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KSh 60 (TSh 1,700 : USh 2,700 : RFr 900)

No. 0284    themtkenyatiimes

Defiant UAG Storm Meru Despite Paid Goons, Roads Barricades



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Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua addressing the public in one of the public engagement forums in Meru on Friday.



Climate: Kenya Hosts Global Forest And Climate Leaders For Key Ministerial Meeting In Nairobi **P.12**




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Defiant Gachagua, Kalonzo Lead United Opposition Tour In Meru Despite Barricades

BY WMTW
@themtkenyatimes

Some Of The Moments As Captured In Pictures

Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka, DP party leader Justin Muturi, and former Agriculture CS Mithika Linturi led a defiant three-day United Opposition tour in Meru and Tharaka Nithi counties, overcoming barricades and attempts by paid goons to block their convoy.

The leaders began in Chuka Town, Tharaka Nithi, where they were warmly received, before traveling through Keeria Market, Nkubu Town, and Kariene. At Kathita River Bridge near Meru Town, rival youths clashed, forcing police intervention. Fires and roadblocks were reported as opposition supporters pushed through to address large crowds in Meru Town.

Linturi dismissed attempts to disrupt their campaign, accusing Meru Municipality MCA Caleb Mutethia of orchestrating paid goons. Gachagua criticized Governor Kithure Kindiki and President William Ruto's government for failing to deliver development and accused them of trying to divide Mount Kenya politically. He urged residents to elect Linturi as governor and replace other incumbents, including MP Rahim Dawood.

Muturi also called on the government to repatriate stranded Kenyans in the Middle East, highlighting misallocated funds at State House. Despite the disruptions, the United Opposition vowed to continue its campaign, insisting that the Ruto administration would be voted out in 2027.



Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times



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

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NEWS IN BRIEF



President William Ruto has reaffirmed the government's commitment to inclusive governance and equitable distribution of resources to ensure balanced development across the country. Speaking after meeting 40 Members of the Kitui County Assembly at State House, Nairobi, led by Speaker Kevin Kinengo Katsiya, the President said the government is working with leaders from all regions to ensure no citizen or area is left behind in the national transformation agenda. During the meeting, they discussed ways of accelerating key development projects in Kitui County, including construction and rehabilitation of dams to address water shortages and improvement of major roads to enhance connectivity. Other priority projects highlighted included affordable housing, modern markets, student hostels, last-mile electricity connectivity and issuance of title deeds.



Busia Governor Paul Otuoma has distributed maize seeds to vulnerable farmers at Katakwa Vocational Training Centre to boost food production in the county. Otuoma said the county government is recruiting more agricultural extension officers to offer farmers technical support and guidance as their crops grow. He encouraged farmers to plant enough food for household consumption and sell the surplus to earn income. The governor also urged farmers to join cooperative societies to avoid exploitation by middlemen. He announced the release of more than Sh1 million to support ward-based cooperatives across the county. Additionally, Otuoma encouraged farmers to diversify into high-value crops such as sunflower, groundnuts, simsim and soybeans.



A NACADA-led multi-agency operation has confiscated 200 grams of heroin and methamphetamine worth Sh4 million and dismantled an illegal operation manufacturing illicit alcohol using fake KRA stamps in Likoni Sub-County, Mombasa. The main suspect, Charles Ongeru, who had long been on the police radar and repeatedly evaded arrest, was apprehended alongside two accomplices during an intelligence-led operation carried out in the early hours of Friday morning. NACADA CEO Dr. Anthony Omerikwa termed the operation a breakthrough in the fight against alcohol and drug abuse, noting that the consumption of illicit liquor contributes to organ failure among users and urging the public to exercise caution when purchasing alcohol.



Safaricom Foundation has donated 55 sets of lockers and chairs to Migori Muslim Comprehensive School to improve the learning environment and support better academic performance among learners. Migori County Safaricom sales representative Emily Awuor said the donation was made under the "Ndoto Zetu, Uwezo Wetu" programme, an initiative aimed at enhancing learning experiences in schools. She noted that the programme targets institutions that lack adequate social amenities in order to create a conducive environment for education. Awuor explained that through the initiative, Safaricom Foundation seeks to support communities by ensuring students have improved facilities that boost morale, encourage effective learning and ultimately enhance academic performance in schools.

Elders and residents of Bodhai Sub-County in Ijara Constituency, Garissa County, have raised concerns over repeated delays in the recruitment of chiefs and assistant chiefs. Led by community representative Abdi Mirat, they said the positions have been advertised more than five times without the process being concluded. Bodhai Sub-County, established in 2022 to strengthen grassroots administration and service delivery, includes several sub-locations such as Qamuthu, Eldere and Daresalam, but only three positions have been filled. Residents accuse area MP Abdi Ali Abdi of interfering with the process. Mirat said each time interview results are forwarded to national authorities, the recruitment is cancelled and the posts re-advertised without explanation.



At least 3,800 vulnerable residents of Central Sakwa Ward in Bondo Sub-County have received free certified maize seeds ahead of the planting season. Area MCA Eng. Bismark Olang'o said the initiative targets vulnerable groups including the elderly, persons living with disabilities, widows and youth, with the aim of boosting food production and enhancing food security. He noted that access to food enables residents to focus on other income-generating activities while also reducing insecurity. Olang'o said the programme, funded through the ward-based fund, supplements subsidised seeds provided by the Siaya County Government and has been scaled up annually since it was launched in 2024.



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Water he planned project, estimated to cost Sh2 billion, will have a capacity of 3,000 cubic metres

Maragua Residents Experience Improved Water Access Under Muwasco Management

BY KNA

@themtkenyatimes

Residents and business owners in Maragua Town are experiencing improved access to clean and reliable water following expanded services by the Murang'a Water and Sanitation Company (Muwasco). According to Muwasco Managing Director Eng. Daniel Ng'ang'a, the company has significantly increased water connections in the area over the past two years, boosting access for thousands of households and businesses.

Speaking during a press briefing, Ng'ang'a said that when the company first took over water services in Maragua, the town had only about 800 active connections and the supply was inconsistent. "In the last two years, we have increased the connections to more than 3,000 households and business premises, serving nearly 30,000 residents," he said. The improvements came after the Maragua Dam was placed under the management of Muwasco, enabling the company to expand distribution and stabilise supply across the town and surrounding areas.

Ng'ang'a added that the company is now working with the Murang'a County Government and national government agencies to de-



Muwasco MD Eng. Daniel Ng'ang'a addressing journalists this week.

velop a modern sewerage system aimed at improving sanitation in the rapidly growing town.

The planned project, estimated to cost Sh2 billion, will have a capacity of 3,000 cubic metres and is expected to support more than 2,000 sewer connections once complete.

"This project, which we are implementing in partnership with the Athi Water Works Agency, will greatly enhance sanitation services in Maragua," he noted.

Ng'ang'a also attributed the improved water supply to the operationalisation of the Maragua-3 Dam, which was authorised by President William Ruto. The dam has

helped restore water supply to areas that had experienced unreliable access for several years.

Muwasco is also extending water services to neighbouring areas including Kambiti, Maragua Ridge and Kama-huha.

Local residents say the improvements have already made a noticeable difference. Charles Wang'ombe, a dairy farmer in the area, said reliable water supply has made it easier to run his farm.

"When I started dairy farming in 2021, we sometimes received water only once a week. It was very difficult to manage the farm," he said. "Now the water flow has improved and I am satisfied

with the supply."

He also commended the company for responding quickly to pipe breakages and maintaining reasonable billing charges.

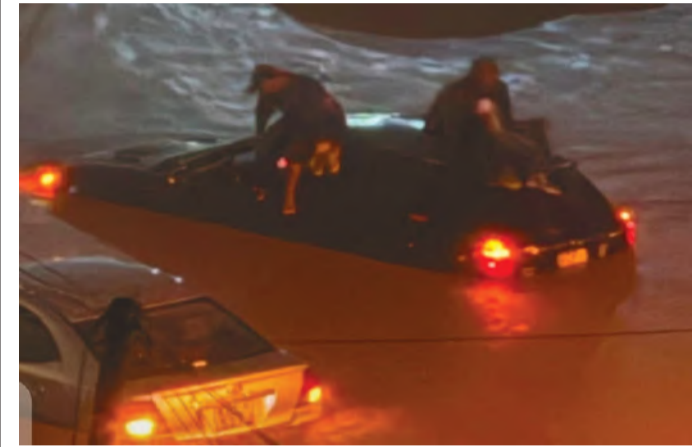
Another resident, Faith Nyawira, said access to clean water has helped reduce cases of waterborne diseases in the community.

"Before we were connected, many residents relied on rivers and wells, which were not always safe," she said.

Ng'ang'a urged residents to support water conservation efforts, including rainwater harvesting and tree planting, to help sustain water availability during dry seasons.

NAIROBI

Military Deployed As Floods Paralyse Nairobi



BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

The Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) have been deployed to bolster rescue and emergency operations in Nairobi after torrential rains triggered severe flooding across the capital, leaving roads impassable, homes submerged, and commuters stranded.

Authorities confirmed that the military was mobilised to support the National Disaster Operations Centre, county emergency teams, and other rescue agencies in evacuating residents trapped in flooded estates and assisting motorists caught in rising waters. "The situation demanded immediate reinforcement. The KDF is working alongside civilian responders to ensure lives are saved and order restored," said Interior Ministry spokesperson Samuel Mwangi.

The flooding, caused by persistent downpours since early morning, overwhelmed drainage systems in several parts of the city. Major highways were

submerged, vehicles stalled mid-traffic, and hundreds of commuters were stranded for hours. Among the worst-hit areas were low-lying estates in Eastlands and sections of Mombasa Road, where residents waded through waist-deep water to reach safety.

Emergency teams have been evacuating families from inundated houses and towing vehicles swept or stalled in floodwaters. Nairobi County disaster chief Jane Wanjiru said: "We are prioritising evacuation in residential estates where water levels are dangerously high. Our teams are working round the clock with the military to prevent further casualties."

