



**Ruto defends Broad-Based Government, unveils development projects in Kisii and Nyamira**  
 UDA and ODM will continue to work together to deliver transformation across the country, President William Ruto has said. **Page 11**



**Court to rule on Mackenzie, 30 Others in Shakahola mass murder Trial**  
 DPP has urged the Mombasa High Court, presided over by Justice Diana Kavedza, to find that 31 accused persons, including controversial preacher Paul Nthenge Mackenzie, have a case to answer. **Page 13**

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**Green city** “Cities account for nearly 70 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions, but they also hold the key to climate solutions,” Andersen.  
**Kenya, UN launch KSh520M Nairobi green city project**

(UNEP) and UN-Habitat, has launched a Sh520 million initiative to transform Nairobi into a model low-carbon, climate-resilient and nature-positive city. Backed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and announced yesterday on the sidelines of the Global Forum for GEF Integrated Programs in Nairobi, the five-year project represents one of the most ambitious urban sustainability drives in Kenya’s history. It will be further supported by up to US\$40 million in future government investment and US\$2 million in technical assistance from development partners — a signal that this is not merely a pilot programme, but the foundation of a long-term national urban transformation agenda.



**Page 9** *UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen*

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# Ruto Emphasises National Unity, Accelerates Development Agenda Across Counties

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

*Some of the moments as captured in photos*

President William Ruto has reaffirmed cooperation between the United Democratic Alliance and Orange Democratic Movement, saying their unity is key to national stability and development. He dismissed efforts to create division, insisting the Broad-Based Government will continue to foster peace and inclusive growth.

During the second day of his tour of Kisii and Nyamira counties, the President said the partnership is anchored on the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda, aimed at ensuring no region is left behind. He noted that continuous engagement with grassroots leaders helps shape people-centered policies.

Ruto inspected and launched several projects, including the construction of Nyakoe and Kegogi modern markets, part of a KSh2.5 billion plan to build 22 markets in Kisii County. He also launched the Bobaracho-Ting'a road and access roads to Gianchore Tea Factory to improve transport and support farmers. In Nyamira, he announced investments in education and health, including Nyamira University College, student hostels, and expansion of Kenya Medical Training College facilities. He said improved infrastructure, including roads and housing, will enhance service delivery and economic growth in the region. He was accompanied by several officials from both national and county governments led by his Deputy, Kithure Kindiki.



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## NEWS IN BRIEF



Seafarers Union of Kenya (SUK) has raised alarm over what it describes as a worsening crisis in the maritime sector, with workers going for months without pay and others detained in foreign countries under distressing conditions. The union's concerns come at a time when Kenya is ramping up investment in the blue economy as a key avenue for job creation and economic empowerment for thousands of unemployed youth. In a bid to regulate the sector, improve working conditions, protect seafarers' rights and align local wages with international standards, the Ministry of Labour recently gazetted and inaugurated the Seafarers Wages Council.

However, despite these efforts, SUK Secretary General Atie Ramadhan says many seafarers remain trapped in poverty, facing exploitation and earning below-standard wages.



Kenyan DJs will now be required to pay an annual licence fee of KSh20,000 to perform at events, clubs, and academies under new tariffs backed by copyright law. The regulations classify public music playback as a commercial activity requiring compensation to rights holders. The new structure also introduces additional charges across the entertainment sector, with clubs and casinos in cities set to pay KSh100,000 annually, while mobile DJs will pay KSh30,000 per year or KSh1,000 per event. Live bands will be charged KSh50,000 in cities and KSh20,000 in local areas. Concert fees range from KSh50,000 for local events to KSh100,000 for international shows, while matatus and political rallies will also face levies.



The Kenyatta Avenue Viaduct being implemented by the Kenya Urban Roads Authority (KURA). The project is expected to ease traffic congestion and improve mobility across Nairobi City. According to the State Department for Roads, the project is designed to link Valley Road directly to the Nairobi Central Business District (CBD), where the viaduct will streamline traffic flow by lifting through-traffic above congested intersections, significantly easing movement into the city core. Construction is steadily advancing, with key civil works already visible. Reinforced concrete piers and substructures are in place along the corridor, while superstructure works are progressing, particularly around the NHIF Building, where sections of the deck have already been elevated.



The High Court in Mombasa has temporarily barred the Kenya Revenue Authority from auctioning or interfering with goods in 18 containers owned by Real Image Logistic Ltd, pending a court hearing. The containers hold goods for about 917 small-scale traders. The company argues the goods are wrongly detained over tax issues linked to a different shipment. It says the continued detention is unlawful and costly due to rising storage charges. The court issued interim orders and set a hearing date. The dispute raises concerns over potential losses to traders not involved in the tax dispute and calls for fair enforcement measures.

Environment and Climate Change Principal Secretary, Festus K. Ng'eno, said the government is advancing key legislative and policy reforms to strengthen environmental governance and climate action. Central to the effort is the review of the National Environment Policy (2013) to align it with current needs. New regulations under the Climate Change Act, including non-market approaches, carbon trading, and carbon registry frameworks, are at advanced stages. The proposed Climate Change Fund will support adaptation and mitigation efforts. Wetlands regulations and environmental audit frameworks aim to enhance ecosystem protection and oversight. Aurelia Rono noted over 1,300 national initiatives are underway, aimed at boosting sustainability, climate resilience, and green economic growth.

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**Health** According to Aids Healthcare Foundation (AHF), Kenya has faced a deficit of 250 million condoms annually, with only 150 million available

# War against the Triple Threat remains a reverie as condoms shortage hits the country



BY Jessie Mugambi Munene  
@themkenyatimes

A shocking revelation on the Daily Nation dated 11th of April 2026 on how the USA funding freeze has affected condoms availability in the country points out that if immediate and urgent measures are not taken, then the Government's commitments and ambitious plan of eradicating the Triple Threat by the year 2030 remains a reverie.

Informed by the surge of teenage pregnancies and cases of Gender Based Violence after the Covid-19 lockdown, on 9th September 2020, Principal Secretaries from various Government departments directed the establishment of Sub National Technical Working Groups on ending teenage pregnancy and gender-based violence. As a result, 47 multi-sectorial County Technical Working Groups were established to address these issues at the Sub National levels.

Cognizant of the interconnection of new HIV infections, unintended pregnancies, and sexual and gender-based violence among adolescents, on 1st December 2021 the National Syndemic Diseases Control Council (NSDCC), the National Council for Population and Development (NCPD), the State Department for Gender and Affirmative Action and the Sub National Governments jointly decided to tackle the triad

challenge. This joint effort was referred to as ending the Triple Threat, which includes Adolescent and Teen Pregnancies, HIV infections among young people and Gender Based Violence.

The World Health Organization informs us that condoms, both male and female if effectively and efficiently used are the safest ways of preventing the transmission of sexually transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS. In addition, condoms are highly effective in preventing unintended pregnancies.

In January 2025, the President of the USA signed the stop work order and this froze all foreign aid and assistance that the Government of the USA was providing. Immediately, the USAID programs that were financing contraceptives including condoms in Kenya were pulled up. Condoms play an instrumental role in preventing unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS which are two components of the Triple Threat. According to Aids Healthcare



**The World Health Organization informs us that condoms, both male and female if effectively and efficiently used are the safest ways of preventing the transmission of sexually transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS. In addition, condoms are highly effective in preventing unintended pregnancies.**



Condoms

Foundation (AHF), Kenya has faced a deficit of 250 million condoms annually, with only 150 million available against an estimated need of 400 million. AHF notes that the distribution has declined and by the end of 2025, the country had only 55 million condoms distributed.

The solution to this looming disaster lies in a very aggressive and intensive budget advocacy. The solution to this disaster lies in the Government of Kenya fully implementing the Abuja Declaration of

having at least 15% of the Government Budget allocated to Health whilst County Governments have to ambitiously and intentionally introduce and allocate enough resources to the Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Child and Adolescent Health Budget lines in their County Health Budgets.

Political goodwill should ensure that county governments have contraceptives including condoms in the most important county policies such as the County Integrated Develop-

ment Plans, Annual Development Plans and Sectorial Work Plans. Worth noting is the instrumental role that Family Planning Costed Implementations Plans plays in addressing the unmet need for contraceptives and hence, the county Governments should consider fully domestication as provided for in the national plan.

*Jessie Mugambi Munene is a Partnerships Lead, Fit For Future Kenya and a gender, anti-FGM champion*

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- e** IEBC Constituency Offices

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## NAKURU

## Residents protest rising livestock theft amid insecurity in Molo



Protests

BY KNA

@themkenyaintimes

Residents of Sion village in Molo Constituency have decried a surge in livestock theft in the area which has led to insecurity and fear among residents.

This comes after raiders broke into one homestead belonging to Lily Rotich and slaughtered a cow within the neighbourhood.

The incident that sparked protest among the residents has left the residents of Sion village counting heavy losses which has sparked fresh concerns about insecurity.

