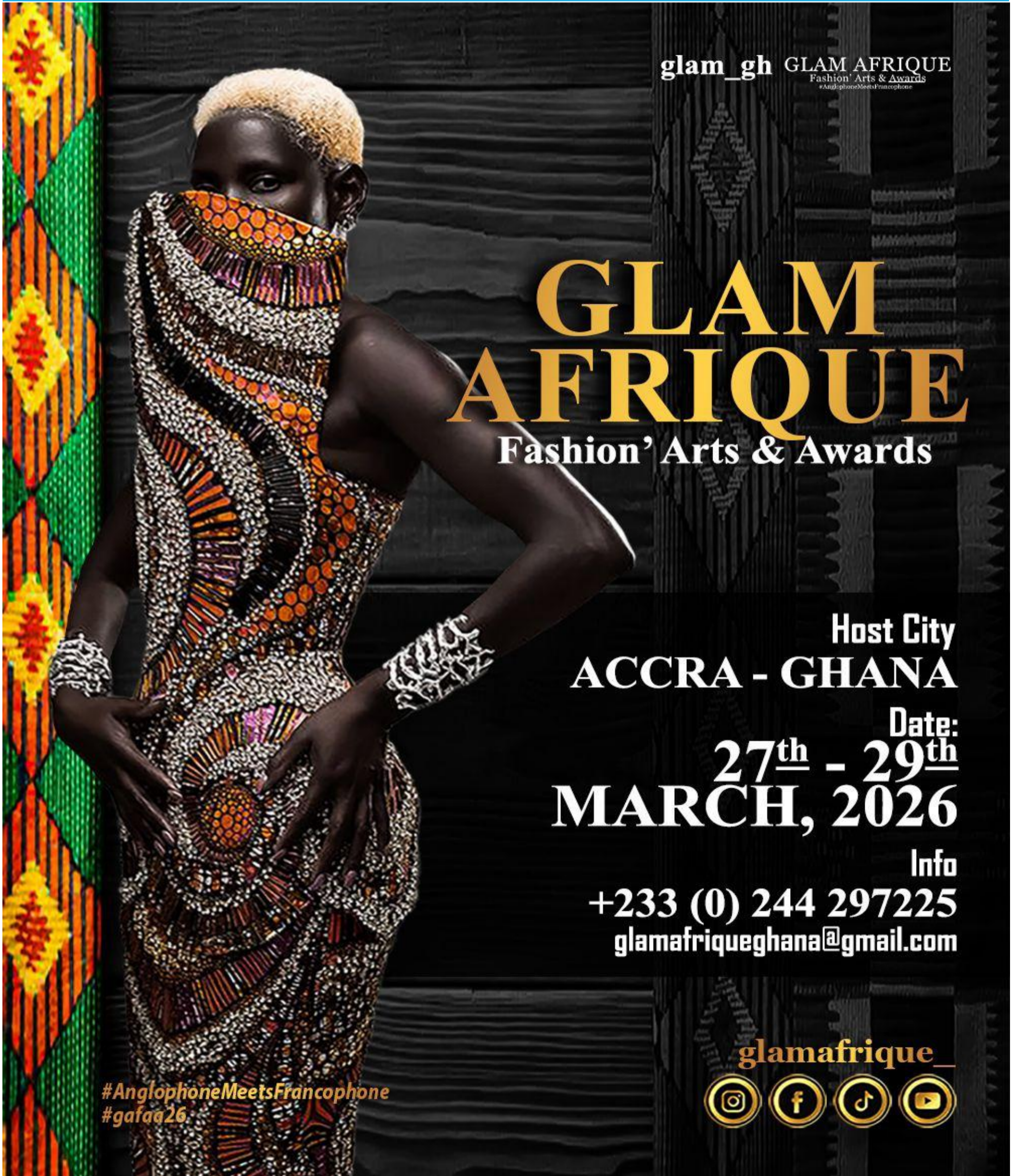


As a sapling we were planted beside
The hospital for his fame with pride
The minister for inaugural ceremony
Just a sugary testimony
We were fifty to be rowed
Guided by security to be bowed
As he timely quenched water
And fed with organic supporter
The hospital grew old
And with roots we were hold
Proud to create shade and kids to swing
And play a vital role oxygenating

One-day the security passed away
With respect made a sad sway
His dear & near morned as "tree slanted"
Now the minister here bedded
But only his clergy men mourned his soul
As deserting money was his goal
A hard storm knocked us
As few of us fell into minus
Here begins my post fallen story
To be sung in glory
Converted as fuel for needy I feel elated
Shaped as furniture feel proud
Processed for construction feel satisfied
Modified in school & as stationary feel enriched
Transformed into musical instruments feel
rhythmatically pleasant
Gratitude for my pencil & paper
Helping me to write this poem so.

G.Sarala.

An Autobiography Of A Fallen Tree



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Unity The unity of Kenya is greater than any political party, political formation or leader,” President Ruto said

Ruto Emphasizes National Unity And Development In UDA-ODM Talks

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

President William Ruto has underscored that talks between the United Democratic Alliance (UDA) and the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) will focus on national unity and the transformation of Kenya, rather than positions or personal interests.

Speaking on Saturday during a thanksgiving ceremony for Justice, Human Rights and Constitutional Affairs Principal Secretary Judith Pareno in Mashuuru, Kajiado County, the President said the broad-based arrangement offers a historic opportunity to unite the country and accelerate its progress toward a first-world economy.

“The unity of Kenya is greater than any political party, political formation or leader,” President Ruto said, emphasizing that members of UDA and ODM will compete democratically for elective positions, allowing Kenyans to decide based on leaders’ track records. He urged leaders to prioritize the country’s transformation, noting that Kenya cannot afford to delay progress.

On development, President Ruto outlined significant government investments in Kajiado County.