The Kenya Meteorological Department has warned that heavy rains will persist until Monday, raising fears of more flooding in Nairobi and neighbouring counties including Kiambu and Kajia-do. "Residents should remain

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NAIROBI

Military Deployed As Floods Paralyse Nairobi

Contd page 6

vigilant. Avoid crossing swollen rivers, drainage channels, and waterlogged roads," said Director David Gikonyo.

Motorists have been advised to steer clear of flooded sections of roads as responders continue operations to restore access. Police have also urged caution, warning against reckless attempts to drive through submerged highways.

Civil society groups have called for urgent investment in Nairobi's drainage infrastructure, noting that

seasonal floods have repeatedly paralysed the city. "This is not just a natural disaster—it is a governance failure. Nairobi's drainage systems cannot cope with heavy rains, and lives are being put at risk," said environmental activist Leah Otieno.

As military trucks ferried stranded residents to safety and emergency crews battled rising waters, the scale of the crisis underscored the fragility of Nairobi's urban systems. For many families, the floods were a stark reminder of the city's vulnerability to climate shocks.

In Nairobi today, survival depends not on speed or strength, but on vigilance and solidarity.

DIPLOMACY

Monica Juma Appointed UNODC Executive Director And UNOV Director-General

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyentimes

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres has appointed Monica Kathina Juma as Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna (UNOV), marking a major diplomatic achievement for Kenya.

Dr Juma succeeds Ghada Fathi Waly of Egypt, with Guterres praising her "dedicated service to the Organization." He also thanked John Brandolino, Director of the Division for Treaty Affairs, who will continue in an acting capacity until Juma assumes office.

Currently serving as President William Ruto's National Security Adviser, Juma has been described by Guterres as "a strategic senior leader with a depth of expertise spanning security, diplomacy and governance." Her career includes Cabinet Secretary roles in De-

fence, Foreign Affairs, and Energy, as well as senior postings in Interior and Defence ministries. She previously served as Kenya's Ambassador to Ethiopia and Djibouti and Permanent Representative to the African Union, IGAD, and UNECA.

President Ruto hailed the appointment as "a proud moment for Kenya and Africa," while Foreign Affairs CS Musalia Mudavadi said it reflected Kenya's growing influence in multilateral diplomacy. Analysts note her leadership comes at a critical time as UNODC confronts global challenges including organized crime, cyber threats, and illicit financial flows.

For Kenya, Juma's rise signals trust in its capacity to shape global justice and security.



Iombe Crater: Meru's Hidden Natural Wonder With Cultural Significance

BY KNA

@themtkenyentimes

Tucked away in the dry landscapes of Igembe North Sub-County in Meru County lies Iombe Crater, a little-known natural attraction where colorful waters, cultural traditions, and community livelihoods intersect.

The crater, surrounded by rolling hills, is known for its striking multi-hued alkaline waters rich in minerals and soda salts. The shimmering surface creates a rare and captivating scene that has fascinated local residents for generations.

Beyond its beauty, the crater serves a practical purpose for the surrounding communities. Pastoralists regularly collect soda salt from the crater to feed their livestock, while many households use it as a natural alternative to ordinary table salt.

Residents say the soda salt is particularly useful when preparing hard foods such

as beans and maize because it softens them, significantly reducing cooking time. This, in turn, helps families conserve firewood, an important resource in the largely dry region.

Iombe Crater is also unique for its year-round water supply, sustained by underground springs that keep the crater active even during prolonged dry spells. This makes it a rare ecological feature in the area.

However, the site holds more than environmental value. It is deeply embedded in the cultural beliefs of the local community. Elders have long enforced traditional rules governing access to the crater, including a prohibition against women and girls who are menstruating entering the site.

According to the elders, breaking this rule is believed to anger God and bring misfortune to the community.

Mary Kaloki, a 75-year-old resident, explained that the practice has been respected for generations.

"It is considered an abomina-

tion for a woman who is menstruating to enter the crater. Our elders believed such an act could anger God and bring misfortune to the community," she said.

Kaloki added that some residents believe ignoring the rule could disrupt the crater's natural balance, occasionally causing the soda salt to disappear temporarily and depriving both people and livestock of the resource.

Over the years, such beliefs have also served as informal conservation practices that have helped preserve the crater.

Despite its ecological and cultural significance, Iombe Crater remains largely unknown beyond the local community due to poor road infrastructure and limited publicity.

Residents are now calling on the government to promote the site as a tourist attraction, saying increased visibility could generate employment opportunities, stimulate local tourism, and support economic development in the region.

Politics At Kathita River bridge that one crosses before entering Meru town it was battle of Titans between two rival groups

Defiant UAG Storm Meru Despite Paid Goons, Roads Barricades

The leaders led by former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka and DP party leader Justin Muturi and former Agriculture CS Mithika Linturi started their three day tour in Chuka town, Tharaka Nithi county where they were received by a sizable number of followers.

BY Dennis Dibondo
@themkenyatimes

United Opposition took their brigade to Meru despite numerous attempts to block them from accessing Meru county.

The leaders led by former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka and DP party leader Justin Muturi and former Agriculture CS Mithika Linturi started their three day tour in Chuka town, Tharaka Nithi county where they were received by a sizable number of followers.

Earlier youths had tried to barricade the road at Keeria Market that is in the boundary between Meru and Tharaka Nithi to prevent the convoy from accessing Meru county. However their attempts were thwarted and the convoy snaked through to Nkubu town in South Imenti constituency where they met a huge crowd awaiting them, than what they had met Chuka town.

The leaders who had a convoy of more than 30 high end vehicles then took their campaigns in Kariene where they had a cup of tea at a local

hotel and later addressed the resident At Kathita River bridge that one crosses before entering Meru town it was battle of Titans between two rival groups of those supporting government and another pro opposition. The youths clashed at Kathita forcing police to intervene to return normalcy.

There, they lit fires from tyres and trees were cut to make sure they cut off the opposition from accessing Meru town where they were to address a mammoth crowd who had early waited for the leaders.

In Meru town, former Agriculture Cabinet Secretary Mithika Linturi laughed off attempts by some politicians to pay goons to try and cut them off from Meru.

“They wanted us to run away or use alternative routes like the By-Passes but they lost miserably all their plans hit dead end. We are residents of Meru nobody can cut us off from our home,” Linturi said.

Linturi had on Thursday evening pinpointed Meru Municipality MCA Caleb Mutethia as the person behind the ordeal to pay goons to disrupt their meeting in Meru.

Gachagua continued hitting at the government during the tour, saying the current deputy President Kithure Kindiki had become too petty to pay goons to prevent them from accessing Meru county.

“A whole deputy President trying to sponsor goons to cause mayhem at our meeting at expense of innocent residents,” Gachagua said.

He said Kindiki who had failed to deliver development projects was trying to use sideshows.

“Kindiki is going around doing empowerment in other areas yet his own people are suffering there is starvation and now floods and cattle rustling,” Gachagua said.

He said Kindiki has continued to boast of how he knows politics yet he has nothing to show at Meru which he calls his backyard.

Gachagua urged Meru residents to send President William Ruto’s government home together with Kithure Kindiki and all Meru MPs starting with Meru senator Kathuri Murungi



Police officers removing blockages in Meru on Friday | Photo: Courtesy.

“I also want you to elect Mithika Linturi as your governor as he is representing Meru at the bargaining table,” Gachagua said.

“They wanted us to run away or use alternative routes like the By-Passes but they lost miserably all their plans hit dead end. We are residents of Meru nobody can cut us off from our home,” Linturi said.

who is the Senate Deputy Speaker. “I also want you to elect Mithika Linturi as your governor as he is representing Meru at the bargaining table,” Gachagua said.

He also urged the people of North Imenti to elect another MP and send incumbent Rahim Dawood home.

Gachagua said President William Ruto wants to divide Mount Kenya into East or West so that he can split Kikuyu, Embu and Meru votes.

“The other day I heard CS Geoffrey Ruku saying that the previous government led by the late President Mwai Kibaki and President Uhuru Kenyatta had done nothing for Meru. “Most of the road projects that are in Meru were initiated by the two former presidents who also appointed a lot of Meru people in the government jobs,” Gachagua said.

He said he will continue going round the country with Wiper Leader Kalonzo Musyoka.

On the efforts to block them from entering Meru, Gachagua said the

government is desperately trying all means to stop them but despite that William Ruto’s regime will go home in 2027.

Former Attorney General Justin Muturi said that President William Ruto government should pay air tickets for hundreds of Kehyans stranded in the middle East.

“Foreign affairs minister should tell President William Ruto to set aside money to repatriate all stranded Kenyans,” Muturi said.

The former CE said the government has misplaced priorities and has allocated KSh17 billion to State House spending while White House spends KSh12 billion.

“They had allocated KSh7.7 billion and now with only three months to another KSh8.4 billion has been added,” Muturi said.

Scores of former, current and aspiring politicians, eyeing different political seats accompanied the United Alternative Government top leaders.

Politics A group of life members has written to the party demanding that the 14-day notice, advertised in national newspapers be revoked

ODM Life Members Challenge Oburu's Special NDC, Cite Pending Branch And League Polls

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

Uncertainty surrounds Friday's bid by the Oburu Oginga-led faction of ODM to convene a Special National Delegates Conference (NDC) on March 27, 2026.

A group of life members has written to the party demanding that the 14-day notice, advertised in national newspapers, be revoked until all branch and league elections are concluded. These polls are meant to select delegates who should participate in the convention.

In a letter prepared by Kimani and Muriithi Associates, the ODM Life Members further questioned the legality of the notice, which was signed by ODM Deputy Secretary General Catherine Omwanyo. ODM has been rocked by a leadership tussle between two factions: one led by Party Leader Oburu Oginga, National Chairman Gladys Wanga, and National Assembly Minority Leader Junet Mohammed; and another led by Secretary General Edwin Sifuna, Siaya Governor James Orengo, and Embakasi East MP Babu Owino, who front the Linda Mwananchi faction. The main point of contention

is whether the 21-year-old opposition party should back President William Ruto's re-election bid or field its own candidate to challenge the incumbent.

While Oburu's faction has already moved party organs to approve pre-2027 coalition talks, Sifuna's wing accuses President Ruto of failing to fully implement the 10 agenda points contained in a Broad-Based Cooperation Pact signed with the late ODM founder Raila Odinga.