Expressing their grievances, residents demanded decisive action, emphasizing the escalating severity of the situation. The residents took to the streets near Sachangwan junction to express their dissatisfaction with security, slamming police for laxity and poor service to residents.

Speaking to the press, the residents led by Lily Rotich, Mercy Langat, Vicky Chepkwong and Benard Rotich are demanding intensified security operations to smoke out the thieves from their hideouts.

“Numerous shops and houses have been broken into, with no arrests made yet. They brazenly slaughter cows near the police station, implying that the perpetrators are familiar to law enforcement,” she said.

“It started as normal petty theft of sufuria and household items, but it has gradually graduated into livestock theft which is now a major concern to residents here,” said Langat.

“We are forced to lock ourselves in the house by 8pm as if there is dust to dawn curfew here at Sion village. The only time we see po-

lice is when politicians are around,” Lily Rotich added.

Benard Rotich narrated how they went to bed thinking all was well only to wake up during milking hours and find their cow missing.

After a tireless search with the help of villagers, they discovered remains of their cow slaughtered a few meters from their home, an incident which sparked protest among the residents citing surge insecurity in the area.

“Here at Sion we can no longer keep our livestock, we are forced to share shelter with the remaining cows and chickens,” said Rotich.

“Its painful to this family for losing their only source of income yet schools are about to open. We demand transfer of police at Sachangwan police station,” he added.

The residents slammed the area chief for allegedly pouring cold water on serious cases resolving to kangaroo courts which has led to insecurity in the area.

Area Chief Evan Mageto promised to intensify patrols to restore order adding that security operators will ensure culprits are brought to book. “We have launched an investigation and I want to assure residents we will restore order and ensure lives of residents here at Sion go on as normal,” said Mageto.

Residents are banding together to explore community-based solutions to address the root causes of insecurity in their area.

Initiatives such as neighbourhood watch programmes, community policing efforts, and engagement with local authorities are being actively pursued to complement official law enforcement efforts.



Nairobi Governor Johnson Sakaja with senior officials, including Woman Representative Esther Passaris, when he broke ground for the construction of the Gikomba modern market yesterday

## Sakaja assures Gikomba traders of modern, safer world-class market as construction begins

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyaintimes

Nairobi Governor Sakaja Johnson has assured Gikomba traders that their interests have been fully considered as the county begins construction of a modern market set to transform one of the city’s busiest trading hubs.

Speaking during the groundbreaking ceremony for Phase One of the Gikomba Market redevelopment, the Governor, accompanied by Housing Principal Secretary Charles Hinga and other leaders, said the project marks the beginning of a long-awaited shift from the area’s current state of temporary structures, muddy pathways, and congestion.

Sakaja emphasized that the new market will feature improved infrastructure, including a better layout, reduced congestion, and enhanced movement for both traders and customers.

“You elected me to protect your interests. This new market is a game changer it is modern, organized,

and will improve business operations and customer experience. In six months, the story will begin to change,” he said.

The Governor noted that Gikomba has, for years, suffered frequent fire outbreaks leading to massive losses. He said the new design prioritizes safety, incorporating improved electrical systems, emergency exits, and expanded trading spaces to accommodate more traders.

He urged traders to support the initiative and avoid divisive politics that could derail progress.

“

**“You elected me to protect your interests. This new market is a game changer it is modern, organized, and will improve business operations and customer experience. In six months, the story will begin to change,” he said.**

“Anyone opposing such a project is denying traders a chance to grow. Let us put politics aside and focus on creating a conducive business environment,” Sakaja added.

The redevelopment will be implemented in phases. Phase One is expected to take six months, with Phases Two and Three to follow upon its completion.

The project is part of the broader development agenda under the co-operation agreement between the Nairobi County Government and the national government, which injected Sh80 billion into key infrastructure projects in the capital.

Earlier in the day, Governor Sakaja chaired an implementation committee meeting with national government officials to assess progress on projects under the agreement, before later visiting Gikomba Market in the afternoon.

The redevelopment is expected to significantly improve working conditions for thousands of traders who have operated for years under challenging conditions, marking a new chapter for the iconic market.

**Green City** The urgency behind the project is hard to overstate. Nairobi's population has grown at a pace that its infrastructure has struggled to match.

# Kenya launches Sh520mn UN-backed project to make Nairobi a model green city

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyatimes

The Government of Kenya, in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and UN-Habitat, has launched a Sh520 million initiative to transform Nairobi into a model low-carbon, climate-resilient and nature-positive city.

Backed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and announced yesterday on the sidelines of the Global Forum for GEF Integrated Programs in Nairobi, the five-year project represents one of the most ambitious urban sustainability drives in Kenya's history. It will be further supported by up to US\$40 million in future government investment and US\$2 million in technical assistance from development partners — a signal that this is not merely a pilot programme, but the foundation of a long-term national urban transformation agenda.

At the heart of the initiative is a pilot intervention in Kamukunji, one of Nairobi's most densely populated and historically underserved neighbourhoods. More than 85,000 residents stand to benefit directly from what planners are calling an integrated “green neighbourhood” approach — a model that combines environmental restoration with tangible improvements in daily living conditions. The interventions will target greenhouse gas emissions reduction, the restoration of degraded ecosystems along the Nairobi River corridor, and improved access to sustainable infrastructure and basic services, from clean energy to waste management.

The urgency behind the project is hard to overstate. Nairobi's population has grown at a pace that its infrastructure has struggled to match. Unplanned urban expansion has fuelled pollution, environmental degradation and heightened vulnerability to climate shocks — flooding in particular has become an annual crisis for low-income settlements. The city, like many African capitals, is paying an increasingly steep price for decades of reactive rather than proactive urban planning.

UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen did not mince words on the

scale of the challenge. “Cities account for nearly 70 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions, but they also hold the key to climate solutions,” she said, adding that Nairobi's rapid urban growth presents both a unique opportunity and a pressing urgency for sustainable planning. Her remarks framed Kenya's capital not as a passive victim of climate change, but as a potential laboratory for the solutions that cities across the Global South desperately need.

That framing — cities as drivers of environmental solutions rather than merely sources of environmental problems — runs through the entire design of the programme. According to GEF officials, the project is deliberately structured to unlock long-term investment by combining catalytic financing with integrated urban

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**UN-Habitat Executive Director Anacláudia Rossbach lent the initiative a sharper global context. By 2050, she noted, nearly two-thirds of the world's population will live in cities — the majority of that growth concentrated in Africa and Asia. “This project demonstrates how integrated planning and targeted investment can deliver inclusive, resilient and thriving urban communities,” she said. In other words, what succeeds or fails in Nairobi will carry lessons far beyond Kenya's borders.**



UN-Habitat Executive Director Anacláudia Rossbach

planning models. The theory of change is straightforward: demonstrate what works in Kamukunji, build the institutional muscle to replicate it, and create the policy architecture to sustain it well beyond the five-year funding window.

UN-Habitat Executive Director Anacláudia Rossbach lent the initiative a sharper global context. By 2050, she noted, nearly two-thirds of the world's population will live in cities — the majority of that growth concentrated in Africa and Asia. “This project demonstrates how integrated planning and targeted investment can deliver inclusive, resilient and thriving urban communities,” she said. In other words, what succeeds or fails in Nairobi will carry lessons far beyond Kenya's borders.

The project will be jointly implemented by UNEP and UN-Habitat in collaboration with the Nairobi City County Government, the State Department for Housing and Urban Development, the Nairobi Rivers Commission and the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry. That breadth of institutional partnership is both the initiative's greatest strength and its most significant administrative test. Coor-

dinating across national ministries, county government and international agencies is rarely straightforward, and the history of well-funded urban programmes in Africa is littered with cautionary tales of ambition undone by bureaucratic fragmentation.

Cabinet Secretary for Lands, Public Works, Housing and Urban Development Alice Wahome sought to reassure on that front, reaffirming the government's commitment to seeing the programme through. “By strengthening planning systems and unlocking innovative financing, we are building cities that are inclusive, resilient and future-ready, with a particular focus on the urban poor,” she said. That last phrase — the urban poor — is where the project's credibility will ultimately be tested. Green urbanism that benefits only middle-class neighbourhoods would be not just a missed opportunity, but a political failure in a city where inequality remains one of the most corrosive social forces.

The initiative is part of the GEF Sustainable Cities Integrated Program, a global effort supporting more than 50 cities across over 20 countries to address the interlocking crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and

pollution through coordinated urban planning and investment. Kenya's inclusion in that network provides Nairobi with access to peer learning, technical knowledge and comparative data that no single national programme could generate alone.

The GEF, the world's largest multilateral environmental fund, has built its model around exactly this kind of catalytic financing — deploying targeted capital to de-risk investment and demonstrate viability at scale. Whether that model delivers in the informal settlements of Kamukunji will depend on execution, political will and the degree to which communities themselves are given genuine agency in shaping the interventions that bear their name.

Nairobi has long been called the Green City in the Sun. For most of its residents, that has been more aspiration than reality. This project, if it delivers on its promise, could begin to close that gap — one neighbourhood, one restored riverbank, one solar panel at a time.