He announced KSh28 billion for the construction of 11,000 affordable housing units, 13 modern markets, and hostels for 3,600 students. Additionally, KSh1.6 billion has been allocated to connect 10,000 households to electricity, while KSh2.7 billion will be used to build and



President William Ruto with PS Judith Pareno and Kajiado Governor Joseph ole Lenku | Photo: Courtesy

upgrade roads, including the Imaroro-Mashuru-Isara Road, Kitengela-Rongai Road, Isinya-Konza City Road, and the recently completed 70km Ngong-Suswa Road. The President emphasized that deliberate development plans are critical to the country’s transformation.

He also assured the Maa community that the government will address land ownership challenges in Kajiado, Narok, and Samburu counties.

During the event, President Ruto commended PS Pareno for breaking barriers as a woman leader and encouraged women to serve with distinction, deliver results, and open doors for others. PS Pareno pledged to execute her mandate diligently, transparently, and accountably.

County leaders, including Kajiado Governor Joseph ole Lenku and Kajiado Central MP Memusi Kanchory, lauded the government for unprecedented development initiatives in the county. Governor Lenku thanked the government for its commitment,

while MP Kanchory noted that no previous administration had initiated comparable projects in his three terms as MP.

National Assembly Minority Leader Junet Mohamed highlighted that ODM is being strengthened ahead of the 2027 General Election and praised the government’s implementation of the 10-point agenda. He also emphasized the transformative potential of the National Infrastructure Fund Bill, which will support nationwide infrastructure development.

Narok Senator Ledama ole Kina reaffirmed ODM’s partnership with UDA, stating that the two parties will govern as equal partners in the next administration rather than remain in opposition.

The President’s address reinforced the government’s commitment to national unity, democratic processes, and accelerated socio-economic development through strategic investments in infrastructure, housing, and energy.



PS Judith Pareno addressing her guests on Saturday.

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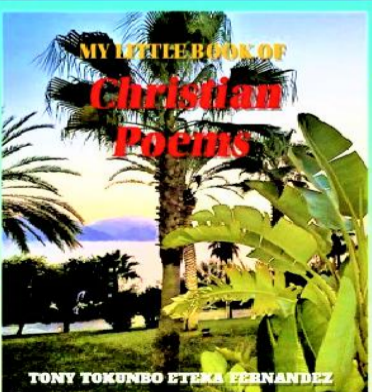
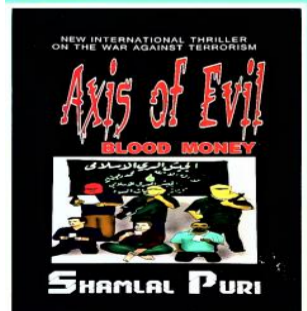
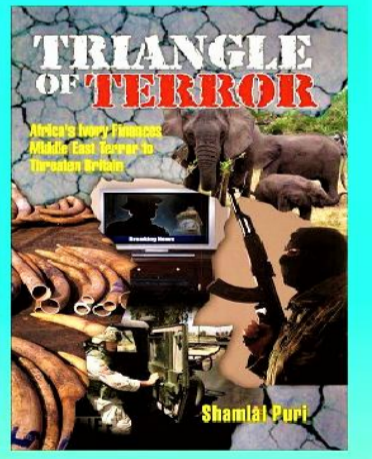
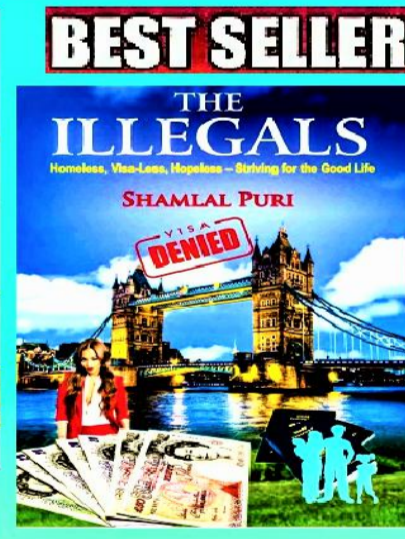
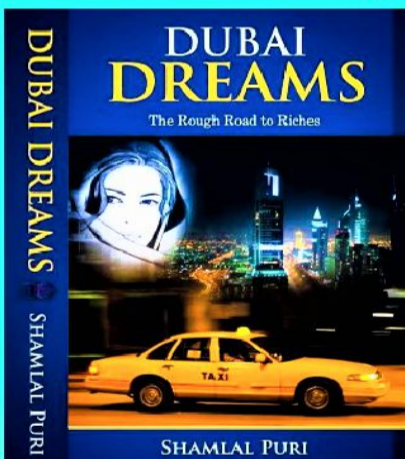
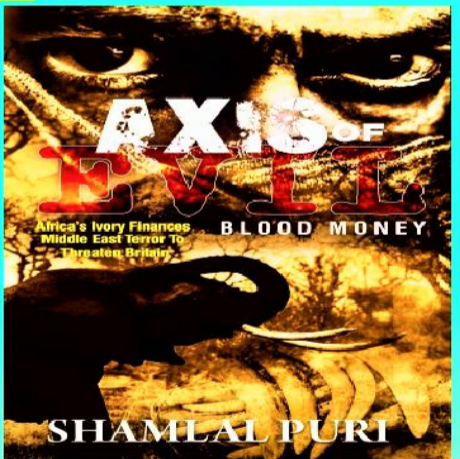
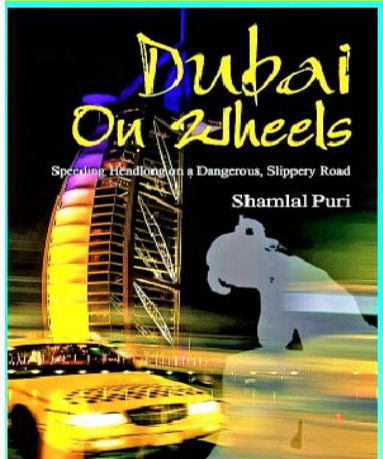
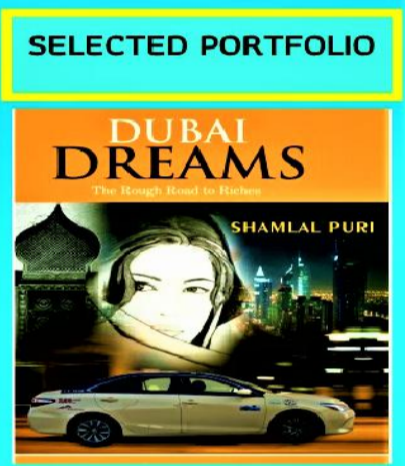
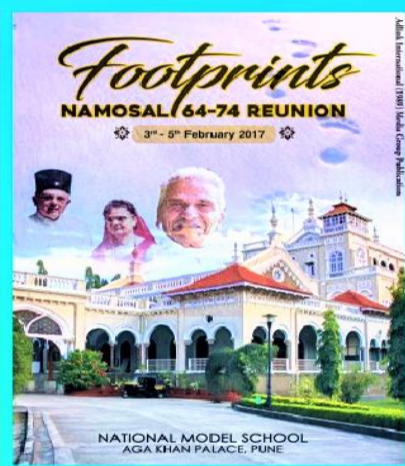
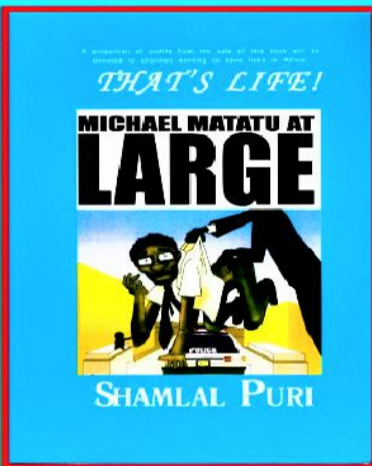
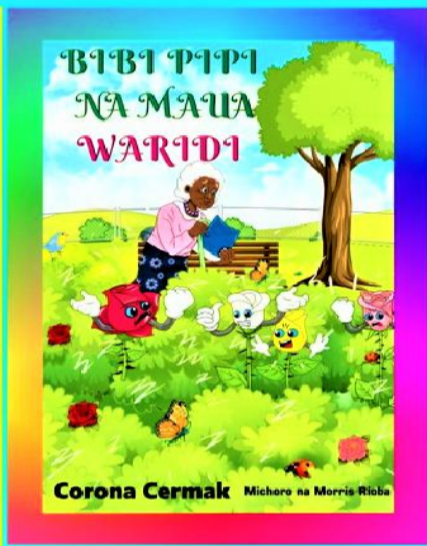
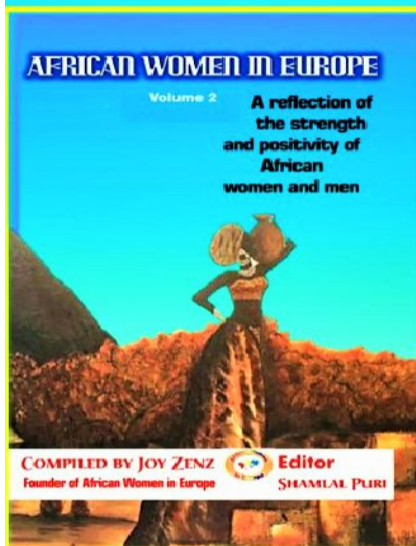
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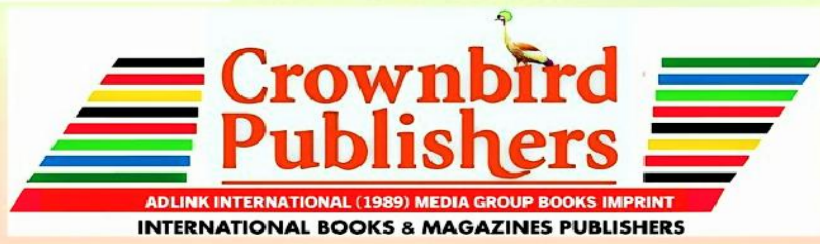
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KUPPET Tharaka Nithi County has voted out its long-serving Executive Secretary, Patrick Gitonga, ending his 28-year tenure