The dispute deepened last month when Sifuna moved to the Political Parties Disputes Tribunal (PPDT) and was reinstated as the substan-



Party Leader Oburu Oginga and Edwin Sifuna

tive ODM Secretary General pending determination of a petition challenging his removal by the National Executive Committee.

Separately, Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna and the ODM Life Members group have accused Oburu of violating the party constitution and undermining internal democracy. They claim Oburu and a select

group have ignored due process, sidelined loyal members, and breached Article 6.2.2(b) of the constitution. According to them, these actions threaten ODM's founding values of transparency, rule of law, and accountability.

Adding her voice to the petition, Raila Odinga's daughter Winnie Odinga demanded Oburu's resignation and

called for an urgent National Delegates Convention "to deliberate on the current governance crisis, restore legitimacy to party structures, and reaffirm ODM's constitutional values."

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Politics Mararo emphasised that effective policies must be informed by the experiences and concerns of people working at the grassroots level.

Nyeri Senatorial Hopeful Nick Mararo Pledges Youth Empowerment And Grassroots Engagement

“We will continue to push for policies that recognise, protect and support such platforms for youth development because when young people are empowered, the entire community benefits through stronger social bonds, safer spaces and expanded economic opportunities,” Mararo said.

BY WMW

@themkenyatimes

Nyeri senatorial aspirant Nick Mararo has pledged to champion policies that support youth empowerment, small businesses and grassroots initiatives if elected, saying meaningful leadership must be guided by the voices of ordinary citizens.

Mararo, the Chief Executive Officer of Base Yetu, a private entity focused on empowering young people through sports-based programs such as pool table activities, made the remarks during his ongoing Mashinani tour across Nyeri County.

Speaking after engaging with pool players at one of their local “bases”, Mararo said such spaces play a critical role in youth development beyond recreation.

“One of the most interesting stops during my Mashinani tour was a conversation with pool players in one of their bases,” he said, adding, “For many young people, these spaces are more than recre-

ation zones. They are talent hubs as well as social spaces.”

He noted that initiatives such as Base Yetu and Krekit have demonstrated how structured support can help nurture talent while providing young people with opportunities for social and economic growth.

Mararo said he intends to push for policies that recognise and support youth-driven platforms that provide safe spaces for young people to develop their skills.

“We will continue to push for policies that recognise, protect and support such platforms for youth development because when young people are empowered, the entire community benefits through stronger social bonds, safer spaces and expanded economic opportunities,” he said.

During the tour, the senatorial aspirant also held discussions with business owners in Nyeri Town, acknowledging

“One of the most interesting stops during my Mashinani tour was a conversation with pool players in one of their bases,” he said, adding, “For many young people, these spaces are more than recreation zones. They are talent hubs as well as social spaces.”

their role in sustaining the local economy.

He described small-scale traders and entrepreneurs as the backbone of the region’s economic activity, noting that their daily efforts often go unnoticed despite their impact.

“As part of my continuous engagement with our people, I spent time with business owners in Nyeri Town; the men and women who open their doors early, close late and quietly keep our economy moving,” he said.

Mararo emphasised that effective policies must be informed by the experiences and concerns of people working at the grassroots level.

“I believe the strongest policies are shaped by the voices of those doing the real work on the ground, and I look forward to continuing these conversations as we work toward a better Nyeri and a stronger Kenya,” he added.

The senatorial hopeful also visited Gatunganga village in Mathira constituency, where he met with residents and listened to their ideas on improving livelihoods through local initiatives and personal development projects.

He said the determination shown by residents undertaking grassroots initiatives demonstrates the potential that exists within communities when given the right support.

“These initiatives reflect the collective determination of our people, and they remind us that good policy must support, not stand in the way of such progress,” Mararo said.

Mararo is seeking to intensify his grassroots engagements as he seeks to build support ahead of the upcoming senatorial contest during next year’s General Election.



Nick Mararo trying his hand in a Pool game in Nyeri town. | Photo: Courtesy



Nick Mararo engaging Nyeri residents.



Nick Mararo having a light moment with an elderly Nyeri county resident.

Climate According to Dr. Barasa, mobilizing private capital through de-risking mechanisms will also be key to accelerating forest-positive development.

Kenya Hosts Global Forest And Climate Leaders For Key Ministerial Meeting In Nairobi

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

Kenya hosted the first Ministerial Meeting and the Third All-Member Gathering of the Forest & Climate Leaders' Partnership (FCLP) in Nairobi, bringing together global leaders to advance forest conservation and climate action.

The high-level meeting was presided over by the Cabinet Secretary for the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, Dr.

Deborah Barasa, who highlighted Kenya's growing investment in forest protection and climate resilience.

Dr. Barasa said the government is strengthening fire surveillance systems, improving early warning mechanisms, and expanding community-based forest fire management programmes. She noted that response capacity has also been enhanced through the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) to better safeguard the country's forests.

"With Africa's urban population expanding rapidly, sus-

tainable forest management and forest-based industries provide powerful pathways for climate mitigation, adaptation, job creation, and economic diversification," she said.

The Cabinet Secretary stressed that achieving climate and land-use commitments will require substantial financial investment. She said governments and partners must work to unlock large-scale funding, strengthen governance and land tenure systems, and ensure policy alignment across sectors.



CS Deborah Barasa

According to Dr. Barasa, mobilizing private capital through de-risking mechanisms will also be key to accelerating forest-positive development.

She further noted that the Nairobi meeting comes at a critical time as Africa prepares to host the global climate conference in 2027. The gathering, she said, provides an opportunity for the continent to demonstrate leadership in climate action and environmental stewardship.

"The Forest & Climate Leaders' Partnership offers an important platform for aligning

national, regional and global efforts toward forest-positive development," she added.

Principal Secretary for Forestry Gitonga Mugambi reaffirmed Kenya's commitment to halting and reversing forest loss while advancing a resilient, low-carbon economy.

He said the country's legal and policy frameworks — including the Forest Conservation and Management Act and the Climate Change Act — are guiding Kenya's transition toward a climate-resilient and forest-positive future.

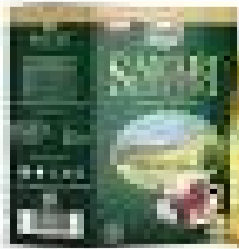
Mugambi also highlighted progress under the government's 15 Billion Trees Growing Initiative, which aims to restore 10.6 million hectares of degraded landscapes while increasing national tree cover to at least 30 percent by 2032. The initiative is part of Kenya's broader strategy to restore ecosystems, strengthen climate resilience, and support sustainable livelihoods through forest-based development.

The meeting brought together government representatives, international partners, and climate leaders to explore ways of accelerating global efforts to protect forests and tackle climate change.

"With Africa's urban population expanding rapidly, sustainable forest management and forest-based industries provide powerful pathways for climate mitigation, adaptation, job creation, and economic diversification," Dr. Barasa said



New Year. Same Chai.



Rains While rainfall in tropical regions is expected and often seasonal, its consequences in past reports has appeared increasingly and unpredictable.

Why Seasonal Rains Continue To Expose Kenya's Infrastructure Weakness

BY Charles Musyoki
@themtkenyatimes

Seasonal rains in Kenya are no longer just a weather event; they've become a test to countries infrastructure resilience. They automatically translate into transport disruption and economic dysfunction. Each year, communities across the country witness bridges submerged, roads converted to pedestrian pathways and businesses disrupted. The recurring destructions raises a pressing question: why does seasonal rain continue to expose weaknesses in the country's infrastructure?

Recent media reports highlighted cases such as Mogor Bridge in Narok county and Migori Main Bridge in Migori County. This has led to immediate and severe impact to bene-

ficiaries of these bridges. haltering transport, impacting cross-border trade and forcing local traders to suspend businesses, causing significant financial losses.

While rainfall in tropical regions is expected and often seasonal, its consequences in past reports has appeared increasingly and unpredictable. Every season, Kenya meteorological department give timely warning about the expected changing weather patterns which may lead to widespread destruction. If this is the case, then the infrastructure planings and must evolve accordingly.

The problem may not be the amount of rainfall but in the resilience of the structures meant to withstand it (the problem). When bridges fail concurrently due to seasonal pressure, concerns arise about design standards, maintenance practices and long-term planning. Temporary repair only re-

stores short-term functionality, leaving dependants in suspense during the next rainy season.

In spite of the fact that; Infrastructure development is a complex process involving budget constraints, procurement process and collaboration between national and county government, economic consequences further imply the urgency of the matter. Disrupted transport systems increase fuel consumption as vehicles seek alternative routes. Businesses face supply chain delays and emergency services may struggle to access certain areas. This may accumulate to boarder economic strain and high communal cost of living.

Seasonal rain is a natural occurrence, but repeated infrastructure failure should not be.as climate evolve, Kenya must adapt its planning and investment priorities to safeguard mobility, economic activ-



Flooded road

ities and public safety. The true test of development lies on resilience but not in how the infrastructure performs in normal conditions.

If the country is to avoid annual/

seasonal cycles of disruption, a shift from temporary fixes to long-term resilience is essential. The rains will return in normality. The question is whether the bridge will be ready.