The world will be watching.

# The Mt. Kenya Times



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**Politics** The President said the Broad-Based Government is the driving force behind accelerated development in the country.

# Ruto defends Broad-Based Government, unveils development projects in Kisii and Nyamira

BY PCS

@themkenyatimes

The United Democratic Alliance and Orange Democratic Movement will continue to work together to deliver transformation across the country, President William Ruto has said.

The President said the Broad-Based Government is the driving force behind accelerated development in the country.

“We will continue uniting the country and preaching peace under the broad-based arrangement,” he said.

President Ruto made the remarks on the second day of his development tour of Kisii and Nyamira counties yesterday.

On the opposition, the President accused the leaders of threatening to plunge the country into chaos should they lose the next election.

“We cannot allow a few people to destroy our country. Our destiny will be determined by 60 million of us and not two or three people,” the President pointed out.

He took a swipe at the opposition for peddling falsehoods, dwelling on propaganda and preaching hatred.

“These people have no vision, no plan and lack an agenda. How will they compete against us with our development record?” the President asked.

Deputy President Kithure Kindiki echoed the President’s message that Kenya belongs to all people, warning that a few “characters” cannot be allowed to create chaos and violence.

Kisii Governor Simba Arati said the Broad-Based Government between UDA and ODM has led to rapid national development.

“If there is a productive engagement with the government, it is this one,” Mr Arati stated, adding that he will continue working with the government for the sake of the people of Kisii County.

He added: “They have been insulting us for working with UDA, but we will not look back. This is about delivering service to the people.”

In Nyamira, the President assured residents that a station for the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) will be built in the county, dismissing claims that the area has been ignored in the extension of the rail from Naivasha to Kisumu.

He explained that a station worth KSh300 million will be set up at Ikonge, pointing out that the facility will be a transport hub for people and goods.

“Be ready to take advantage of this important facility,” he told the residents, noting that the SGR will be key in transporting produce such as tea, bananas, and macadamia within Kenya and to the region.

The extension of the SGR from Naivasha through Nyamira, Kisumu, Malaba and beyond will stimulate economic growth in the country and across the region, he stated.

“Falsehoods have been doing rounds that we won’t have an SGR station here. I am here to tell you that this is not true,” he said.

The President had day-long meetings in Nyamira and Ki-

sii counties, including laying the foundation stone for construction of facilities at the proposed Nyamira University College.

“When we said we would build a university here, some people doubted us. As you can see today, the university is now taking shape,” President Ruto said.

**On the opposition, the President accused the leaders of threatening to plunge the country into chaos should they lose the next election.**

**“We cannot allow a few people to destroy our country. Our destiny will be determined by 60 million of us and not two or three people,” the President pointed out. He took a swipe at the opposition for peddling falsehoods, dwelling on propaganda and preaching hatred.**

**“These people have no vision, no plan and lack an agenda. How will they compete against us with our development record?” the President asked.**



President William Ruto listening as leaders address the public yesterday.

He explained: “Initially, we had allocated KSh200 million for this project. We are adding another Sh300 million,” he said.

He pointed out that an additional KSh300 million would be spent on building hostels.

The President thanked North Mugirango MP Joshua Nyamoko for moving a secondary school to create space for the university.

“Hon Nyamoko provided KSh25m for reconstruction of the school. I will provide an additional KSh20 million to help establish the secondary school elsewhere,” he said.

The President assured the residents of Nyamira and Kisii counties that they “are right at the centre of the National Government” development plans. Divisive politics, he cautioned, belongs to the past, reiterating his commitment to ensure that every part of the country gets their rightful share.

On health, the President said a new hospital will be established to serve Nyamira and the neighbourhood.

“We are in talks with the county government to build a new hospital worth KSh1 billion,” he said, noting that development, and not ethnicity, will deliver the transformation Kenyans yearn for.

Further, he announced that KSh950 million has been set aside to build a new stadium in Nyamira.

“I have told Governor Amos Nyaribo to look for land where we can build a stadium,” he said.

DP Kindiki, who is accom-

panying the President on his four-day tour, told the residents that President Ruto is focused on his vision and resolute in his determination to bring tangible change.

“Your Excellency, you have come here for development not politics,” the DP said, adding that the President’s tour is geared towards unlocking stalled road projects, building markets, schools and stadia.

Governor Nyaribo expressed his support for the President, saying his development record speaks for itself.

“We thank you for the hospital, university and the roads,” Mr Nyaribo said.

Mr Nyamoko said Nyamira will be transformed under the leadership of President Ruto.

On the second day of his tour in Kisii County, the President also launched the construction of the Bobaracho-Ting’a road and access roads to Gianchore Tea Factory. The road is good news to tea farmers who have endured difficulties in transporting their produce to the factory.

The President said contractors had returned to build all roads that had stalled, pointing out that contracts for some of them have already been advertised.

In Kisii County, the President laid the foundation stone for the KSh100 million Kegogi Modern Market, which will accommodate 200 traders.

Across the county, the President said, the government is building 22 modern markets at a cost of KSh2.5 billion.

“We said every hustle matters and this is the reason we

are building all the markets. Mama mboga and other traders need clean spaces for their enterprises,” he said.

The President pointed out that the government has a development record to present to Kenyans while his competitors have nothing to show the electorate.

“In education, we have employed 100,000 teachers, built 23,000 new classrooms and rolled out a new funding model for fighting universities,” he said.

In the past three years, he said, his administration has stabilised the economy by bringing down inflation, interest rates and the exchange rate, and bolstered forex reserves from \$5.7 billion to \$14.6 billion.

With the economy now on sound footing, the President said the government now has sufficient resources for development, including building roads.

One of the key projects the government is focusing on in Gusiiland is electricity connectivity through the last mile programme.

“We are investing KSh300million to enhance the connection of homes to electricity. Our plan is to connect an additional 20,000 homes,” the President said.

Politics .....

# Nyeri Senatorial aspirant Nick Mararo blames government for uncollected IDs

BY MKT REPORTERS

@themtkenyatimes

Even as the youth are being urged to register as voters, uncollected national identity cards is a big impediment.

Nyeri senatorial aspirant Nick Mararo who likened the voters card in governance to money in the economy blamed the national administration for laxity.

“A voters card is the political currency just as money is the economic currency and all should be well armed and should be viewed as a basic right for all” noted Mararo.

Speaking during a IEBC stakeholders engagement meeting at ACK Guest House

in Nyeri town yesterday, Mararo lashed out at the National Government Administration Officers for not ensuring that the youth get their IDs soon after they are processed.

“The administrators know each and every home in their jurisdictions and there can be no explanation for the documents to lie idle in government offices particularly considering there are nyumba kumi volunteers in every village,” the Jubilee party aspirant said.

Governor Mutahi Kahiga who has also declared his interest in being the senator after serving his mandatory two terms decried the low turnout at the voter registration centres.

“With only two weeks the end of the exercise only 17.8% of the projected 139,892 new voters have been registered.

According to IEBC commissioner Anne Nderitu who graced the forum, at least 15,000 uncollected cards in the county impact negatively to the exercise.

Participants called on the electoral body to liaise with religious institutions in the villages to sensitise the potential voters to ensure that all eligible voters participate in establishing a responsive government.

Mararo urged all aspirants across the political divide to play their roles in calling on the youth to to aquire both the



Nick Mararo (centre) at ACK Guest House Hall with other stakeholders yesterday. | Photo: Courtesy.

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IDs and voters cards as they have a bigger stake in the future of the nation.

Among other participants was the area deputy county commissioner Kaindio Mauta, aspirants for various political seats and officials of political parties.

Rware ward MCA aspirant on Jubilee party, Paul Mwangi Wanjiru vowed to spare no resources to ensure that residents of marginal areas

of Witemere, Majengo and Gamerock are well sensitised to register for both the IDs and voters cards to exercise their democratic right.

The county according IEBC has 481,000 and all the projected 139,000 new voters are registered, the county would have about 620,000 votes; a number any presidential aspirant would salivate for.



Huge numbers of national ID cards uncollected. | Photo: Courtesy.

**Court** The prosecution told the court that it has already established a prima facie case after calling 121 witnesses

# Court to rule on Mackenzie, 30 Others in Shakahola mass murder Trial

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyentimes

The Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) has urged the Mombasa High Court, presided over by Justice Diana Kavedza, to find that 31 accused persons, including controversial preacher Paul Nthenge Mackenzie, have a case to answer in the ongoing Shakahola mass murder trial involving 191 counts of murder.

The prosecution told the court that it has already established a prima facie case after calling 121 witnesses and producing multiple exhibits linking each accused person to the offences. Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions Jami Yamina submitted that the totality of evidence places each accused within the circumstances that led to the deaths of the victims.

He said many of the witnesses came from Shakahola or had direct knowledge of the events, and gave firsthand accounts of what happened to their relatives, children, siblings, friends, and neighbours during the period in question.