Gitonga Ousted After 28 Years As Muchina Dispute Shapes KUPPET Tharaka Nithi Poll

James Njebiu, a classroom teacher at Ikuu Boys' High School, emerged victorious, marking what many members described as a generational shift in leadership.

BY MKT REPORTER

[@themkenyatimes](#)

The Kenya Union of Post Primary Education Teachers (KUPPET) in Tharaka Nithi County has voted out its long-serving Executive Secretary, Patrick Gitonga, ending his 28-year tenure in a hotly contested election held at Picnic Grounds in Chuka town.

James Njebiu, a classroom teacher at Ikuu Boys' High School, emerged victorious, marking what many members described as a generational shift in leadership.

Teachers widely linked Mr Gitonga's defeat to his handling of the prolonged dispute involving Joan Muchina, the Chief Principal of St. Bakhita Chuka Girls High School. The controversy dates back to last year when Mr Gitonga led a section of teachers in demonstrations at the school, accusing Ms Muchina of defying a strike called by KUPPET. The protest turned chaotic after students reportedly broke the school's main gate and spilled into the streets of Chuka town.

Mr Gitonga had also accused the principal of being harsh on teachers and mishandling students. The allegations triggered further demonstrations by parents at the county offices of the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) and at the school. The TSC subsequently directed Ms Muchina to step aside pending investigations,

with her deputy assuming the role in an acting capacity.

However, some teachers have since criticized the manner in which the matter was handled, arguing that the accusations were exaggerated and that the union's approach damaged internal cohesion. A section of members said the dispute cost Mr Gitonga crucial support in the election.

Beyond the controversy, age and retirement were also factors in the leadership change. Some teachers argued that Mr Gitonga, having attained retirement age, was no longer best placed to represent actively serving educators. They said the union required a leader who directly experiences classroom challenges and evolving policy changes.