The Mt. Kenya Times



Happy Birthday Wishes To Dear Dad Who Is Ever Near In My Heart 🧡🙏" 2-3-45



**In quiet nights and brightest days,
You've stood beside me in many ways.
Through every loss, through every cheer,
Your love has kept me strong and near.**

**May life be kind in all you do,
May hope walk softly close to you.
May dreams you hold, both big and small,
Rise with courage—never fall.**

**So on this day, this moment true,
I send my love wrapped just for you.
Happy Birthday, dear heart so near,
Let me Be Blessed with joy, year after year.**

***This day is made to speak your name,
A gentle joy, a heartfelt flame.
You're not just close, you're part of me,
A bond no time can ever free.**

R. SRIPRIYA
BT ENGLISH
GHSS KOLAPAKKAM KANCHIPURAM DISTRICT
TAMILNADU
INDIA

Never Mock At The Small One



*Each creature wish to live and survive.
All creatures or things have its own uniqueness.
To a skilled person, even a Grass can be a weapon.
A small thorn can help to pick tooth.
No two things in the word exactly the same.
Human and animals are coexisters on the planet.
Human is the superior.
That superior is among the lower.
Value does not depend on the size.
It depends on the tendency.
A small diamond is more valuable than a big stone.
Size does not decide value.*

N. SELVARANI
B. T. ASST
GHS-SAKKARAKKOTTAI.
RAMANATHAPURAM.
TAMIL NADU.
INDIA.

*All Creatures in the world or not same.
All are essential and valuable to the life.
The life on the planet is green.
The creatures on the planet are interdependent.*

Never Mock The Small One; One Day They Might Save You



*Never mock a pain you haven't lived.
Life has a way of humbling us through the same
wounds we once judged in others. What you laugh
at today may one day become your own battle.
So be gentle with your words, kind with your
thoughts, and slow to judge what you don't
understand. Compassion costs nothing—but its
absence can cost everything.*

— M.R. Hanshiga
VII-C
John Dewey Matric Higher secondary school
Panruti.
Creative writers
Cuddalore.

Journeys Beyond Time: Roshan's Poetic Imagination Finds Voice In A Collection Of 25 Thought-Provoking Poems



In an age where careers often follow predictable paths, Roshan's journey stands out as a testament to curiosity, creativity, and the enduring power of storytelling. From beginning his education in a government school to pursuing engineering—like millions of students across the country—his path seemed familiar at first. Yet, during the final months of his engineering studies, Roshan found himself drawn toward the dynamic world of business and marketing. Nearly a year and a half later, he stepped into the field that would truly define his voice—content writing. Today, with over three years of experience as a writer, his passion for words has culminated in a remarkable literary work.

Roshan's love for Hindi literature traces back to his childhood. School textbooks, old novels, newspaper stories, and the colorful world of Hindi comics nurtured his reading habit and

*quietly shaped the storyteller within him. Over time, these stories became more than just entertainment—they became lifelong companions and inspirations. His latest book, *Samay Se Pare Kuch Yatraayein* (Journeys Beyond Time), is a captivating collection of 25 poems that transport readers into imaginative realms shaped by the author's inner reflections.*

These poems move effortlessly between moments of calm and introspection to questions that challenge the reader's perception of life and time. Often transcending the boundaries of the physical world, Roshan's poetry invites readers to pause, think deeply, and sometimes even live the journeys described within the verses.

As readers turn the pages, many will discover fragments of their own emotions and experiences woven into the narratives.

For Roshan, the greatest hope is that these poems feel just as personal to readers as they do to him—an intimate journey shared through words.

Readers can follow the author on Instagram: @okayruan.

Disappointed Balloon Man



*He had to feed his kids & parent's old
Let us not prick his heart
So buy a few before he departs And distribute to
the poor kids
Helping their sorrows to get rid
Let both-the kids & the balloon man
Fly in happiness as high as they can.
And watch our soul also enjoy it as a colourful
balloon
As our heart feels light with melodious tune.*

*Yes! the balloon man stood
In a disappointed mood
Masked as an airless balloon
Unable to return home soon
As his balloon stayed unsold*

G.Sarala.
Creative Writers.

Never Mock The Small One..



*Never mock the small one,
For storms are born from breeze.
The spark you step upon today
Can set the world ablaze.
A whisper can shake mountains,
A drop can flood the sea.
The tiniest wing in motion
Can bend a mighty tree.
Greatness is not measured
By shadow, height, or throne.
The hand you push aside today
May be the one that saves your own.
Respect the least among you..
Power often walks unknown*

V.Mahalakshmi,
Pgt English,
John dewey matric higher sec school,
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Concert President William Ruto has committed Sh20 million annually for the next five years to support an initiative started by the late Emurua Dikirr MP Johanna Ng'eno

Ruto Pledges Sh100mn For Annual Concert Started By Johanna Ng'eno



President William Ruto at Ng'eno's funeral service in Dikirr, Narok County | Photo: PCS

legislator had worked closely with the national government to advance development projects, including the establishment of technical training institutions.

The President extended his condolences to Ng'eno's family and the people of Narok County, saying the country had lost a bold and committed leader.

"Kenya has lost a leader who was deeply committed to serving his constituents," he said.



The late Emurua Dikirr MP Johanna Ng'eno | Photo: PCS

BY MKT Correspondent

@themkenyaintimes

President William Ruto has committed Sh20 million annually for the next five years to support an initiative started by the late Emurua Dikirr MP Johanna Ng'eno aimed at empowering artists through concerts and creative industry events.

Speaking during Ng'eno's funeral service in Narok County, the President said the Ministry of Sports will work with other relevant agencies to sustain programmes that promote artists and nurture Kenya's creative economy.

Ruto made the pledge while recounting how the outspoken legislator persistently tried to reach him while seeking financial support for a major event for artistes.

According to the President, Ng'eno called him several times in a short span, something he said was unusual for the MP.

"It was unusual for Ng'eno to look for me that many times. He looked for me three, four times, and even more, until I

knew there was a problem," Ruto said on Friday.

The President told mourners that Ng'eno had attempted to reach him about six times, prompting him to return the call to understand what the issue was.

When he finally spoke to him, the MP explained that he had organised a major celebration for artistes in Eldoret expected to attract about 20,000 people.

Ruto said the lawmaker informed him that the event had already been planned and was scheduled to take place within two days.

"I asked Ng'eno, 'You are asking for Sh20 million and giving me only two days' notice. Where will I get that money from?'" the President recalled.

Ng'eno, however, responded saying he actually need Sh30 million to fund the event.

"He told me, 'It's not Sh20 million, it's Sh30 million,'" Ruto added, drawing laughter from mourners.

Sports ministry funding

The President said he eventually intervened and directed the Ministry of Sports to work with the MP to ensure the ar-

tistes received support.

"In the end, I had to make several efforts and directed the Ministry of Sports to work with him so that the artists could be supported," he said.

Ruto described Ng'eno as a passionate champion of creatives who had volunteered his time and energy to advance the welfare of artistes.

He noted that the legislator remained committed to supporting the creative sector even in the days leading to his death.

"Because he took up that responsibility and volunteered to help the artists, even at the time of his death he had gone to assist artists in Endeless. Johanna Ng'eno deserves recognition," he said.

The President said the government's five-year commitment will help sustain initiatives that bring together artists and provide opportunities for them to showcase their talent.

Ruto also praised Ng'eno's dedication to public service, saying the late MP had made significant contributions to Emurua Dikirr Constituency and was widely known for the sacrifices he made for his people.