The prosecution further told the court that the accused were linked to the activities and religious doctrines of Mackenzie's Good News International Church, including the alleged extreme fasting practices, which directly and indirectly resulted in the deaths of 191 people.

According to the State, the minors who died in the alleged suicide pact were murdered because they had no capacity to make independent judgment or consent to the agreement, making their deaths unlawful.

The prosecution also argued that there was evidence of malice aforethought, stating that the manner in which members were instructed to fast without food or water demonstrated intent that led to death.

It further submitted that each accused played a specific role in the alleged criminal enterprise, with responsibilities divided into groups such as security personnel, transporters, and grave diggers, all of whom allegedly participated in facilitating the deaths.

The court was also told that the coordinated structure of roles showed that the accused were part of a common plan or pact that enabled the execution of the alleged offences.

In addition, the prosecution said that several victims, including chil-



Paul Mackenzie with his co-accused listening to their lawyer.

dren, were identified through DNA testing, while others were identified by relatives using non-conventional methods due to the condition of the bodies.

Mackenzie, also known as Mtumishi, Nabii, and Papaa, alongside the 30 co-accused, faces 191 counts of murder allegedly committed at Shakahola in Malindi Sub-County, Kilifi County, on unknown dates between January 2021 and September 2023. They are charged under Sections 203 and 204 of the Penal Code.

The prosecution closed its case on 16 January 2025 after calling 121 witnesses and presenting its evidence against all accused persons.

The court is set to deliver its ruling tomorrow on whether the accused persons have a case to answer and will be placed on their defence.



Prosecutor Jami Yamina making his submissions.

## Heartache



Who told you I wouldn't cry?  
Are there any who walked with me?  
Who told you I'm not on their mind?  
Tell me, is there anyone thinking of me?

I closed my eyes, forgot, and quietly went far  
away,

What didn't I do just to please you?  
Hoping maybe you would change,  
I wrote beautiful poems for you.

I heard you say "Why is she laughing?",  
Enough, my pains have worn me out.  
Stop asking too many questions,  
It's enough that my father is ill.

Don't gossip about me if I go far away,  
Say kind words behind my back.  
Don't hurt my heart even if I laugh often,  
Don't wish me evil — wish me well.

Author: Shohsanam Nomozova

## Conversation between minute hand and hour hand



Minute hand (MH): Hello dear, Why are you  
depressed?

Hour hand (HH): My appearance makes me  
suppressed.

MH: Don't worry dear, short & stout doesn't

matter, I'll be with you to guide.  
HH: Will you ever be beside me to abide?  
MH: Sure dear, let's perform in periodic motion.  
Predicating the good & bad deeds in emotion  
With celestial bodies- the sun & moon.  
HH: Yes, let me be consoled now as it's boon.  
MH: Of course dear,  
We are calculated in all the walks of human  
HH: Yes, be proud, we are more than Yeoman &  
Spokesman (It's twelve now both hugged--)

G. Sarala.  
CREATIVE WRITERS

## Hardworking Boy (A Fairy Tale)



In a distant village, there lived a hardworking boy  
named Nodirjon. He had a friend named Nortoy,  
who was a bit lazy.

Nodirjon would always offer help to anyone he met  
on the street and spoke kind, polite words. Since  
he never hurt anyone, elders would bless him  
and say, "Thanks to your father for raising you  
so well." Nodirjon was always in a good mood and  
loved to work.

Nortoy, on the other hand, behaved poorly both  
outside and at home. He was very careless. Some  
people would get upset with him and wonder,  
"Why does this boy spend all his time on games  
and развлечения instead of doing something  
useful?"

One day, while Nodirjon was resting after working  
in his garden, Nortoy came up to him and said,

"Hey, my friend, why are you tiring yourself like  
this? The work will always be there. Come on, let's  
go play with the others. Live for yourself!"

Nodirjon replied,

"No, I have things to do. I can't go."

"Why not?" Nortoy asked.

"My friend," said Nodirjon, "to achieve something  
in life, you must work hard. Our ancestors didn't  
say 'Hard work brings comfort' for nothing. One  
day, you will regret these actions."

Nortoy didn't like these words and continued  
living as he pleased.

One day, he went to his father and asked for  
money. His father replied, "I don't have any  
money."

Feeling upset, Nortoy left the house without  
looking back and went out into the street. Then  
he remembered his friend's words.

After that, he went to Nodirjon, thanked him, and  
decided to change his habits. He started working  
hard and tried to live a better and happier life.

Moral: A person cannot achieve anything without  
hard work.

👉 Said Akbar Surxoniy

## Friendship



Friendship is a happy smile,  
That stays with you all the while.  
A friend will help you when you're sad,

And make you laugh when days are bad.  
They share their toys and play with you,  
And help you learn new things too.  
A friend is kind, a friend is true,  
They always care about you.

Yasir Shihan  
6th standard  
Government High School  
Sakkarakattai  
Ramanathapuram district  
Tamil Nadu, India

## Agriculture



Agriculture is very important,  
It is the backbone of our future.

It is like a deity,  
We respect it with deep piety.

No agriculture, no food,  
People may turn helpless and rude.

Respect agriculture and farmers together,  
Without them, life would worsen forever.

Agriculture falls like a gentle rain,  
A boon for us to grow and gain.

Practice farming with an innovative mind,  
To yield rich harvests of every kind.

By,  
S. S. Nikshith  
VI Std  
PUMS Chinna Obulapuram  
Gummidipoondi  
Tiruvallur Dt, Tamil Nadu, India

## When my universe fell silent



You were my sunrise, warm and bright,  
Painting my darkness into light.  
Now dawn arrives, yet feels so cold,  
A sky of fire, but no hand to hold.

Your smile once shined like the golden sun,  
A gentle warmth I could never outrun,  
Now every ray just burns my skin,  
Reminding me of where you've been.

Your eyes were galaxies, deep and wide,  
Where all my restless dreams would hide,  
Like endless stars in midnight's grace,  
Now I search skies, but miss your face.

Your love was like the moon so near,  
Softly calming every fear,  
Now tides within my heart still rise,  
But crash alone beneath dark skies.

Your care was constellations above,  
Guiding my lost soul back to love,  
Now every star feels far away,  
A map that's faded into gray.

You were my universe, vast and true,  
Every breath began with you,  
But losing you has torn apart,  
Every orbit of my fragile heart.

Now I'm just space, empty and wide,  
With broken stars I cannot hide,  
A silent sky, a fallen hue—  
A universe that once was you.

©Dr. Daksha Udhani  
Ahmedabad

## There are few people who ask 'Are you okay?'



We are bonding with many people  
All are busy with their schedule  
They are caught up in their own lives  
Simply don't realise what we go through  
It doesn't mean a lack of care.  
Sometimes it's lack of awareness.  
But we want someone to check in on us.

Amid their busy schedule,  
if someone asks you with caring  
"Are you okay?"-- lifts more .  
It's a valid medicine for our longing.  
The type of people are blessing to us.  
The people who are caring with the intention of  
genuine love.  
Don't miss them, respect them, keep near.

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

**Darts** The competition built on momentum from a similar event, also sponsored the by the MP through his Wambugu Wainaina Foundation

# Over 220 Players Compete in Othaya MP's Darts tournament as winners take home cash and trophies

BY WMW  
@themkenyatimes

More than 220 darts players from across Kenya converged in Othaya town for a vibrant weekend tournament that saw top performers walk away with cash prizes and trophies worth thousands of shillings.

The two-day event, held at the Othaya NG-CDF Hall, was sponsored by Othaya Member of Parliament Wambugu Wainaina and attracted dozens of participants, highlighting the growing popularity of the sport in the region.

The competition built on momentum from a similar event, also sponsored the by the MP through his Wambugu Wainaina Foundation last December further cementing Othaya as an emerging hub for darts.

In the men's category, Joseph Wanjohi emerged the



Othaya MP Wambugu Wainaina showcasing his darts playing skills at Othaya NG-CDF hall on Saturday. | Photo: Courtesy.

overall winner, taking home KSh30,000 and a trophy after an impressive run throughout the tournament. Wilson Kaimenyi secured second place with KSh20,000, while Gaitho Njihia and Paul Kie-

ma finished third and fourth respectively, each earning KSh10,000.

Other players in the men's category were also rewarded, with those ranked fifth to eighth receiving KSh5,000

each, ninth to 16th place taking home KSh2,500, and those finishing between position 17 and 32 earning KSh1,000 each.

In the ladies' category, Joy Cherotich claimed top honours and walked away with KSh10,000 after dominating her matches. Regina finished second to earn KSh6,000, while Pauline Ndung'u was among the top performers, finishing fourth. Players ranked third and fourth received KSh4,000 each, fifth to eighth took home KSh2,000, and those in positions nine to 16 earned KSh1,000.

The tournament drew participants from different parts of the country, showcasing both seasoned players and rising talents in the darts scene.

The colourful awards ceremony marked the climax of the event, celebrating skill, sportsmanship, and communi-


ty engagement.

The MP noted that the competition not only provided a platform for talent development but also fostered unity among players from diverse regions.