For her part, Ms Muchina has consistently denied wrongdoing, maintaining that the claims against her are malicious and driven by personal and vested interests, including procurement-related disputes. She has urged the TSC to consider her performance record in previous postings.

Ms Muchina was transferred to St. Bakhita Chuka Girls in 2023, a move reportedly resisted by sections of local political leaders, KUPPET officials and the school sponsor, the Catholic Diocese of Meru. Before the transfer, she served at Mwaani Girls High School from 2018, where the institution recorded notable academic and infrastructural growth. During her tenure, the KCSE mean score improved from 5.0 to 7.2, enrolment rose significantly, and the school earned regional recognition for cleanliness and co-curricular excellence.

The new KUPPET county team will now be led by Mr Njebiu as Executive Secretary, alongside a full slate of newly elected officials. Observers say that while union politics naturally evolve, the Muchina dispute appears to have played a decisive role in ending Mr Gitonga's nearly three-decade dominance of KUPPET in Tharaka Nithi County.



James Njebiu



Patrick Gitonga

Parliament Begins Funeral Preparations Of Emurua Dikirr MP Johana Ng'eno

BY MKT Correspondent

@themkenyatimes

The Parliament of Kenya has begun funeral preparations for Emurua Dikirr Member of Parliament, Johana Ng'eno Kipyegon, following his tragic death in a helicopter crash on Saturday evening.

A parliamentary team yesterday visited the late legislator's Nairobi residence to support the family and coordinate arrangements for the funeral.

Ng'eno perished at approximately 4:45 p.m. in Chepkiep, Mosop Constituency, Nandi County, along with the pilot and four other passengers.

Until his untimely death, Ng'eno served as Chairperson of the Departmental Committee on Housing, Urban Planning & Public Works and was a member of the Liaison Committee.

A statement from Parliament said



The late Johana Ng'eno

that under his leadership, the Housing Committee played a pivotal role in passing the Affordable Housing Act, 2024, which established a framework to enhance access to decent and affordable housing across Kenya.

Elected in 2013, Ng'eno was serv-

ing his third consecutive term in the National Assembly and had been widely recognized for his dedication to constituency development and legislative service.

In a formal communication to the House, National Assembly Speaker Moses Wetang'ula described



Some mourners at the late Ng'eno's Nairobi home. | Photo: Courtesy

Ng'eno's death as a devastating loss to both Parliament and the nation.

The Speaker announced the appointment of a team of legislators to support the family and coordinate funeral arrangements.

The team is led by Julius Melly of Tinderet, assisted by Mugambi Rin-

dikiri of Buuri, alongside eight other Members of Parliament. They will liaise with the family to provide support for the send-off, based on the family's decisions.

Agribusiness The move has been hailed as a major milestone for growers, processors and investors seeking to restore the crop's profitability

New Pyrethrum Law Sparks Hope For Sector Revival And Higher Farmer Earnings

BY KNA

@themkenyatimes

Pyrethrum farmers across Kenya have welcomed the repeal of the Pyrethrum Act of 2013 and the introduction of a new legal framework aimed at revitalizing the struggling but once-thriving sector. The move has been hailed as a major milestone for growers, processors and investors seeking to restore the crop's profitability and competitiveness.

The Chairman of the Pyrethrum Growers Association, Justus Monda, praised William Ruto for assenting to the repeal, describing the decision as a historic turning

point. According to Monda, the previous law had become outdated and misaligned with the evolving needs of modern agriculture. He argued that overlapping mandates and excessive bureaucracy had slowed industry growth, limiting farmers' access to markets and discouraging expansion.

Under the old framework, the Pyrethrum Regulatory Authority was responsible for licensing growers, dealers and processors, as well as collecting levies. However, stakeholders said this arrangement created duplication and at times conflicted with other agricultural statutes. With the repeal, regulatory func-

tions will now fall under the broader agricultural system overseen by the Agriculture and Food Authority, a move expected to streamline operations and harmonize sector oversight.

Industry players believe the clearer guidelines under the new law will foster a more transparent and competitive market structure. This is expected to boost acreage under cultivation, attract fresh investment and improve processing capacity. Companies such as Kentegra and the Pyrethrum Processing Company of Kenya have already been involved in revival efforts, particularly in Nakuru.

In Nakuru County, pyre-



Pyrethrum stakeholders in a farm

thrum farming has gained renewed momentum through collaboration between the county government and private stakeholders. The crop, valued for the natural insecti-

cide pyrethrin extracted from its flowers, remains a key cash crop in the region. Since 2017, more than 66 million seedlings have been distributed, benefiting over 7,000

farmers. Currently, about 2,148 acres are under cultivation, with plans to expand to 30,000 acres.

Governor Susan Kihika highlighted the construction of the Nakuru County Aggregation and Industrial Park at Egerton Agro-City as a major boost for farmers. The facility will provide cold storage to reduce post-harvest losses, curb exploitation by middlemen and promote value addition through agro-processing.

Once a leading foreign exchange earner, Kenya's pyrethrum industry has suffered in recent years due to declining production, delayed payments and regulatory bottlenecks. Stakeholders are optimistic that the new legislation will restore investor confidence, strengthen coordination within the agricultural sector and reposition pyrethrum as a key contributor to national economic growth.

U.S. - Israeli Strike On Iran Iran's state media confirmed yesterday that its Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was killed

What To Know About Latest U.S. - Israeli Strike On Iran

Iran retaliated swiftly, declaring all U.S. military bases in the region legitimate targets.

BY Xinhua News Agency

@themtkenyatimes

Iran's state media confirmed yesterday that its Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was killed in a joint U.S.-Israeli attack on Saturday, prompting Iranian missile strikes on Israel and U.S. targets across the region.

What happened?

Israel announced a "preemptive" strike on Saturday morning, deploying around 200 fighter jets in simultaneous airstrikes targeting Iran's missile and defense systems in western and central provinces. Shortly after, U.S. President Donald Trump said on his social media platform Truth Social that U.S. forces were "undertaking a massive and ongoing operation" aimed at Iran's missile industry.