He noted that the outspoken



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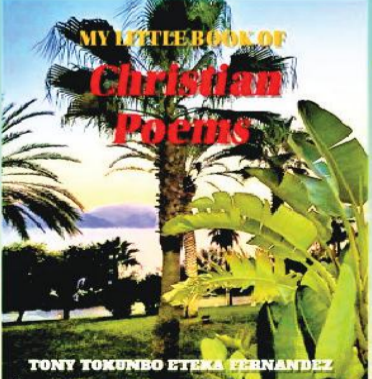
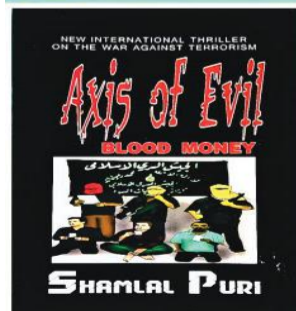
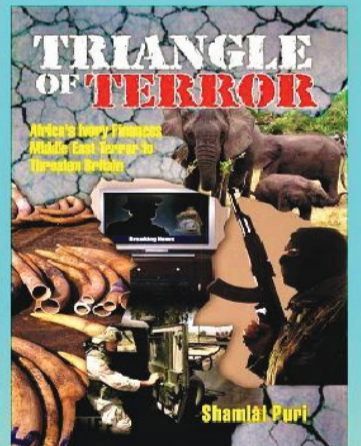
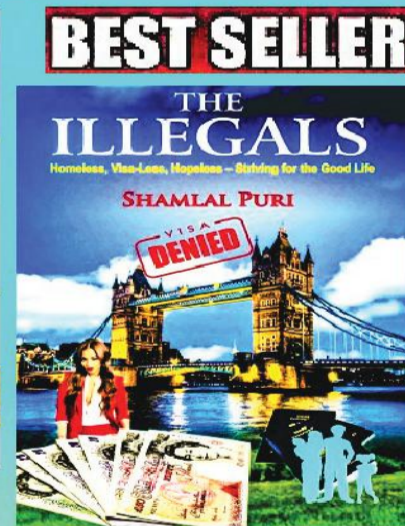
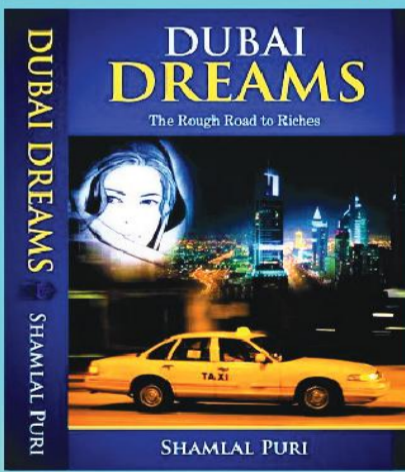
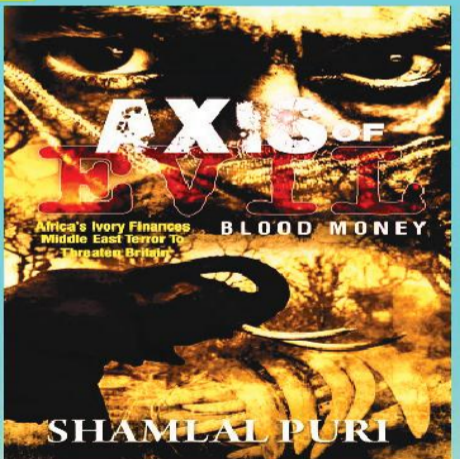
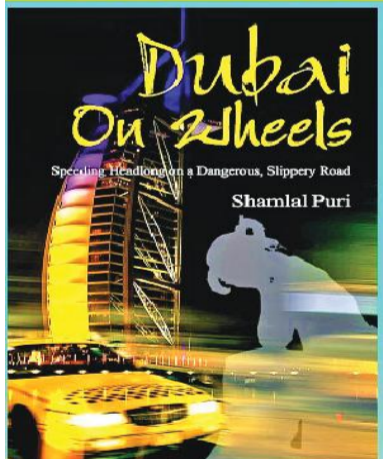
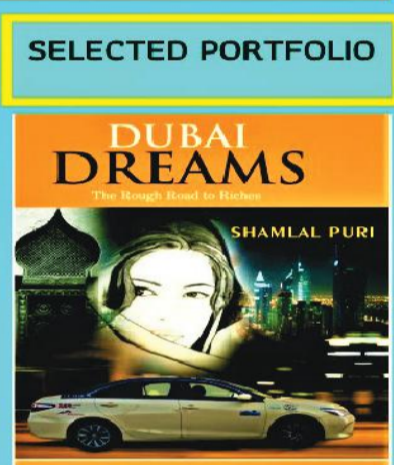
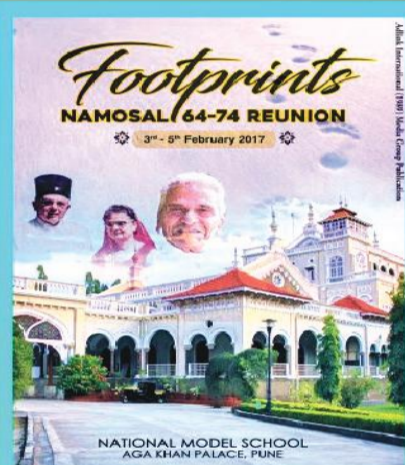
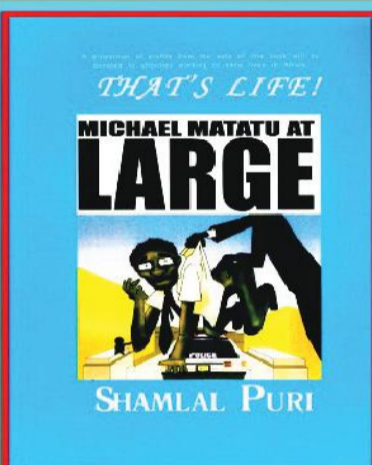
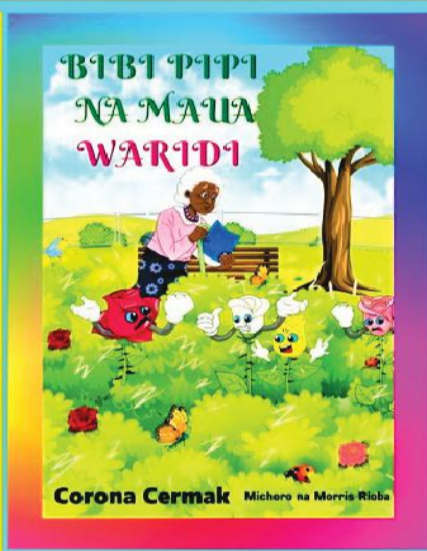
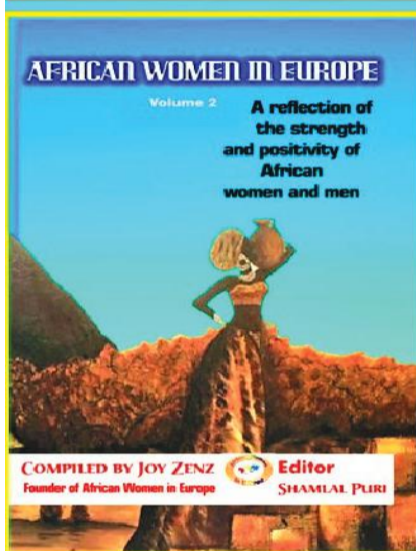
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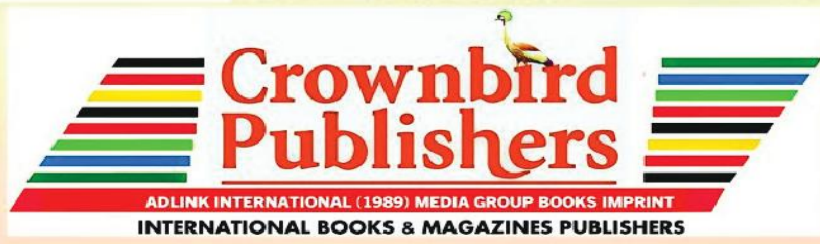
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Judiciary Justice is not a privilege—it is a right. And for Kenya’s newest magistrates, the responsibility to uphold that right begins now.

Commit To Justice And Integrity, CJ Advises Newly Recruited Magistrates

The Chief Justice emphasized that Magistrates’ Courts and Small Claims Courts are the primary point of contact between the Judiciary and the public. She noted that many litigants appear without legal representation, meaning their perception of justice is shaped directly by magistrates. “Professionalism, fairness, and efficiency are not optional—they are the very foundation of public trust in the Judiciary,” she said.

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyatimes

Chief Justice Martha Koome has urged newly recruited judicial officers to embrace justice, integrity, and professionalism as the guiding principles of their careers, warning that their work will define the public’s trust in Kenya’s Judiciary.

Speaking during the swearing-in ceremony of 99 Resident Magistrates, who will also serve as adjudicators in the Small Claims Courts, Justice Koome said the officers must embody civility, collegiality, impartiality, and independence. “Your appointment reflects confidence and trust placed in you by the nation to serve as custodians of justice and guardians of the rule of law,” she told the recruits.

The Chief Justice emphasized that Magistrates’ Courts and Small Claims Courts are the primary point of contact between the Judiciary and the public. She noted that many litigants appear without legal representation, meaning their perception of justice is shaped directly by magistrates. “Professionalism, fairness, and efficiency are not optional—they are the very foundation



Chief Justice Martha Koome | Photo: Judiciary Press

of public trust in the Judiciary,” she said.

Koome commended the recruits for emerging from a rigorous process conducted by the Judicial Service Commission (JSC), where more than 1,700 advocates applied for just 100 positions. “This was one of the most competitive recruitments in our history. You are here because you demonstrated excellence, resilience, and commitment,” she added.

The CJ highlighted the Judiciary’s reform blueprint, Social Transformation through Access to Justice (STAJ), which seeks to transform court stations into centres of excellence. She set ambitious targets: no case should remain in a Magistrate’s Court for more than three years, while Small Claims Courts must resolve matters within 60 days.

“Magistrates’ Courts recently achieved a Case Clearance Rate of 104 percent—the first time the rate has exceeded 100 percent since we began tracking the metric. This is progress, but we must sustain it,” Koome said.

She directed the Registrar of Magistrates’ Courts and the Chief Registrar of the Judiciary to develop a self-evaluation tool and institutional performance framework to help officers monitor productivity.

Koome reiterated the Judiciary’s strict “no adjournment” policy, aimed at preventing unnecessary delays. “Justice delayed is justice denied. You must manage your dockets actively, maintain punctuality, and deliver rulings within statutory timelines,” she said.

She urged magistrates to take responsibility for the pace of cases under their supervision,

“

“Magistrates’ Courts recently achieved a Case Clearance Rate of 104 percent—the first time the rate has exceeded 100 percent since we began tracking the metric. This is progress, but we must sustain it,” Koome said.

stressing that effective docket management is central to reducing backlogs.

On judicial conduct, Koome reminded the officers of the Judiciary’s Code of Conduct and Ethics. “Judicial independence requires that your decisions be guided solely by the law and the evidence before you. Nothing else should influence your judgment,” she said.

She reaffirmed the Judiciary’s zero-tolerance policy on corruption. “Integrity is non-negotiable. Both the Judiciary and the JSC maintain a firm stance against unethical conduct. Uphold professionalism and integrity throughout your careers,” she added.

Judicial Service Commission Chairperson Justice David Majanja praised the recruits, saying: “You are joining at a time when the Judiciary is

undergoing transformation. Your role is pivotal in ensuring access to justice for ordinary Kenyans.”

Attorney General Justin Muri, who attended the ceremony, echoed the CJ’s sentiments: “The rule of law is the bedrock of our democracy. Magistrates must ensure that justice is not only done but seen to be done.”

Siaya Governor James Orenge, himself a seasoned lawyer, remarked: “The Judiciary is the last line of defence for citizens. These magistrates must carry that responsibility with humility and courage.”

The recruitment comes at a time when Kenya’s Judiciary is under scrutiny for delays, corruption allegations, and public mistrust. Analysts say the CJ’s emphasis on integrity and efficiency reflects an urgent need to restore confidence.

Dr. Mercy Wanjiku, a governance expert, told medias: “Magistrates are the face of justice for most Kenyans. If they fail, the entire system is seen as failing. Koome’s message is timely and necessary.”

Civil society groups also welcomed the CJ’s remarks. The Kenya Human Rights Commission said in a statement: “We support the Chief Justice’s call for integrity. The Judiciary must remain a bulwark against impunity.”