Wainaina further observed that with continued support from leaders and stakeholders, such tournaments are expected to grow, offering more opportunities for local players to compete at higher levels and gain national recognition.



The winners: Joseph Wanjohi and Joy Cherotich.




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**Physical Session:**  
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**Mathematics** The five-day residential camp, which ran from April 8 to 12, 2026, brought together 32 of the brightest young learners

# Student debunks myth around mathematics, urges mindset shift

BY KNA

@themkenyatimes

Kenya High School student Michelle Ombuna, 15, has challenged learners to develop a positive mindset and approach mathematics with confidence.

Speaking during the closing ceremony of the 2026 African Olympiad Academy (AOA) Rising Stars Training Camp at the Centre for Mathematics, Science and Technology Education in Africa (CEMASTEA), Karen Campus, Ombuna said many students end up failing the subject due to negative perceptions about mathematics.

She added that many students struggle with mathematics not because of lack of ability but due to attitude, stressing that consistent practice and problem-solving are key to mastery and success.

Ombuna was selected to join the African Olympiad Academy (AOA) in Rwanda on a three-year full scholarship, alongside Caleb Tanui (15) from Alliance High School and Juni Pearl Mumo (15) from Alliance Girls High School, after emerging as the top-performing students.

The five-day residential camp, which ran from April 8 to 12, 2026, brought together 32 of the brightest young learners, selected from a pool of over 15,000 students through the Kenya Mathematics Olympiad selection process.

The AOA programme is designed to identify and nurture students to compete on the global stage as they gain skills that will help them become innovative and contribute meaningfully to society.

During the camp, students underwent intensive training, tackling highly challenging problems and sitting rigorous tests.

Ombuna encouraged students to join CEMASTEAs to gain exposure to Science, Technology, Engineering, and



Kenya High School student Michelle Ombuna (L) and Caleb Tanui from Alliance High School (R) pose for a photo after the closing ceremony of the 2026 African Olympiad Academy (AOA) Rising Stars Training Camp at the Centre for Mathematics, Science and Technology Education in Africa (CEMASTEA), Karen Campus.

Mathematics (STEM).

She said many learners continue to struggle with mathematics mainly due to attitude rather than ability, emphasising that confidence and consistent problem-solving practice are key to success.

“Math is not a hard subject; it is about your mentality. If you approach it positively and take time to think through problems, it becomes much simpler,” she said.

She described the experience at the AOA Rising Stars Training Camp as both challenging and enriching.

“Honestly, the experience has been interesting. The parts where it was quite challenging and the parts where it was fun made it a wonderful experience,” she said.

She said she is preparing for a more demanding academic environment, where she expects to face tougher challenges and compete against more advanced peers.

“I think after this I will go back, sit down, and work harder at a higher level compared to what I was doing. At AOA, I will meet smarter people and more difficult problem-solving tasks,” she said.

Ombuna explained that

Olympiad mathematics is significantly different from classroom learning, noting that it emphasises critical thinking and independent problem-solving rather than the direct application of formulas.

“In class, you are taught to apply formulas, but here you are given problems that require critical thinking. Sometimes you are not even given a formula; you have to figure it out yourself,” she said.

She added that while Olympiad mathematics is more demanding, it is also more effective in developing analytical and creative thinking skills.

“Even though it is more challenging, it is better because it engages your mind more and develops problem-solving skills. Classroom mathematics is simpler but limits creativity,” she noted.

Ombuna emphasised that success in mathematics largely depends on mindset and persistence.

“If someone asks me how to do math, I would say just look at a problem and try different ways to solve it. Your mentality is everything,” she said.

She further suggested that integrating Olympiad-style learning into the national

curriculum could strengthen learners’ problem-solving abilities and improve overall educational outcomes.

“It is not a bad idea to add what we learn here into the curriculum. It would make students better at problem-solving, which would benefit the country,” she said.

She also highlighted the importance of collaboration in learning, noting that interaction with peers and mentors played a key role in improving her understanding of complex concepts.

“At first, I used to try solving problems alone, but I realised that you need help from others. Discussions with teachers and fellow students really help,” she said.

Ombuna credited her teachers and mentors for guiding her journey and supporting her selection into internation-

al-level training opportunities.

Another participant, Caleb Tanui, also 15, echoed similar sentiments, noting that Olympiad training is more challenging but more impactful because it builds deeper understanding and real-world problem-solving skills.

He observed that while Kenya’s education system is largely exam-oriented, Olympiad training focuses on practical problem-solving, suggesting that such approaches could strengthen the national curriculum.

Caleb also reflected on his 2025 AOA experience, describing it as highly competitive, where learners are constantly pushed to excel.

He thanked his teachers and parents for their support, saying the programme would significantly contribute to his ac-

ademic and personal growth.

The Co-founder and Executive Director of the African Olympiad Academy, Arun Shanmuganathan, said AOA aims to nurture world-class problem solvers capable of addressing complex challenges beyond academics, including in technology, research, and innovation.

He encouraged students to embrace mathematics. “We encourage students to deeply understand concepts rather than rush to solutions. Mathematics is not just about memorising formulas or passing exams. It is about problem-solving and critical thinking,” he said.

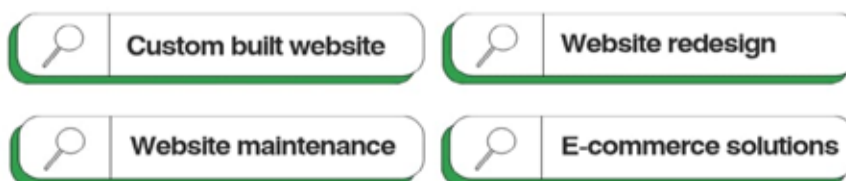
The selected students will now proceed to the African Olympiad Academy in Rwanda, where they will undertake a rigorous Olympiad-focused curriculum alongside Cambridge A-Level studies, preparing them for continental and global competitions, including the International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO) and the Pan African Mathematics Olympiad (PAMO).



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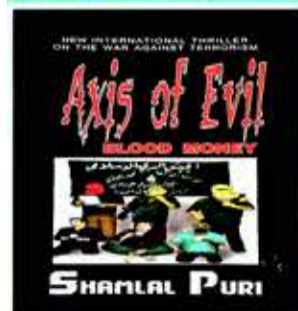
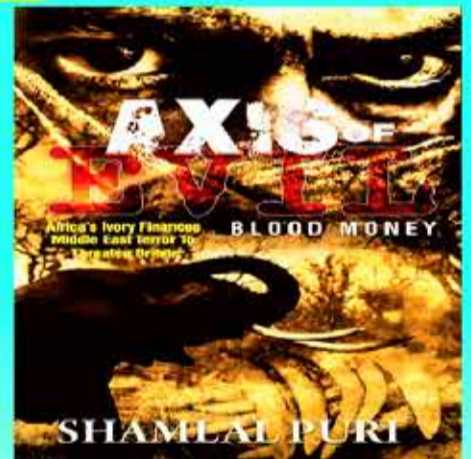
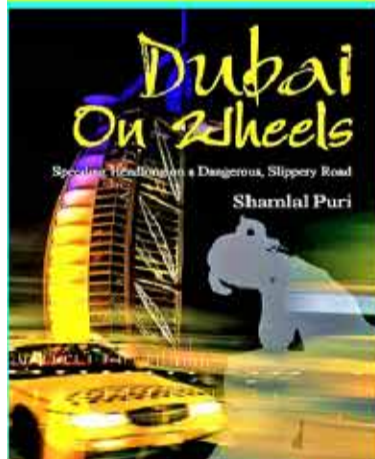
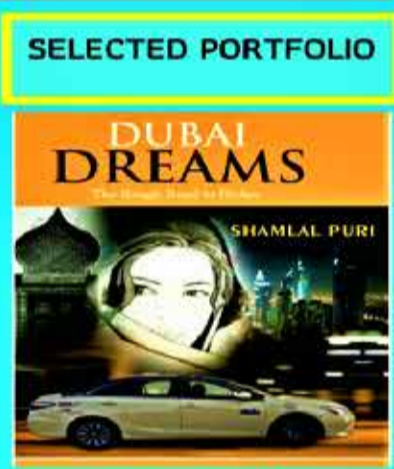
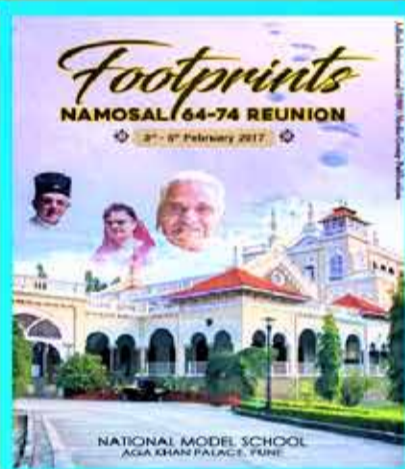
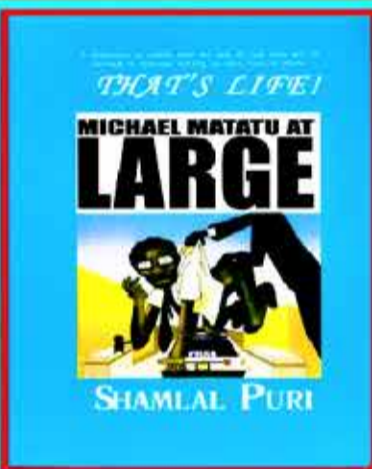
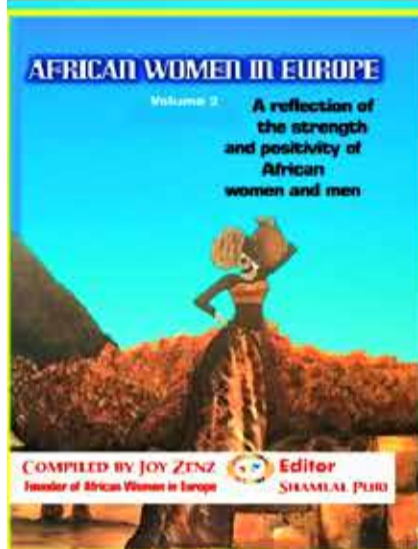
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**SHA** No health care system, regardless of its technical sophistication, can succeed without the confidence of those it serves.