Iran retaliated swiftly, declaring all U.S. military bases in the region legitimate targets. Missile strikes hit Israel and U.S. assets across several Gulf countries, including Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, Jordan, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia. Iranian media reported that the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps had closed the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's vital oil and gas shipping lanes, citing U.S. and Israeli attacks as the reason.

According to Iranian authorities, the strikes affected at least 24 of Iran's 31 provinces, causing 201 reported deaths and 747 injuries. Up to 160 people may have been killed when airstrikes hit a school in southern Iran, according to Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei. Iran's president condemned the attacks as inhumane. Missiles also struck areas near Tehran, including offices of Khamenei and President Masoud Pezeshkian.

Trump claimed that Khamenei was killed in the strikes, a report later confirmed by Iranian state media, which announced a 40-day mourning period.

Why now

Trump justified the strikes as necessary to defend the American people

from imminent threats from Iran. Similarly, the Israeli Defense Ministry stated that the operation aimed to neutralize threats to Israel. Analysts suggest that the broader goal may be regime change in Iran through targeted military action. Unlike earlier strikes in June 2025, which focused on underground nuclear facilities away from civilian areas, this operation deliberately targeted multiple cities and leadership sites, intending to eliminate top Iranian leaders while they were at command posts.

The Pentagon has named the operation "Operation Epic Fury," with officials indicating it could continue for days or weeks. Planning for the strikes reportedly began months in advance, with the final date chosen to ensure maximum strategic impact. The U.S. military had been bolstered to its highest presence in the Middle East since the 2003 Iraq invasion. Israel deployed approximately 300 advanced fighter jets with multi-layered air defense systems designed to counter short- and medium-range threats. Analysts note the strikes aim to paralyze Iran's high-level command, weaken domestic resistance, and exert military pressure for potential negotiations.

How will Iran retaliate

Iran has indicated that there are no "red lines" for retaliation following the strikes. Officials warned that responses could be open-ended and immediate. Despite U.S. and Israeli military advantages, Iran retains significant retaliatory capabilities, particularly through its ballistic missile arsenal. Some missile types could reach Israel in roughly 12 minutes.

Iran also appealed to the United Nations, reaffirming its right to self-defense and warning that retaliation

“According to Iranian authorities, the strikes affected at least 24 of Iran's 31 provinces, causing 201 reported deaths and 747 injuries



People attend a protest against U.S.-Israeli attacks on Iran, in Tehran, Iran, Feb. 28, 2026. | Photo: Xinhua.

will continue decisively until the aggression stops. Experts caution that Iran could coordinate with regional allies, including Hezbollah in Lebanon, Houthis in Yemen, and Iraqi Shiite militias, to strike U.S. and Israeli targets across the Middle East.

Will conflict escalate?

Following Khamenei's reported death, Trump stated that "heavy and pinpoint bombing" would continue as long as necessary to achieve "peace throughout the Middle East and, indeed, the world." Analysts warned that what began as a calculated military operation could spiral into a wider regional conflict. Iraqi political analyst Adel al-Ghurairi noted that the failure of diplomacy leaves the military option as the primary tool for rolling back Iran's nuclear progress.

The strikes could pressure Gulf countries to take sides, potentially exacerbating existing rivalries and security dilemmas. Observers note that domestic political considerations influenced the timing, with the U.S. administration seeking a rapid resolution ahead of midterm elections and Israel's Prime Minister



People attend a protest against U.S.-Israeli attacks on Iran, in New York, the United States, on Feb. 28, 2026. | Photo: Xinhua/Zhang Fengguo

Benjamin Netanyahu aiming to bolster political standing.

Economic risks are also significant. Prolonged conflict could push Brent crude oil prices toward \$100 per barrel, raising global inflation by up to 0.7 percentage points. Iran's closure of the Strait of Hormuz, which handles 20% of global oil supply, could trigger immediate disruptions. The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and its

allies may face pressure to increase production to offset supply shortages.

The situation remains fluid, with heightened fears of regional instability and broader military escalation. Both sides appear committed to sustained operations, while international observers warn of the potential humanitarian, economic, and security consequences should the conflict continue unchecked.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Kenyans Fall Victim To Recruitment Scams Linked To Russia-Ukraine War

A sinister wave of recruitment scams tied to the Russia-Ukraine conflict is sweeping across Kenya, ensnaring desperate job seekers with false promises of lucrative opportunities abroad. Brokers, exploiting economic hardship and high unemployment, are luring vulnerable youth into perilous assignments that in some cases lead to military involvement rather than the advertised security or construction jobs.

Authorities have sounded the alarm, warning that corruption networks have infiltrated vital systems to facilitate fraudulent passports, fake military identification papers, and falsified travel documents. "We are seeing organized syndicates exploiting loopholes in our institutions," a senior immigration official disclosed, stressing the urgent need for vigilance.

Victims recount being approached through social media and informal agents who demand hefty fees to process travel documents. Many only discover the deception upon arrival in Eastern Europe. "I



thought I was going to work in logistics," said one returnee, "but the reality was far more dangerous than anything I imagined."

Government officials have urged citizens to verify overseas job offers through accredited agencies and to report suspicious dealings. Labour Cabinet Secretary Florence Bore emphasized: "No Kenyan should risk their life through unverified recruitment. We are tightening oversight to protect our people."

Analysts argue that the scams

thrive in a climate of economic desperation. With youth unemployment stubbornly high, the allure of quick money abroad remains potent. Yet the unfolding crisis underscores the need for transparency in recruitment processes and stronger safeguards for citizens seeking opportunities overseas.

The warning is stark: in the fog of war, false promises can cost lives.

By Erick Otieno, Laikipia University

Tension In The Middle East: A Three-Way Standoff

The Middle East is once again on the brink. A volatile three-way standoff between the United States, Israel, and Iran has escalated into one of the region's most dangerous flashpoints in years, with strikes, counterstrikes, and mounting civilian casualties underscoring the peril. At the heart of the crisis lies Iran's nuclear ambitions and its support for proxy militias, issues that Washington and Jerusalem view as existential threats.