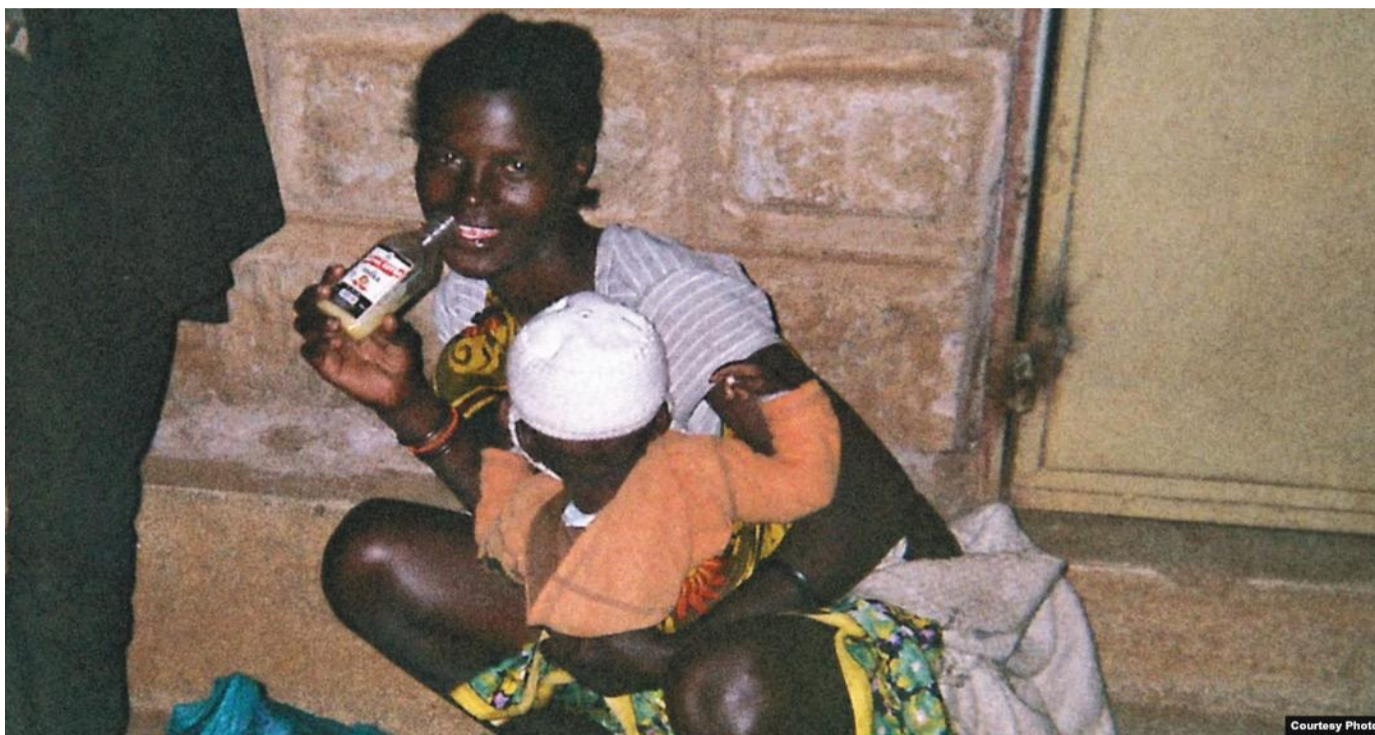
The new magistrates will be deployed across the country, with many expected to serve in rural and underserved areas. Their role in Small Claims Courts is seen as critical in resolving disputes quickly and cheaply, particularly for ordinary citizens and small businesses.

Koome concluded her address with a rallying call: “As ambassadors of the Judiciary’s transformation agenda, you represent the foremost point of contact between the justice system and the ordinary citizen. Your work will transform lives and strengthen access to justice for all Kenyans.”

Justice is not a privilege—it is a right. And for Kenya’s newest magistrates, the responsibility to uphold that right begins now.

Street children Street children—girls and boys alike—are frequently targeted by predators who exploit their vulnerability.

How Hunger And Sexual Exploitation Drive Street Children To Drugs And Death Traps



Street children drug abuse

BY Collins Kibet
@themkenyaintimes

Street children remain among the most vulnerable groups in society. Living without stable shelter, protection, or consistent access to food, they face harsh realities that push them toward dangerous coping mechanisms. Hunger and sexual exploitation are two powerful forces that often trap these children in cycles of drug abuse, crime, illness, and even death. Understanding the causes, impacts, and possible solutions to this crisis is essential for building a society that protects its most vulnerable members.

One of the primary drivers pushing street children toward drugs is extreme hunger and poverty. Many end up on the streets after escaping abusive homes, losing parents, or being abandoned due to economic hardship. Without access to regular meals, sur-

vival becomes a daily struggle. Some resort to begging, collecting waste, or performing small tasks for money. Yet when food is not guaranteed, drugs often become a temporary escape. Substances such as glue, alcohol, or cheap narcotics are used to suppress hunger, numb emotional pain, and help them endure cold nights and loneliness.

Sexual exploitation and abuse are another devastating factor. Street children—girls and boys alike—are frequently targeted by predators who exploit their vulnerability. Adults may promise food, shelter, or money in exchange for sexual acts. Over time, some children are forced into prostitution or trafficking networks. Exploiters often introduce drugs to control them, reduce resistance, and keep them dependent. Once addicted, the children become easier to manipulate and remain trapped in exploitative environments.

The impact is catastroph-

ic. Drug addiction damages physical and mental health, leading to respiratory diseases, infections, and long-term neurological harm. Sexual exploitation exposes children to sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, and unwanted pregnancies. Psychologically, the trauma of abuse, neglect, and constant danger fosters depression, anxiety, and hopelessness. Tragically, many street children die young from overdoses, violence, untreated illness, or unsafe living conditions.

Beyond individual suffering, the crisis undermines communities and national development. Children denied education, protection, and opportunity are more likely to remain in poverty or become entangled in crime and exploitation networks. Society loses valuable human potential that could otherwise contribute to economic and social progress.

Addressing this requires comprehensive and compas-

sionate solutions. Governments and communities must prioritize programs that provide food, shelter, healthcare, and education. Safe shelters and rehabilitation centers can help children recover from addiction and trauma. Stronger laws and enforcement are needed to punish those who exploit children. Community organizations and NGOs should work to reunite children with safe family environments whenever possible and support vulnerable families to prevent children from ending up on the streets.

Education and awareness are equally vital. When communities understand the risks

and realities faced by street children, they are more likely to support protective policies and programs. By tackling poverty, strengthening child protection systems, and ensuring access to basic needs and opportunities, society can break the cycle that drives children toward drugs and death traps.

Ultimately, every child deserves safety, dignity, and the chance to build a better future. Protecting street children from hunger, exploitation, and addiction is not only a moral responsibility—it is an investment in a healthier, more compassionate society.

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Gaza Abu Shaar said scenes of escalation reported from Iran brought back painful memories.

“Enough war!” Gazans Shout For Peace Amid Mounting Regional Tensions

Now, as news arrives of U.S.-Israeli strikes on Iran and Tehran’s counteroffensive, residents say they are watching developments with familiar dread

Mariam Mohsen, a 30-year-old journalist from Gaza City, said people there are closely monitoring regional developments despite their own accumulated hardships.

BY Xinhua News Agency
@themtkenyatimes

In the Rimal neighborhood of Gaza City, the streets remain lined with damaged buildings and piles of rubble. The two-year war that devastated the coastal enclave has left deep scars, both visible and hidden.

Now, as news arrives of U.S.-Israeli strikes on Iran and Tehran’s counteroffensive, residents say they are watching developments with familiar dread.

“We have lived through killing, hunger and fear,” said Hassan Abu Shaar, a 43-year-old shop owner and father of four. “We do not wish this suffering on any people, whether in Iran or anywhere else.”

Abu Shaar said scenes of escalation reported from Iran brought back painful memories. “The continuation of war means more suffering for ordinary people,” he told Xinhua.

“We hope people can live in peace and security, that children can go to school without fear, and that families can remain safely in their homes,” he added.

On Saturday morning, Israel and the United States launched large-scale joint

strikes on Iran. Iran soon responded with counterattacks targeting Israeli and U.S. assets across the region. The confrontation has triggered waves of missile exchanges, mounting casualties and far-reaching political, security and economic repercussions.

For residents of Gaza, where the impact of war remains visible in shattered infrastructure and strained living conditions, the developments have stirred deep unease.

Mariam Mohsen, a 30-year-old journalist from Gaza City, said people there are closely monitoring regional developments despite their own accumulated hardships.

“Any new escalation increases anxiety here, because our humanitarian and economic situation is already fragile,” she said. “We know what it means to wake up to news of bombings and to worry about relatives and friends.”

In the Shuja’iyya neighborhood east of Gaza City, construction worker Samer Elewa said the events surrounding Iran reminded him of the deep scars wars leave on societies.

“People who have not lived through war might think it is only about military victories or political goals,” he said. “But for ordinary families, war means fear, loss and years of rebuilding.”

Elewa, whose family was displaced several times during the Gaza conflict, said that when bombs fall, there are no winners among civilians.

“Children lose their sense of safety, parents lose their livelihoods, and communities carry the trauma for years,” he said.

Ibrahim al-Otla, a 52-year-old former teacher, said the holy month of Ramadan has prompted many residents



Displaced Palestinian children are pictured among temporary tents in the west of Gaza City on

March 3, 2026. | Photo: Rizek Abdeljawad

to pray for calm across the region.

“We are in a month of mercy and blessings,” he said. “We pray that peace will prevail for all peoples and that the wars exhausting so-

“In the Shuja’iyya neighborhood east of Gaza City, construction worker Samer Elewa said the events surrounding Iran reminded him of the deep scars wars leave on societies.

“People who have not lived through war might think it is only about military victories or political goals,” he said.

“When they hear any loud noise, we see fear in their eyes,” he said. “Those who have experienced war understand its bitterness and hope it will stop everywhere.”

He added that many children in Gaza continue to suffer psychological trauma.

“When they hear any loud noise, we see fear in their eyes,” he said. “Those who have experienced war understand its bitterness and hope it will stop everywhere.”

At a grocery store in the Nuseirat refugee camp in central Gaza, shopkeeper Mahmoud al-Dali said decades of conflict in the region have shown that the human cost of war remains the same.

“In every conflict, politicians talk about strategy and power,” he said. “But the ordinary person is the one who pays the real price.”

For university student Lina al-Khatib, reports of the latest conflict brought back memories of nights spent sheltering with her family during Israeli airstrikes.

“We used to sit together in the darkest corner of the house, listening to explosions and hoping the next strike would not hit us,” she said.

Local observers said the

expanding confrontation has heightened concerns among Gaza residents, many of whom rely on humanitarian assistance and face difficult economic conditions.

Mustafa Ibrahim, a Gaza-based political analyst, warned that prolonged fighting involving Iran could have serious repercussions for the entire Middle East.

“Any large-scale war in Iran will not remain confined within its borders,” he said. “It will affect the balance of power in the region on security, economic and political levels.”

“The Middle East is interconnected,” he added. “Major disruptions in one pivotal country inevitably have consequences for others. What the region needs are comprehensive political understandings, not open-ended wars that deepen the suffering of people.”