# A System on trial: The Social Health Authority and the question of trust, equity, and inclusion in Kenya's healthcare future



**BY Fredrick Chelimo**

[@themkenyatimes](#)

Kenya's transition to the Social Health Authority (SHA) was conceived as a defining milestone in the country's pursuit of universal healthcare coverage, a system envisioned to guarantee equitable access to quality healthcare while shielding citizens from financial distress. It was presented as a progressive, technology driven, and corruption resistant model, one that would fundamentally recalibrate the relationship between the citizen and the state in matters health. Barely taking root, the distance between promise and lived reality is becoming increasingly apparent. What was introduced as a transformative reform is now undergoing a profound test of credibility

Early operational experiences, marked by delays in service delivery, uncertainty in benefit structure, allegations of fraudulent claims, and concerns raised by oversight institutions over financial leakages, all this having collectively began to erode public confidence. The system, despite all the positive attributes from the political class and the executive, is already being judged not by its intentions, but by its performance.

At its core, healthcare is deeply human enterprise. It is not merely about systems. Financing models or policy frameworks, it is about dignity, access, and trust. When patients arrive at an health facility, they do so with vulnerability and expectation. Any uncertainty in the system, whether in service provision, cost coverage or administrative process, translates directly into anxiety, delayed care or in some cases complete disengagement.

For persons with disabilities, this



reality is even more pronounced. Healthcare, for this vulnerable group, is not episodic; it is continuous, often complex, and deeply intertwined with quality of life. Yet, systemic barriers persist. Physical inaccessibility of facilities, gaps in disability sensitive care, hidden costs, and limited clarity on specialized coverage continues to define their interaction with the healthcare system. In such a context, universal health coverage risks becoming a conceptual ideal rather than a practical guarantee.

The challenge, however, extends beyond operational inefficiencies to a more fundamental issue; public trust. No health care system, regardless of its technical sophistication, can succeed without the confidence of those it serves. Trust is not declared, it is demonstrated. It is built through consistency, transparency and shared experiences.

It is in this regard that critical and



**At its core, healthcare is deeply human enterprise. It is not merely about systems. Financing models or policy frameworks, it is about dignity, access, and trust. When patients arrive at an health facility, they do so with vulnerability and expectation. Any uncertainty in the system, whether in service provision, cost coverage or administrative process, translates directly into anxiety, delayed care or in some cases complete disengagement.**

unavoidable question arises. If the Social Health Authority is indeed as revolutionary, as incorruptible, and as transformative as it has been described by its architects, then its strongest validation must come not from policy statements, but from leadership by example. Those who legislated it, those who designed it, and those entrusted with its implementation, led by the Health Cabinet Secretary, must be seen to fully and unequivocally participate in the system.

Such leadership is not symbolic, it is foundational. It communicates confidence, reinforces credibility, and aligns the experiences of policy makers with those of ordinary citizens. It assures the public that the system is not merely suitable for the many, but trusted by those who know it best. Conversely, any visible hesitation or separation risks sending a deeply unsettling message, that the

system is still experimental, that its reliability is uncertain, and that those enrolled within it are, in effect, participants in a live trial. In such a scenario citizens may begin to perceive themselves not as beneficiaries of mature and well-considered reform, but as subjects within a system still seeking validation. That perception, once entrenched, is profoundly difficult to reverse.

This moment therefore calls for more than technical adjustments or administrative enforcement. It demands a restoration of confidence through a deliberate, visible and principled action. Strengthening accountability mechanisms, ensuring clarity in policy and operations, addressing financial vulnerabilities, and embedding inclusivity, particularly for persons with disabilities which must be pursued with urgency and resolve. Kenya's aspiration for universal health coverage remains both valid and necessary. The vision of a healthcare system that is equitable, accessible and dignified is not in question. What is in question is the pathway of achieving it. And whether that pathway inspires trust.

Ultimately, the success of Social Health Authority will not be measured by its design, but by its adoption, its performance, and confidence it commands across all segments of society. A truly transformative system must be one that unites, rather than stratifies; one that reassures, rather than unsettles. If SHA is to stand as a cornerstone of Kenya's social contract, then it must be owned collectively, trusted universally, and experienced equally. Anything less risks reducing a bold national ambition into a contested experiment, one that fails short not for lack of vision, but lack of shared conviction and accountability.

*Mr. Fredrick Kipchumba Chelimo PWD is a Chairperson, Jiamini Disability network Community Based organization. Email: [jiamini.network@gmail.com](mailto:jiamini.network@gmail.com)*

**Politics** In discussions concerning bent objects, a billhook grows angry simply because it is the subject of conversation.

# The chains of colonialism: Uganda's unending struggle for economic freedom

*A legacy of exploitation: how colonialism continues to shape Uganda's destiny*



Uganda government brutalizing the opposition

we are up against. Uganda's path forward demands investment in its own people, industries, and future. It demands an education system that honours indigenous knowledge alongside modern learning. It demands political leadership that is accountable to Ugandans — not to the interests of former colonial powers. And it demands that we, as citizens, reclaim the confidence to define ourselves on our own terms.

The journey will not be easy or swift. But history has never favoured those who wait for liberation to arrive on its own. It belongs to those who organise, who speak plainly, and who refuse to be silenced.

Uganda's future is not written in the names imposed upon our rivers and mountains. It is written by the choices we make today — for ourselves, for our children, and for the generations who came before us and deserve to be remembered with dignity.

The struggle continues. And it must.

Scholars like Mahmood Mamdani and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o have long reminded us that colonialism is not merely a chapter that ended with independence. It is a structure — embedded in institutions, economies, and minds — that must be actively dismantled. Reclaiming our narrative is not nostalgia. It is a political and economic necessity.

As Frantz Fanon observed, colonialism is not a reasoning entity — it is a system of violence that yields only when confronted with organised, collective resistance. That resistance need not be violent, but it must be deliberate, sustained, and rooted in a clear-eyed understanding of what



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“Kubagamba akainami, oruhabyo rugira ekyiniga” — In discussions concerning bent objects, a billhook grows angry simply because it is the subject of conversation.

Uganda, the Pearl of Africa, is a land of extraordinary beauty and immense potential. Yet beneath that beauty lies a wound that has never fully healed — the deep, enduring scar of colonialism. Its wealth was plundered, its people subjugated, and its identity systematically dismantled. The painful truth is that, decades after formal independence, the shackles remain.

Look no further than our landmarks. Nalubaale Dam is still widely called Owen Falls Dam. Lake Victoria — Nalubaale to those who have called its shores home for centuries — bears the name of a foreign queen. Murchison

Falls, sacred to local communities, was renamed after a British geologist. Queen Elizabeth National Park, Mt. Elgon — the list goes on. These are not merely names. They are daily reminders of a stolen identity.

Our economy tells a similar story. Uganda remains largely dependent on cash crops — cotton, coffee, and tea — a structure inherited directly from the colonial era. The profits flow outward while our people are left with meagre wages and a fragile econom-

“**Our economy tells a similar story. Uganda remains largely dependent on cash crops — cotton, coffee, and tea — a structure inherited directly from the colonial era. The profits flow outward while our people are left with meagre wages and a fragile economic foundation. The so-called aid we receive often deepens dependency rather than dismantling it, functioning less as generosity and more as a mechanism of continued control.**”

ic foundation. The so-called aid we receive often deepens dependency rather than dismantling it, functioning less as generosity and more as a mechanism of continued control.

Our education system, modelled on Western frameworks, has long marginalised indigenous knowledge and erased cultural memory. Our laws and institutions, many of them colonial in origin, continue to entrench inequality. And our political landscape, shaped by decades of external interference, has too often served foreign interests over the welfare of ordinary Ugandans.