Recent coordinated U.S. and Israeli attacks on Iranian military and nuclear infrastructure triggered retaliatory missile and drone strikes from Tehran, spreading instability across the region. Urban centers in Israel and Iran have been hit, while Gulf states such as Bahrain and the UAE remain on high alert. The Strait of Hormuz, a vital artery for global energy trade, now faces disruption, rattling international markets.

"This is a dangerous escalation that risks spiraling out of control," warned UN Secretary-General António Guterres, urging restraint and renewed diplomacy. Israel insists it cannot tolerate a nucle-



ar-armed Iran, while Tehran accuses its adversaries of aggression and vows continued resistance. Washington, caught between deterrence and diplomacy, has hardened its stance after repeated breakdowns in nuclear talks.

The human toll is rising. Civilians displaced, infrastructure damaged, and humanitarian needs growing—all while global powers like Russia and China call for de-escalation. Analysts argue only sustained

negotiations, backed by neutral mediators, can defuse the crisis. Confidence-building measures and regional security frameworks may offer a path forward.

For now, the Middle East teeters on a knife-edge—proof that in this standoff, miscalculation could ignite a wider war.

By Collins Kibet, Koitalel University

Redefining Kenya, Africa, And Beyond Media Narratives

For decades, Africa's story has been told through foreign lenses—often reduced to tropes of poverty, war, and underdevelopment. What has been obscured is the continent's resilience, creativity, and cultural richness. Today, a new generation is rewriting that narrative. The voices of tomorrow—young journalists, bloggers, podcasters, and digital creators—are reshaping how Kenya, Africa, and the wider world are perceived.

Armed with smartphones, social media, and independent platforms, these storytellers bypass traditional gatekeepers to produce authentic accounts rooted in their communities. They spotlight innovation, entrepreneurship, environmental stewardship, and mental health awareness, shifting focus from crisis to solutions. "We are not what the world has told us to be," one youth-led campaign declared, capturing the spirit of a continent reclaiming its identity.

In Kenya, young reporters highlight grassroots initiatives that enhance food security and foster peace. Across Africa, similar voices are dismantling the "single story"



of hardship, replacing it with narratives of ambition and creativity. Universities play a crucial role, nurturing critical thinking and ethics among journalism students who will become custodians of truth and defenders of dignity.

Technology amplifies this transformation. A novel written in a rural village can reach readers worldwide within minutes, enabling intercultural dialogue and countering misinformation. Yet, the responsibility is heavy: tomorrow's voices must

remain ethical, accurate, and sensitive, ensuring storytelling builds rather than destroys trust.

The shift is unmistakable. Africa's youth are not asking to be heard—they are speaking with conviction, writing with confidence, and declaring a future defined by pride, not pity.

The narrative is changing, and the world must listen.

By Beatrice Chepkemoi, Laikipia University

Heavy Rains Return As Planting Season Begins

Heavy rains have swept across Kenya's breadbasket regions just as planting season gets underway, offering both promise and peril for farmers already burdened by soaring input costs. While rainfall is vital for crop establishment, its intensity has disrupted field preparations, leaving tractors stranded in waterlogged soils and raising fears of seed washout.

Agricultural experts caution that persistent downpours could delay planting schedules and erode soil nutrients. Reports of localized flooding in low-lying areas have heightened anxieties. The Food and Agriculture Organization has warned that climate variability is increasingly distorting planting calendars, complicating farmers' ability to plan effectively.

Economists add another layer of concern: rising production costs often translate into higher food prices months later. If flooding or crop disease reduces yields, supply constraints could intensify market pressures. The World Bank has previously noted that climate disruptions, combined with input inflation, pose serious risks to food



security in developing economies where agriculture anchors livelihoods.

Farmers' associations are urging government intervention through temporary fertilizer subsidies, improved drainage infrastructure, and expanded crop insurance schemes. "We need urgent support to cushion against unpredictable weather and rising costs," one farmer in Trans Nzoia said, reflecting widespread frustration. Agricultural authorities insist they

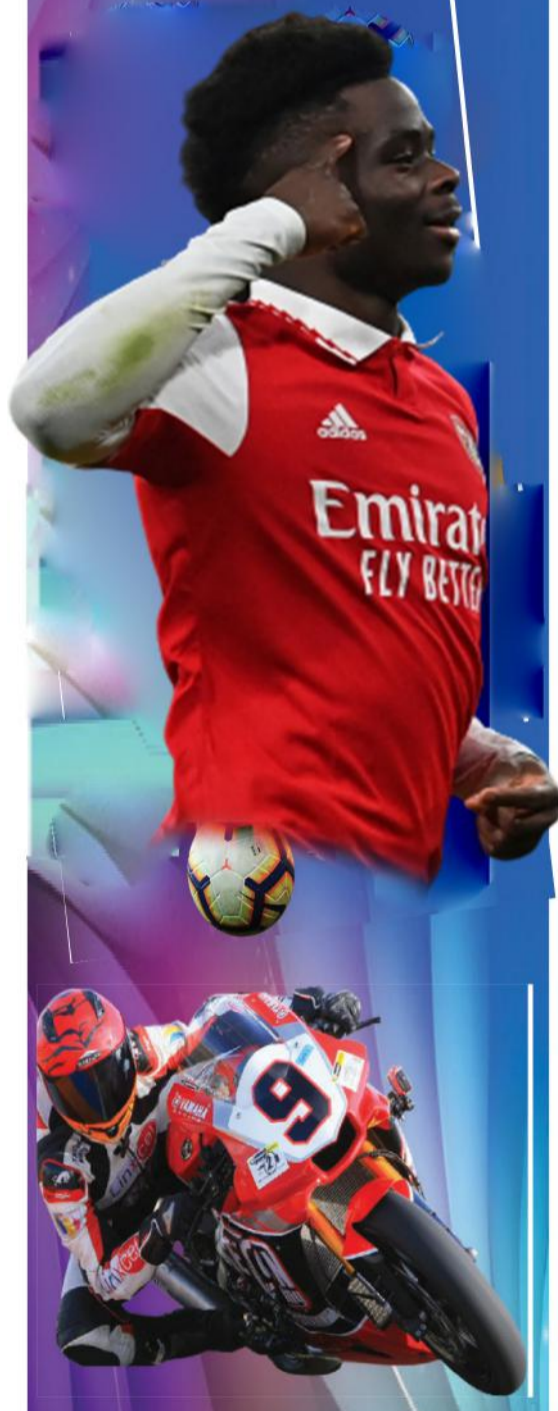
are monitoring rainfall patterns and market developments closely. Yet for many farmers, what should be a season of optimism is unfolding under a cloud of economic uncertainty.