Dubai Airports Facilitate Over 1,000 flights Amid Regional Disruptions

Airports in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE), have facilitated more than 1,140 flights over the past 84 hours to help travelers return home amid regional aviation disruptions.

The flights are operated from Dubai International Airport and Al Maktoum International Airport, according to Dubai Airports, the city’s state-owned operator.

Between Monday and Thursday, more than 500 flights departed from the two airports, providing around 105,000 outbound seats to passengers traveling to more than 80 countries, with the number continuing to rise each day. Dubai Airports said additional flights are being added to the schedule daily and advised travelers to check the latest flight status directly with their airlines.

Airspace across several parts of the Middle East was restricted after the United States and Israel launched strikes on Iran over the weekend, prompting retaliatory attacks and widespread aviation precautionary measures. The UAE has reportedly closed parts of its airspace as a precautionary measure.

BY Xinhua News Agency
@themtkenyatimes



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Fatalities On Our Roads



Kenya's roads have become death traps. The grim tally of 5,009 lives lost last year—261 more than in 2024—underscores a national crisis that can no longer be ignored. Behind every statistic is a family shattered, a community robbed, and a nation bleeding from preventable tragedies.

President William Ruto has rightly sounded the alarm, calling road safety a matter of urgent national concern. His figures are chilling: over 4,000 fatalities annually, with pedestrians, motorcyclists, and passengers bearing the brunt. The causes are depressingly familiar—drunk driving, bribery, unlicensed drivers,

unroadworthy vehicles, counterfeit spare parts, and reckless public service operators pressed by economic strain.

The rot is systemic. Highway patrols are thin, enforcement is compromised, and training standards remain lax. The President's proposed reforms—instant fines, demerit points, standardized driver training, automated ticketing, CCTV surveillance, speed cameras, digital fatigue monitors, and body-worn cameras for traffic officers—are ambitious. They could mark a turning point if implemented with integrity and urgency.

But technology alone will not

save lives. Road safety demands discipline from drivers, vigilance from pedestrians, and accountability from authorities. Citizens must reject shortcuts, report corruption, and demand safer infrastructure. The government must match rhetoric with action, ensuring reforms do not gather dust in policy papers.

Kenya cannot afford to normalize carnage on its highways. Every journey should end at home, not in a morgue. Road safety is not a privilege—it is a right. And until we treat it as such, our roads will remain rivers of blood.

By Charity Mwangi, Laikipia University

Month Of March: Celebrating Women, Confronting Challenges

March is more than a calendar marker—it is a global reminder of the power, resilience, and indispensable role of women in shaping society. From nurturing families to leading nations, women remain the backbone of progress. Their achievements deserve celebration, but their struggles demand urgent confrontation.

Across the world, women have broken barriers once thought insurmountable. They lead governments, run thriving enterprises, and stand tall in boardrooms once closed to them. Affirmative action and constitutional guarantees have elevated women from the margins to the center of decision-making. Yet, beneath these triumphs lies a sobering reality: too many women remain shackled by outdated traditions and systemic neglect.

The persistence of female genital mutilation in parts of Kenya and beyond is a national shame. Dreams are cut short, childhoods stolen, and futures compromised by practices that have no place in the 21st century. The law must not

only condemn but decisively punish perpetrators of such violations. Similarly, early marriages continue to rob girls of education and opportunity, perpetuating cycles of poverty and disempowerment.

Even where legal provisions exist—such as the two-thirds gender rule and the 30 percent allocation in government tenders—many women remain unaware or unable to access these opportunities. Awareness campaigns and enforcement must match the ambition of the laws themselves.

Equally troubling is the rise of body shaming and public humiliation, often instigated by fellow

women. This toxic culture undermines solidarity and erodes dignity. Stronger protections and cultural shifts are needed to end this scourge.

As the world marks International Women's Day, let us not only applaud women's resilience but also confront the injustices that persist. Celebrating women is not enough—empowering them fully is the unfinished revolution.

The measure of any society is how it treats its women. Ours must rise to the challenge.

By: Daniel Maina, Laikipia University



We Need Stable Roads For The Singapore Journey

Kenya's dream of becoming "the Singapore of Africa" will collapse unless we first fix the ground beneath our feet. Vision alone does not build nations—discipline, stability, and consistency do.

Singapore's transformation under Lee Kuan Yew was no miracle. It was the product of deliberate planning, protected institutions, and a political culture that valued continuity over chaos. Policies were not tossed about by partisan storms. The rule of law was firm, corruption was crushed, and economic planning stretched decades ahead.

Kenya's current administration speaks of bottom-up growth, industrialization, digital innovation, and infrastructure expansion. These are worthy pillars. But ambition cannot thrive in an environment of policy uncertainty, shifting tax regimes, and institutions weakened by political interference. Investors flee unpredictability. Citizens lose faith when rules change overnight.

Stable roads mean more than tarmac and expressways. They mean predictable governance, regulatory clarity, and professional institutions that outlast political cycles. They mean a civil service insulated from



partisan games, and a private sector confident enough to plan for the long term.

If Kenya truly wants to walk the Singapore path, it must embrace the discipline that journey demands: stability in governance, continuity in economic policy, respect for institutions, and a relentless fight against corruption. Citizens, opposition, civil service, and business

leaders must all contribute to a predictable ecosystem where long-term planning survives short-term pressures.

Kenya has ambition. Kenya has potential. But without stability, even the boldest vision will skid off course.

By John I. Maina

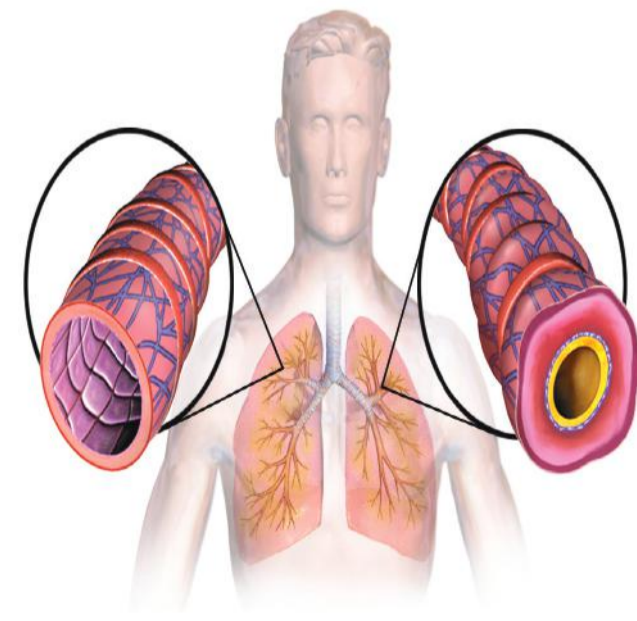
How I Managed Asthma And Made It To University

Asthma once dictated every breath of my childhood. Dust, smoke, and cold air were enough to send me gasping, sometimes into hospital beds where the night felt endless. School days slipped away, friendships thinned, and stigma cut deeper than the wheeze in my chest. "You could die anytime," peers would sneer, as if my condition defined my destiny.

But destiny is not written in coughs and inhalers—it is carved in resilience. I learned that asthma is not a sentence but a challenge to be managed. I mapped my triggers, built habits of hydration, warmth, and timely medication, and discovered the quiet power of discipline. Stress management became as vital as any prescription. Slowly, I reclaimed control.

Today, I sit in lecture halls at Laikipia University, a second-year student living proof that asthma does not own me. I laugh with friends, tackle assignments, and breathe freely into a future once clouded with doubt. My journey is not about denial of asthma—it is about refusing to let it run the show.

Asthma is chronic, yes, but it is



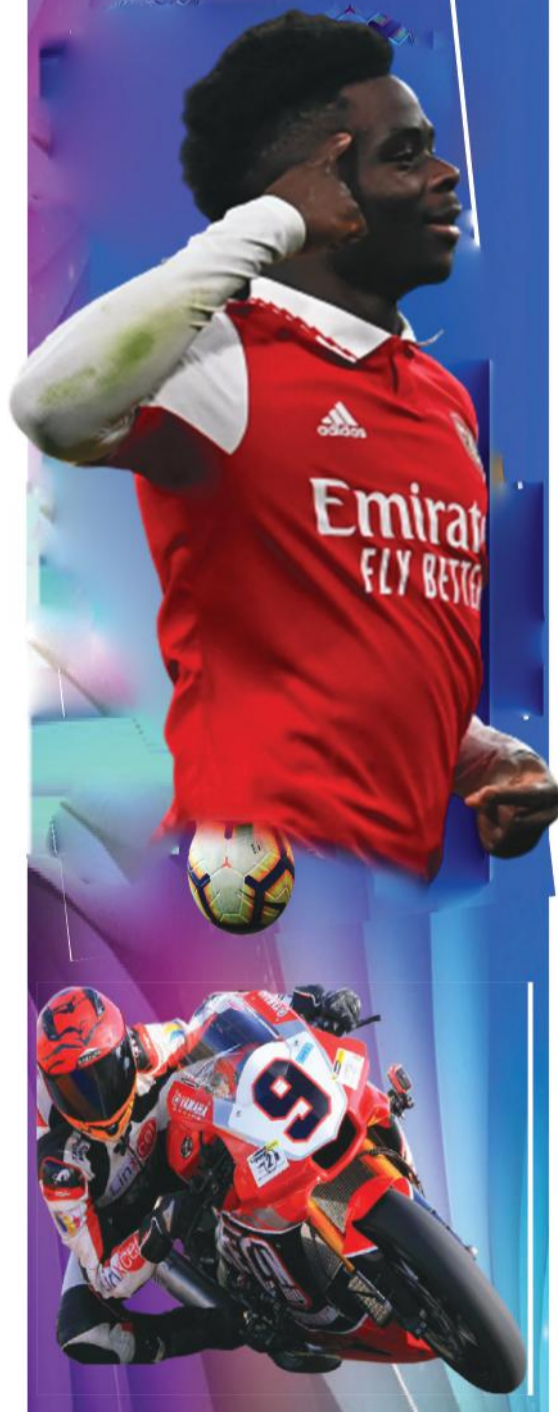
not a barrier unless you surrender to it. To anyone feeling overwhelmed: know your triggers, build daily habits, and fight back with consistency. The disease may linger, but it does not define you.