The human cost is equally stark. The Basongora people were forcibly removed from their ancestral lands to make way for Queen Elizabeth National Park — without consultation, without compensation, and without justice. Communities around Kabalega Falls and Mt. Masaba were displaced and denied access to lands they had cultivated and revered for generations. These are not footnotes of history. They are lived realities that persist today.

Yet there is reason for hope, and it lies in the power of honest reckoning.

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**Strait of Hormuz** In accordance with Trump's proclamation, the blockade will be enforced "impartially" against vessels of all nations entering or departing Iranian ports

# Why Trump threatens to blockade Strait of Hormuz

BY Xinhua News Agency

@themtkenyatimes

U.S. President Donald Trump announced on Sunday that the U.S. Navy would begin blocking ships trying to enter or leave the Strait of Hormuz, after peace talks with Iran failed to produce a deal, jeopardizing a tenuous two-week ceasefire reached on Tuesday.

Why is Trump threatening to close off the global energy chokepoint that he has repeatedly demanded Iran reopen with no limitations or delays? And what is the impact of the potential blockade?

## What happened?

After marathon talks with Iran failed to reach a deal, Trump said in a post on Truth Social that the U.S. Navy would "immediately" begin a blockade of ships entering or leaving the Strait of Hormuz. "I have also instructed our Navy to seek and interdict every vessel in International Waters that has paid a toll to Iran," Trump continued, adding that "no one who pays an illegal toll will have safe passage on the high seas." U.S. Central Command said in a statement later on Sunday that U.S. forces will begin implementing a blockade of "all maritime traffic entering and exiting Iranian ports" on Monday at 10 a.m. Eastern Time (1400 GMT).

In accordance with Trump's proclamation, the blockade will be enforced "impartially" against vessels of all nations entering or departing Iranian ports and coastal areas, including "all Iranian ports on the Arabian Gulf and Gulf of Oman," according to the statement. It added that the U.S. forces "will not impede freedom of navigation for vessels transiting the Strait of Hormuz to and from non-Iranian ports." In response to Trump's statement regarding the naval blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps warned Sunday that any warships approaching the strait to enforce a blockade would be considered a ceasefire breach and would be dealt with harshly and decisively.



The photo released on July 21, 2019 shows the British oil tanker "Stena Impero" surrounded by speedboats of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) in the Strait of Hormuz, Iran. | Photo: Morteza Akhouni/ISNA/Handout via Xinhua

## Why a blockade

Trump's remarks came a few hours after U.S.-Iran talks in Islamabad, Pakistan, concluded without an agreement on Sunday. The two sides confirmed that they reached an understanding on several issues, but their views diverged on major sticking points.

Citing a U.S. official familiar with the issue, The Washington Post reported that the two sides failed to reach agreement on several U.S. demands, including that Iran end all uranium enrichment and allow the United States to retrieve its highly enriched uranium, dismantle all major nuclear enrichment facilities, and fully reopen the Strait of Hormuz without charging transit fees. By closing off the Strait of Hormuz, which typically carries more than 20 percent of globally traded energy, Trump could strip Iran of critical leverage in negotiations and stop Iran from selling oil to its customers. If Trump's strategy works, it may force Tehran to make concessions by cutting off a key source of funding for its government and military operations, analysts said. In addition to the U.S. blockade of the strait, Trump also floated on Sunday the possibility of resuming U.S. strikes

in Iran "as a way to break a stalemate in peace talks," according to the Wall Street Journal.

## What impact?

Analysts said the blockade could

deepen the global energy supply shock by driving up oil and gas prices, while risking a renewed outbreak of hostilities that could derail the fragile two-week ceasefire.

While the blockade might be effective as a long-term strategy to impose pain on the Iranian economy, the move may come as a blow to the rest of the world as well, warned Jim Krane, energy research fellow at Rice University. "If the deficit to the oil market takes another jump, it is going to impose pain on every person on Earth that's subject to market oil prices," he told The Associated Press. After the U.S. announcement, oil prices rose in early market trading on Sunday. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, rose 7 percent to 102.29 U.S. dollars a barrel. Trump said on Sunday that the price of oil and gasoline may stay elevated through the U.S. midterm elections in November, a rare acknowledgment of the potential fallout.

Washington's signals of potential military actions, including interdiction and possible blockade measures in the Strait of Hormuz, are adding to instability in the shipping environment, Windward, a London-headquartered maritime analytics firm, said on Sunday. The firm described the Strait of Hormuz as a "controlled and unstable" system, where the risk of direct confrontation between state actors is growing.



Iranian soldiers patrol the Strait of Hormuz in southern Iran, April 30, 2019. | Photo: Xinhua/Ahmad Halabisaz



# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Political goonism

By Oliver Ouma

Democracy dies not with a bang, but with a hired fist.

Kenya's political arena is under siege. What should be a battleground of ideas and policy has increasingly become a theatre of orchestrated violence, where hired gangs silence dissent, intimidate opponents, and terrorise citizens into submission.

The evidence is damning. Nominated Senator Godfrey Osotsi was attacked at a political event in Kisumu — not for any wrongdoing, but simply for showing up. Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua and his supporters have faced teargas and hostile confrontations. These are not isolated incidents. They are symptoms of a deeply troubling pattern in which political engagement is met with aggression rather than argument.

The questions that follow are uncomfortable but unavoidable: who organises these groups? Who funds them? And



why, time and again, do the perpetrators walk free? The culture of impunity surrounding political violence is not accidental — it is cultivated. When violence goes unpunished, it is effectively endorsed.

This is a threat that cuts far deeper than partisan politics. When elected officials cannot attend public events without fear of attack, ordinary citizens face an even grimmer reality. Political spaces become no-go zones. Participation shrinks. Democracy hollows out from within.

Kenya has long held its democratic credentials with pride. That reputation is now being tested — not by foreign interference, but by the very actors who benefit most from the system.

Political leaders, law enforcement, and citizens must draw a hard line. Peaceful engagement is not a luxury. It is the foundation upon which every Kenyan's voice rests.

Goonism has no place in a republic. Neither do those who bankroll it.

## Discipline over comfort

Comfort is seductive. Discipline is transformative. The difference between the two is where growth begins.

In a world obsessed with instant results and effortless success, lasting achievement takes a quieter, less glamorous road. It starts with a deliberate choice — to act when circumstances are unfavourable, to show up when motivation has long since vanished, and to build when no one is watching.

Motivation is emotional and unreliable. It surges and fades, often disappearing precisely when it is needed most. Discipline is different. It creates routine and structure, ensuring progress continues even on the hardest days. Where motivation asks how you feel, discipline asks what must be done.

Purpose is the engine that sustains it all. When individuals understand the deeper reason behind their pursuit, focus sharpens and distractions lose their grip. Purpose transforms



sacrifice into meaning. During setbacks and periods of slow progress, it serves as the quiet reminder that movement is still happening, even when results are not yet visible.

One of the greatest enemies of growth is the myth of perfect timing. Conditions are rarely ideal. Those who wait for the right moment often find themselves waiting indefinitely. Those who grow are those who begin where they are, with

what they have, and refine their approach along the way. Every small, disciplined action compounds — quietly, steadily — into meaningful change.

Growth, ultimately, is not an event. It is a choice repeated daily, in moments both seen and unseen.

Choose discipline. The future it builds is worth every uncomfortable step it demands.

By Elvis Oweri, Laikipia University

# SPORTS NEWS

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## Kenya Pipeline cruise past Kalibi as DCI suffer opening day defeat at Africa Club Championships



Kenya Pipeline players celebrate.

By **Martin Weche**

It was a tale of two Kenyan sides on the opening night of the Africa Club Volleyball Championships in Cairo, Egypt, yesterday, as national champions Kenya Pipeline sailed through their debut fixture while the Directorate of Criminal Investigations endured a sobering introduction to the continental showpiece.

Pipeline, the five-time champions and perennial heavyweights of East African volleyball, made light work of Ghana's Kalibi SC in a straight sets victory that, while not entirely without a fight, underlined their credentials as serious contenders for the title.

The oil merchants set the tone early, dominating the opening set with purpose and authority to win 25-19. It was com-

posed, controlled volleyball from coach Geoffrey Omondi's charges, with the Ghanaians given few opportunities to settle or find any rhythm of their own.

The second set, however, told a different story. Kalibi dug deep and refused to be swept aside, pushing Pipeline harder than the scoreline of the first set might have suggested they were capable of. It was a tense, physical contest that stretched the Kenyan champions all the way, but Pipeline held their nerve when it mattered most, grinding out a 25-21 victory to move within one set of the win.

Any threat of a Kalibi comeback was firmly extinguished in the third and final set, which proved to be one-way traffic in Pipeline's favour. Omondi's side were ruthless and efficient, closing out the match in com-

manding fashion with a 25-13 triumph that will have sent a message to the rest of the field.

It was precisely the kind of start Pipeline would have been hoping for, with demanding fixtures against Sococim, Gender Light and the Democratic Republic of Congo's La Loi still to come in the group stage. The victory offered both valuable points and confidence ahead of what promises to be a fiercely contested tournament.