The rains may nourish the soil, but without decisive action, they could also drown the hopes of Kenya's farmers.

By Rebah Mukalo, Laikipia University

SPORTS NEWS

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Sports >> *Kenya Police FC reignited their Kenya Premier League campaign on Sunday afternoon with a decisive 2-0 victory over Bandari at the Police Sacco Stadium

Kenya Police Tighten Grip With Commanding Win Over Bandari

By MKT Sport

Kenya Police FC reignited their Kenya Premier League campaign on Sunday afternoon with a decisive 2-0 victory over Bandari at the Police Sacco Stadium, a result that underscored their growing momentum in the title race. Yves Koutiama struck early in the 13th minute, while Jacques Bowamba sealed the contest in the 76th, ensuring the defending champions remain firmly in contention.

The victory lifts Police to 37 points, narrowing the gap to just three behind third-placed Shabana and 12 adrift of leaders Gor Mahia. It also marks their second consecutive win after dispatching Sofapaka 2-0 earlier in the week.

Coach Nicholas Muyoti, visibly buoyed by his side's resurgence, told reporters: "We needed consistency, and back-to-back wins show the boys are beginning to believe again. Every point matters now, and we are chasing the leaders with renewed focus."

Koutiama, who has been in scintillating form, opened the scoring with a clinical finish that left Bandari's defence scrambling. Speaking after the match, the striker said: "I feel at home here, and scoring for Police is always special. We know the league is tough, but we are ready to fight until the last day."

Bowamba's second-half strike, a composed effort that capped off a flowing move, effectively ended Bandari's hopes of a comeback. The Congolese forward remarked: "It was important to kill the game. We cannot afford to drop points at this stage, and I am happy to contribute."

For Bandari, the defeat was a sobering reminder of the challenges ahead. Coach Twahir Muhiddin admitted his side lacked sharpness in key moments: "We conceded cheaply,



Bandari's Frank Ouya (L) battles for the ball with Kenya Police's Charles Ouma. PHOTO/BANDARI FOOTBALL CLUB.

and against a team like Police, you pay the price. We must regroup quickly because the fixtures are unforgiving."

The result adds intrigue to the Premier League standings, with Gor Mahia still leading the pack but Police showing signs of a late surge. Analysts note that Muyoti's men, buoyed by their foreign imports, could yet mount a serious challenge if they sustain their current form.

Football commentator Carol Radull observed: "Police have the depth and discipline to push

the leaders. The question is whether they can maintain this rhythm against tougher opponents in the coming weeks."

Kenya Police's resurgence is a timely reminder of the competitive spirit that defines the Premier League. Their disciplined approach, tactical maturity, and reliance on foreign talent have injected fresh energy into the campaign. Yet, the road ahead is steep, with Gor Mahia's dominance and Shabana's resilience posing formidable hurdles.

Still, as Muyoti aptly put it,

"We are chasing the leaders with renewed focus." That statement captures the essence of Police's mission: a relentless pursuit of glory, driven by belief and discipline.

The law enforcers have sounded the siren — and the rest of the league must take notice.

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *AFC Leopards stormed back into the Kenya Premier League title race with a resounding 5-1 victory over Shabana at the Nyayo Stadium yesterday evening

AFC Leopards Roar Past Shabana In Fiery Nyayo Clash



AFC Leopards players celebrate their win over Shabana. PHOTO/AFC LEOPARDS SC.

By MKT Sport

AFC Leopards stormed back into the Kenya Premier League title race with a resounding 5-1 victory over Shabana at the Nyayo Stadium yesterday evening, a match dramatically interrupted when police lobbed teargas into the stands, forcing fans to flee for safety. The emphatic win keeps Ingwe within six points of leaders Gor Mahia, who top the table with 46 points, while Shabana remain third on 40.

The contest began with Leopards asserting dominance early. Samuel Semo and Tyson Otiemo struck in the first half to give Ingwe a 2-1 lead at the break. Shabana's Wycliffe Awiko briefly revived hopes with a 61st-minute

goal, but Samuel Ssenyonjo restored Leopards' cushion just seven minutes later.

Chaos erupted soon after when teargas fumes engulfed the stadium, halting play and sending terrified supporters scrambling. "We were caught completely off guard," said one fan outside the stadium. "Families had to run, children were crying—it was a frightening scene."

When play resumed, Leopards showed no mercy. Kayci Odhiambo unleashed a thunderous strike in the 70th minute to make it 4-1, before Ssenyonjo bagged his second of the night in the 74th, sealing a statement victory.

Coach Thomas Trucha hailed his side's resilience amid the disruption: "The boys kept their focus even when the atmosphere

turned hostile. This win is about character as much as quality. We are chasing Gor Mahia, and we will not stop."

Shabana's head coach Sammy Okoth admitted his team was outplayed but lamented the off-field incident: "We lost concentration after the stoppage, and Leopards punished us. But the teargas episode was unacceptable—it disrupted the rhythm of the game and endangered lives."

League officials later confirmed they are investigating the incident. A Football Kenya Federation (FKF) spokesperson stated: "Safety of fans is paramount. We are reviewing reports from security agencies to ensure accountability and prevent recurrence."