I am Giovanni, and my story is

simple: asthma tried to silence me, but I chose to breathe louder.

Asthma is real—but so is victory.

By: Ochekit Giovanni

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Sports >> *The Harambee Starlets touched down in Nairobi on Friday afternoon following the unexpected postponement of the Women's Africa Cup of Nations (Wafcon)

Harambee Starlets Return After Wafcon Postponement



Harambee Starlets' Violet Nanjala (L) and Jentrix Shikangwa arrive at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) from Ivory Coast.
PHOTO/HARAMBEE STARLETS.

The Harambee Starlets returned home on Friday afternoon following the unexpected postponement of the Women's Africa Cup of Nations (Wafcon), which had been scheduled to take place from March 17 to April 3 in Morocco.

The team had been preparing to travel to Miramas, France, for a high-performance training camp when the Confederation of African Football (CAF) announced the decision. CAF cited "unforeseen circumstances" and emphasized its commitment to staging a world-class event as the reason for the delay.

For head coach Beldine Odemba and her squad, the announcement came after a week-long camp in Ivory Coast. During that period, the Starlets played two international friendlies against Benin and the hosts, los-

ing both matches. Despite the results, Odemba highlighted the importance of the experience and the lessons learned.

"It's good that we have played international friendlies. They give you a clear picture of where you are. We really need to work with the girls mentally and psychologically. We need to sharpen our attack and get more goals," she said.

The Football Kenya Federation (FKF) responded to CAF's announcement by assuring the team of continued support. "Despite this postponement, we remain committed to providing the Harambee Starlets with the resources, planning, and support necessary to keep the team ready and competitive for the rescheduled tournament," FKF said in a statement.

The Starlets are preparing

for their second appearance at Wafcon, having last featured in 2016. They are drawn in Group A alongside hosts Morocco, Senegal, and Algeria—a challenging pool that will test their resilience and growth. Facing Morocco on home soil, Senegal's physicality, and Algeria's tactical discipline will demand peak performance from Odemba's charges.

While the postponement disrupts immediate plans, it also offers the Starlets valuable time to regroup, refine their strategy, and strengthen their squad. The international friendlies, though tough, provided a reality check on areas needing improvement, particularly in attack and composure under pressure. Odemba has emphasized the need for mental toughness, sharper finishing, and stronger teamwork

as the team builds toward the continental stage.

For the players, the delay is both a frustration and an opportunity. It means more time to prepare, more time to bond, and more time to correct weaknesses. For FKF, it is a chance to ensure that logistical and financial support is in place to give the team the best possible platform.

The Harambee Starlets' journey to Morocco may have been delayed, but their ambition remains intact. With determination, discipline, and the right preparation, they can turn this pause into a launchpad for success.

The Starlets' return is not a setback—it is a pause before the push for history.

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *The Sports Disputes Tribunal (SDT) has overturned a ruling by the Football Kenya Federation (FKF) that had awarded Gor Mahia and Nairobi United a point each

SDT Overturns FKF Ruling On Gor Mahia-Nairobi United Tie



Nairobi United's John Otieno fights for the ball with Gor Mahia's Benson Omalla.

The Sports Disputes Tribunal (SDT) has overturned a ruling by the Football Kenya Federation (FKF) that had awarded Gor Mahia and Nairobi United a point each following their abandoned league clash on December 21, 2025.

In a decision delivered Friday afternoon, the tribunal quashed the earlier verdict by FKF's League and Competitions Committee and referred the matter back to the body for a fresh hearing. Importantly, SDT directed that the new ruling must be guided by the 2019 FKF Rule Book, not the 2025 version that informed the initial decision.

The aborted match, played at Dandora Stadium in Nairobi, was marred by crowd trouble. Nairobi United, popularly known as Naibois, had equalised in the 58th minute through Ovela Ochieng', sparking wild celebrations. Tensions quickly esca-

lated, with fans from both sides clashing. Objects were hurled onto the pitch, forcing players to flee into the dressing rooms for safety. The violence spilled outside the stadium, with reports of injuries among supporters.

The FKF committee had initially ruled that both teams share the spoils, awarding a point each. Nairobi United, dissatisfied with the outcome, lodged an appeal at SDT, arguing that the ruling was unfair and inconsistent with established regulations.

SDT's intervention now resets the process, requiring FKF to revisit the matter under the framework of the 2019 rules. This directive underscores the importance of consistency in applying regulations, particularly in high-stakes fixtures where fan behaviour and match integrity are at issue.

The December clash carried added weight given the histo-

ry between the two sides. Only months earlier, Nairobi United—then a second-tier side—had stunned Gor Mahia with a 2-1 victory in the FKF Cup final. That upset, coupled with online banter leading up to the league fixture, heightened tensions and contributed to the charged atmosphere in Dandora.

The tribunal's ruling is significant for both clubs and the wider football fraternity. For Gor Mahia, perennial giants of Kenyan football, the decision means uncertainty over their league campaign. For Nairobi United, it represents a chance to press their case for fair treatment as they continue to establish themselves in the top flight.

Beyond the immediate implications, the ruling highlights the growing role of SDT in safeguarding fairness and accountability in Kenyan football. By insisting on adherence to the 2019

FKF Rule Book, the tribunal has reinforced the principle that governance must be rooted in clear, consistent, and transparent regulations.

As FKF prepares to rehear the case, stakeholders will be watching closely. The outcome will not only determine the fate of the abandoned fixture but also set a precedent for how similar disputes are handled in the future.

For now, the Gor Mahia-Nairobi United tie remains unresolved, a reminder of the challenges posed by fan violence and the critical need for strong governance in the game.

The SDT ruling is more than a correction—it is a call for consistency, fairness, and discipline in Kenyan football.

SPORTS NEWS



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SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



How Do Children Mature Mentally

By: Wanjohi Mugambi

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Worth Noting:

- Their order of succession is constant, although the average ages at which they occur may vary with the individual, according to his degree of intelligence or with the social milieu. Thus, the unfolding of the stages may give rise to accelerations or retardations, but their sequence remains constant in the areas (operations, etc.) in which such stages have been shown to exist.
- Each stage is characterized by an overall structure in terms of which the main behavior patterns can be explained. In order to establish such explanatory stages, it is not sufficient to refer to these patterns as such or to the predominance of a given characteristic (as is the case with the stages proposed by Freud and Wallon).

Maturation is only one of many factors involved, and the influence of the physical and social milieu increases in importance with the child's growth. Organic maturation is undoubtedly a necessary factor and plays an indispensable role in the unvarying order of succession of the stages of the child's development, but it does not explain all development and represents only one factor among several.

Basically, the mental development of the child appears as a succession of three great periods. Each of these extends the preceding period, reconstructs it on a new level, and later surpasses it to an ever greater degree.

This is true even of the first period, for the evolution of the sensorimotor schemes extends and surpasses the evolution of the organic structures that take place during embryogenesis. Semiotic relations, thought, and interpersonal connections internalize these schemes of action by reconstructing them on the new level of representation, and surpass them until all the concrete operations and cooperative structures have been established.

Finally, after the age of eleven or twelve, nascent formal thought restructures the concrete operations by subordinating them to new structures whose development will continue throughout adolescence and all of later life (along with many other transformations as well). The integration of successive structures, each of which leads to the emergence of the subsequent one, makes it possible to divide the child's development into long periods or stages and subperiods or substages which can be characterized as follows:

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These overall structures are integrative and non-interchangeable. Each results from the preceding one, integrating it as a subordinate structure, and prepares for the subsequent one, into which it is sooner or later itself integrated.

Given the existence of such a development and the integrative direction that can be seen in it a posteriori, the problem is to understand its mechanism. This is, in fact, an extension of the problem embryologists raise when they wonder whether ontogenetic organization results from preformation or from epigenesis, and what causal processes are involved. As yet, we have reached only provisional solutions, and future theories will be acceptable only if they succeed in integrating interpretations of embryogenesis, organic growth, and mental development into a harmonious whole. Meanwhile, we must be content with a discussion of the four general factors so far assigned to mental development:

The first of these is organic growth and especially the maturation of the nervous system and the endocrine systems. There is no doubt that a number of behavior patterns depend on the first functioning of certain

structures or circuits. This is true of the coordination of vision and apprehension at about four and a half months. The organic conditions for visual perception are not fully realized until adolescence, whereas retinal functioning is quite early.

Maturation plays a role throughout mental growth. But what role? We have little detailed knowledge about maturation, and we know next to nothing about the conditions that permit the formation of the general operatory structures. Where we do have some data, we see that maturation consists essentially of opening up new possibilities and thus constitutes a necessary but not in itself a sufficient condition for the appearance of certain behavior patterns. The possibilities thus opened up also need to be fulfilled, and for this to occur, maturation must be reinforced by functional exercise and a minimum of experience. In addition, the further the acquisitions are removed from their sensorimotor origins, the more variable is their chronology, meaning not their sequence but the time of appearance.

The other fundamental factor is social interaction and transmission. Although necessary and essential, it is also insufficient by itself. Socialization is a structuration to which the individual contributes as much as he receives from it, whence the interdependence and isomorphism

of "operation" and "cooperation." Even in the case of transmissions in which the subject appears most passive, such as school teaching, social action is ineffective without an active assimilation by the child, which presupposes adequate operatory structures.

Finality is a subjective notion, and oriented development (a development that follows a direction) does not necessarily presuppose a pre-established plan—for instance, entropy in thermodynamics. In the development of the child, there is no pre-established plan, but a gradual evolution in which each innovation is dependent upon the previous one. Adult thought might seem to provide a pre-established model, but the child does not understand adult thought until he has reconstructed it, and thought is itself the result of an evolution carried on by several generations, each of which has gone through childhood. Any explanation of the child's development must take into consideration two dimensions: an ontogenetic dimension and a social dimension (in the sense of the transmission of the successive work of generations). However, the problem is somewhat analogous in both cases, for in both the central question concerns the internal mechanism of all constructivism.