While Pipeline were celebrating a job well done, it was a far tougher evening for their Kenyan counterparts, DCI, who came up against a formidable Tunisian outfit in CF Carthage and ultimately fell short across three hard-fought sets.

DCI were by no means pushovers, and they made the North Africans work for it in the open-

ing set, losing by the narrowest of margins, 25-22, in a contest that could have gone either way at several points. It was a gutsy performance that hinted at what the Kenyan detectives were capable of.

The second set, however, saw Carthage begin to assert their class, winning 25-19 as their experience and quality began to tell. DCI's resistance crumbled in the third, with a 25-12 defeat completing a 3-0 loss that will sting, though their fight in the earlier sets will give the technical bench something to build on.

Kenya's third representative at the championships, KCB Volleyball, are yet to enter the fray and will be looking to make a positive impression when they step onto the court today.

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

**Sports >>** \*Murang'a Seal FC have ended their working relationship with head coach Osbourne and his assistant Philip Wanjoya

## Murang'a Seal part ways with Osbourne, Odhiambo steps in



Immediate former Murang'a Seal head coach Osbourne yesterday. PHOTO/MURANG'A SEAL

By **Martin Weche**

Murang'a Seal FC have ended their working relationship with head coach Osbourne and his assistant Philip Wanjoya, the club confirmed yesterday, bringing to a close a tenure that had delivered some of the most promising results the club has seen in the top flight.

In an official statement, the club described the split as mutual, taking care to acknowledge the contributions of both departing coaches.

"We extend our sincere appreciation to both coaches for their professionalism, dedication and contribution during their time with the club, and we wish them every success in their future endeavours," the statement read.

Stepping into the breach is for-

mer Harambee Stars stalwart Dennis Odhiambo, who has been handed the reins on an interim basis until the end of the season. The former right back and midfielder, who featured prominently for the national team during his playing days, also represented Murang'a Seal, a connection the club says gives them confidence in his appointment.

"Dennis has been part of Murang'a Seal FC and the national team Harambee Stars and we are confident in his ability to lead the team forward," the club announced. Odhiambo has moved swiftly in his new role, naming Marcus Abwao as his assistant coach.

The writing had been on the wall for Osbourne for some time, with the football grapevine buzzing with talk of his departure

following a chastening 5-1 defeat to lower-league side Mfalme FC over the weekend — a result that sent shockwaves through the club and its fanbase. For a team that had at one point looked capable of challenging for honours, shipping five goals to a side from a lower tier was difficult to stomach.

The trouble at Murang'a Seal, however, extended beyond the pitch. The club has been embroiled in a growing storm involving former goalkeeper Mustafa Oduor, who opened up in a candid interview on a local podcast. Oduor alleged he had been unjustly scapegoated following a dramatic 3-2 defeat to fierce rivals Gor Mahia in last season's league encounter — a match Murang'a Seal had appeared to have under control, leading 2-0

at the interval. The goalkeeper also levelled serious accusations of tribalism against certain figures within the club, claims that are likely to invite further scrutiny in the coming days.

Osbourne, who arrived at the club in August of last year, leaves with his record largely intact. He steered Murang'a Seal through an impressive ten-match unbeaten run spanning late 2025 into the new year, a far cry from the relegation dogfight that defined the previous campaign.

The team currently sit eighth on the standings with 38 points from 27 matches. Whether Odhiambo can consolidate their position and restore calm to a club in turbulence remains to be seen.

# SPORTS NEWS



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# SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



## Jadids – devotees of national awakening



By: Egamberdiyeva Muslima

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This article analyzes the Jadid movement that emerged in Turkestan in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It highlights the Jadids' contributions to reforming the education system, promoting modern sciences, and fostering national awakening. Through the examples of intellectuals such as Mahmudkhoja Behbudi, Abdulla Avloni, Munavvar Qori Abdurashidkhanov, Fitrat, and Cholpon, the essence of Jadidism is revealed in both its educational and political dimensions. The role of Jadid press and theater in awakening society is also examined. Furthermore, the article discusses the connection between Jadidism and national independence movements, the persecution of Jadids during the Soviet period, and the revival of their legacy in modern times.

Keywords: Jadidism, enlightenment, national awakening, Jadid press, independence movement

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Turkestan experienced complex socio-political processes. During this period, the colonial policy of the Russian Empire had a profound impact on the political life, economic development, and cultural-spiritual landscape of the region. The restriction of local freedoms, the inability of the traditional education system to meet modern demands, and the weakening of national identity forced the intellectual elite to seek new paths. It was under such historical conditions that the Jadid movement emerged.

The Jadids aimed to liberate society from ignorance and backwardness, guiding it toward science, enlightenment, culture, and progress. Their ideas were not limited to educational reform; they also encompassed national awakening, social transformation, and the development of independent thinking.

Jadidism was an educational and reformist movement that arose during this period. Its primary goal was to fundamentally revise the traditional education system and equip people with modern knowledge. Jadids criticized the outdated teaching methods of maktabas and madrasas, arguing that widespread illiteracy stemmed from rote memorization, the mechanical reading of Arabic religious texts without comprehension, and the lack of practical knowledge necessary for modern life. As a solution, they introduced new-method schools based on phonetic teaching, literacy, and arithmetic.

Secondly, the Jadid movement sought to incorporate secular subjects such as mathematics, geography, natural sciences, and history into the curriculum. This innovation played a crucial role in shaping a scientific worldview among the population.

Thirdly, one of the most significant ideas of the Jadids was national awakening. They aimed to strengthen national identity by promoting education, language, literature, and culture. For the Jadids, knowledge and enlightenment were the key to freedom and progress and the most important factors determining the future of the nation.

The success of the Jadid movement was largely due to its prominent representatives, who sought to awaken society through their writings, social activities, and educational initiatives.

Mahmudkhoja Behbudi is considered one of the pioneers of Jadidism. In his works, he emphasized the importance of knowledge and called on people to overcome ignorance. His play "Padarkush" exposed the tragic consequences of ignorance and laid the foundation for Uzbek drama. Abdulla Avloni, as an educator and intellectual, addressed the issue of raising a new generation. His work "Turkiy Guliston yoxud Axloq" contributed significantly to the moral and ethical development of youth. He also prepared school textbooks and advocated for educational reform.

Munavvar Qori Abdurashidkhanov, a founder of new-method schools, played a key role in implementing educational reforms in Turkestan. His efforts significantly contribut-



Jadid movement that emerged in Turkestan in the late 19th and early 20th centuries

ed to increasing literacy among the population.

Fitrat, a prominent representative of Jadid literature, was a scholar and publisher who linked the future of the nation with enlightenment and knowledge. His works addressed pressing social issues and sought solutions for societal development. Cholpon, one of the leading poets among the Jadids, expressed themes of freedom, national pride, and patriotism in his poetry, inspiring a spirit of awakening among the people.

The spread of the Jadid movement was greatly facilitated by the press. Through newspapers and journals such as "Taraqqi", "Shuhrat", and "Oyna", Jadid intellectuals encouraged self-education, promoted secular knowledge, and fostered modern thinking. These publications addressed issues of education, culture, social equality, and national awakening, helping society adapt to the demands of the time and develop independent thinking.

Jadids also paid great attention to the development of theater. Figures like Behbudi, Avloni, and Fitrat used stage performances to highlight social issues. Through theatrical works, audiences witnessed the consequences of ignorance, injustice, and backwardness, which en-

couraged them to adopt new ways of thinking.

Thus, Jadid press and theater became powerful tools of national awakening in Turkestan, playing a decisive role in shaping public consciousness. Although the Jadid movement initially focused on educational reform, it gradually evolved toward ideas of national independence. Intellectuals believed that enlightening the people through education would eventually lead to political awareness.

The February Revolution of 1917 accelerated political processes in Turkestan. Jadid intellectuals actively participated in efforts to expand civil rights and freedoms and promoted the idea of autonomy. They played a significant role in the experience of the "Turkestan Autonomy." However, the October Revolution and the establishment of Soviet power drastically changed their fate. Although they initially cooperated with the Soviet regime in educational and cultural reforms, their aspirations for national independence conflicted with Soviet ideology. As a result, many Jadids were repressed in the 1920s–1930s, labeled as "nationalists" and "enemies of the people." Prominent figures such as Behbudi, Fitrat, Cholpon, and Avloni were ex-

ecuted or exiled.

The Jadid movement marked a turning point in the history of national awakening of the Uzbek people. It went beyond the limitations of traditional education and played a crucial role in introducing modern knowledge, science, and progressive thinking. The Jadids' activities in education, press, theater, literature, and politics were all aimed at transforming society.

Their legacy remains highly relevant today. In the years of independence, the names and works of Jadid intellectuals have been restored, and their ideas continue to serve as a foundation for national consciousness and spiritual development. Jadidism is not only a historical phenomenon but also a valuable lesson for future generations: a nation can achieve progress only through knowledge, enlightenment, justice, and free thought.

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