Analysts believe Leopards' attacking flair could yet tilt the ti-

tle race. Sports journalist Milton Nyakundi observed: "Ingwe's firepower is unmatched when they click. Ssenyonjo and Odhiambo are proving decisive, and if they sustain this form, Gor Mahia will feel the pressure."

Fans, though shaken by the teargas chaos, left the stadium buzzing about the team's performance. "This was vintage Leopards," said longtime supporter James Mwangi. "We want the league back, and with this kind of football, it feels possible."

As Trucha summed up: "We showed we can fight through adversity. Now the fight continues—on the pitch, for the title."

AFC Leopards have roared, and the league has been warned.

SPORTS NEWS



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SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



Sister Brenda Hampton The Angel Of Alabama And A Lifetime Of Freedom Fighting



By: Anila Bukhari
@themkenyatimes

Sister Brenda Hampton is widely known throughout Alabama as a fearless advocate, a humanitarian leader, and a modern-day freedom fighter. Rooted in faith and strengthened by legacy, she has devoted her life to defending civil rights, protecting her community's health, and ensuring that justice is not just spoken about—but lived. Born and raised in Courtland, Alabama, Sister Brenda Hampton carries forward the powerful heritage of the Legendary Freedom Fighting Hampton Family, a name long associated with courage, resistance, and unwavering service.

Growing up in a family known for standing boldly against injustice, Sister Brenda learned early that freedom requires action. The Hampton family legacy instilled in her the importance of unity, faith, and organized community strength. Surrounded by examples of activism and resilience, she developed a deep understanding that leadership is not about position—it is about responsibility. That belief would later define her life's work.

Over the years, Sister Brenda has built a distinguished career as a civil and human rights advocate. Her advocacy has focused not only on traditional civil rights issues but also on environmental justice, political representation, and community empowerment. She believes that civil rights extend to clean water, safe environments, equal political participation, and access to educational resources. Her work reflects a holistic understanding of justice.

In 2019, her dedication was honored when she received the Thomas S. Grant Humanitarian Award from the NAACP Alabama chapter. This recognition celebrated her tireless humanitarian efforts and her consis-

tent leadership in defending underserved communities. That same year, she was recognized in Birmingham, Alabama, during the Women Who Shape the State Awards as an Honorary Freedom Fighter—an acknowledgment of her impact on shaping policy, protecting rights, and strengthening communities across the state.

Sister Brenda serves as the CEO and President of The Concerned Citizens of North Alabama, an organization committed to protecting public health and advocating for environmental accountability. Under her leadership, the organization has taken strong action against water contamination and industrial pollution concerns affecting local residents. She has been particularly vocal regarding the dangers of harmful chemicals and their long-term effects on families.

As Administrator of The Concerned Citizens WMEL Water Authority Grassroots initiative, she has worked directly with citizens to demand transparency, safety, and responsible water management. Her membership in the Warriors for Clean Water further highlights her commitment to ensuring that every family—regardless of income or background—has access to safe drinking water. Sister Brenda also serves as a member of the National PFAS Perfluorooctanoic Acid Coalition, standing at the forefront of efforts to address chemical contamination nationwide. She understands that environmental injustice often targets vulnerable communities, and she refuses to allow silence to prevail where action is needed.

Her leadership extends beyond environmental justice into education and community development. As President of the Resource Center at the North Alabama Missionary Academy, she supports initiatives that provide students with resources, mentorship, and encouragement. She believes that education is a cornerstone of freedom and that empowering youth is essential for lasting change. Her work at the academy reflects her desire to nurture future leaders grounded in both knowledge

and moral strength.

In 2023, Sister Brenda's extraordinary service was recognized during the 91st South Eastern Regional Conference Public Meeting of Alpha Kappa Alpha. She received the Soaring to Greater Heights of Service Award, honoring her dedication to uplifting communities and serving with excellence. Being recognized by such a historic and influential organization affirmed the regional and national significance of her work.

Politically, Sister Brenda Hampton has broken important barriers. She became the first female Democrat Delegate from Lawrence County, Alabama—an achievement that marked a milestone in local political history. In a space traditionally dominated by male leadership, she stepped forward with courage and conviction, opening doors for other women to follow. She continues her political engagement as a member of the Alabama Democratic State ADC Conference and is currently running for the 2026 Lawrence County State Executive Democratic Board. Her candidacy reflects her belief that policy decisions must include voices from the grassroots level.

Her life and legacy became the focus of the documentary "The Angel of Alabama," which highlights her journey as a freedom fighter, community organizer, and woman of faith. The film captures not only her activism but also her compassion and spiritual foundation. Sister Brenda openly credits God as her source of strength, often expressing that her mission is divinely guided. Her faith sustains her through challenges and reminds her that perseverance is part of purpose.

Throughout her journey, Sister Brenda Hampton has demonstrated that true leadership is consistent. She attends meetings, organizes communities, mentors young people, advocates for policy changes, and remains present during times of crisis. She does not retreat when challenges arise; instead, she stands firm. Her voice carries both authority and empathy, making her a respected figure among peers and community members alike.



Sister Brenda Hampton

What makes Sister Brenda truly legendary is not only the awards she has received or the positions she holds. It is her unwavering commitment to justice in every form. She understands that the fight for freedom evolves with time. Today, that fight includes environmental protection, political representation, educational empowerment, and community unity. She embraces all of these arenas with equal passion.

As a member of the Legendary Freedom Fighting Hampton Family, she honors her heritage by continuing the struggle for equality while building new pathways for progress. Her work bridges generations, connecting the civil rights battles of the past with the environmental and political challenges of the present.

Sister Brenda Hampton's story is one of courage, conviction, and calling. She has transformed adversity into advocacy and challenges into change. Through faith, determination, and tireless service, she has earned her place as a respected leader in Alabama and beyond.

Her journey continues, but her impact is already deeply woven into the fabric of North Alabama's history. Sister Brenda Hampton remains a powerful reminder that freedom fighters still walk among us—and that justice requires voices willing to stand, speak, and serve.