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No. 0290    themtkenyatiimes

Ruto Defends Mt Kenya Ties



Health: Government raises alarm over tobacco imports as it expands mental health services **P.11**



P.9 *President William Ruto addressing Murang'a residents on Friday. Photos/courtesy.*



Anti-corruption: EACC CEO Abdi Mohamud elected President of regional anti-corruption body **P.12**



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SCAN TO REGISTER

Opposition leaders fault government over SHA, governance and public trust in Coastal tour

BY WMW

@themtkenyatimes

Some of the moments as captured in pictures

Leaders of the United Alternative Government have stepped up criticism of President William Ruto's administration, accusing it of failing to deliver essential services, mis-managing public funds, and eroding public trust.

Led by former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, the opposition team on Friday engaged residents in Samburu, Mazaras, Mswambeni and Likoni towns as part of their ongoing "Meet the People" tour across the Coast region, covering Kwale County and Mombasa County.

Gachagua renewed calls for reforms in the teachers' medical scheme under the Social Health Authority (SHA), urging teachers to demand better insurance cover.

He claimed the current arrangement is ineffective and continues to disadvantage educators. He further alleged that SHA owes county governments more than KSh8 billion, raising concerns about the sustainability of healthcare services.

The former DP also defended teachers who have yet to receive payments for marking last year's national examinations, accusing the government of diverting funds for political purposes instead of meeting its obligations.



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The Mt. Kenya Times

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NEWS IN BRIEF



Turkana Deputy Governor Dr. John Erus joins Energy Cabinet Secretary Opiyo Wandayi, EAC and ASALs Cabinet Secretary Beatrice Askul, elected leaders, community leaders, senior government officials and residents at Amosing, Turkana East, on Friday for the groundbreaking of Gulf Energy's oil and gas operations in the South Lokichar Basin.



Some participants at the Mental Health Nurses' Chapter 27th Annual Conference in Nanyuki, Laikipia County, which brought together over 400 psychiatric nurses from all 47 counties. The conference aims to develop innovative ways to address mental health challenges, including rising suicide cases, and to explore the impact of climate change on mental health disorders.



Kenya is set to host the 15th Annual Connected Africa Summit (CAS2026) from Monday to Thursday next week at the Edge Convention Centre in Nairobi, bringing together senior government officials, private sector leaders and development partners to accelerate Africa's digital transformation. While making the announcement, Cabinet Secretary for Information, Communications and the Digital Economy, William Kabogo, noted that the summit will focus on delivering practical outcomes under the theme 'Uniting Africa's Innovation for an Inclusive Digital Market'. Kabogo explained that this year's meeting shifts emphasis from dialogue to measurable results, stressing that Africa must take charge of shaping rules governing its digital economy, including artificial intelligence, cross-border data flows and digital trade.



Residents of Bula Mzuri, Bashal, Sambul and Kunaso areas in Garissa town have decried poor access roads to their areas after their main road from Garissa CBD was washed away by floods from the recent rains in the county. The residents say that despite having elected leaders from their area, they have been left to suffer from poor roads, which flood every time there is rain blocking the locals and even children from going to schools or madrassa. Led by Yussuf Bile Salat, they are now calling on the county government and the relevant national government agency to move with speed and repair the roads before schools reopen for a second term.



Women engaged in artisanal mining activities at an iron ore site in Kishushe, Taita Taveta County, where extraction of mineral resources continues alongside efforts to enhance value addition and community participation in the mining sector.

A recent key milestone was the formation of a Community Development Agreement Committee (CDAC) linked to the Samrudha mining company, in line with the Mining Act, 2016. The committee brings together community representatives and government officials, including the office of Wundanyi MP Danson Mwashako and area MCA Anthony Mghendi.

The CDAC is expected to guide the utilisation of the one per cent of gross sales revenue allocated to host communities, a provision designed to fund local development projects.

Taita Taveta County Executive Committee Member for Lands, Christina Zighe, says the framework provides a structured avenue for communities to finally benefit from their natural resources.

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Coffee Organisers said the initiative is transforming how Kenyan coffee is marketed globally

Kenyan coffee fetches record prices at African Trade Fair

BY KNA

@themkenyaintimes

Direct online coffee auctions are connecting farmers to global buyers, pushing specialty coffee prices to historic highs.

The African Coffee Trade Fair (ACT) 2026, held Thursday evening, recorded its highest-ever sales, with Kenyan specialty coffee fetching up to USD 120 per kilogram in a landmark direct auction that linked farmers to international buyers.

The event, a premier platform for trading high-quality Kenyan micro-lot coffees held Thursday, brought together producers and buyers from Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and the Americas through a fully digital bidding process.

Organisers said the initiative is transforming how Kenyan coffee is marketed globally, with a focus on quality, sustainability, and direct trade.

Luka Rotich, a manager at Jabali Coffee Company and a licensed exporter at the Nairobi Coffee Exchange, said the initiative was launched three years ago to address the lack of recognition for Kenyan coffee in emerging markets.

“Much of our coffee was being blended with other origins, losing its identity. With recent sector reforms, we are now connecting farmers directly to global buyers, and the results are clear,” he said.

Since its inception, prices have risen sharply, from USD 35 per kilogram in 2024 to



Mr Luka Rotich

USD 60 in 2025 and now a record USD 120 in 2026, he said, adding that this year’s event featured over 300 samples, with only 22 top-scoring lots graded above 85 points selected for auction.

Farmers say the platform is already delivering results, and Josephine Ndikwe of Kiguta Estate in Nyeri County, a family farm with over six decades of coffee production, said participation in the auction offers better pricing and international exposure, and their fermented micro-lot sold for USD 33.50 per kilogram.

“Kenya is renowned around the world for producing very high-quality coffee, and we have been able to actually produce very good coffee.

This auction is helping and giving farmers a platform whereby bidders around the world can experience the top 30 coffees in Kenya,” Ndikwe added.

Meanwhile, second-generation farmer Martin Mwangi Muriuki from Gacha Coffee Estates, in Kirinyaga County, reported strong global demand for his coffee, with one lot also reaching USD 120 per kilogram.

He added that the anonymous, quality-based bidding system marks a shift from traditional trading models.

Industry players say growing demand for specialty coffee, driven by urban consumers and specialty cafés, presents a major opportunity for Kenya.

Farmers are increasingly adopting innovative processing methods and tailoring production to meet global tastes.

The success of the ACT auction signals a broader shift in the sector, one that could give Kenyan farmers greater control, higher earnings, and stronger positioning in premium global markets.

Kenya is widely respected in the global specialty coffee sector for producing coffees with distinctive character and exceptional quality, and the government has been aggressively revitalising the coffee sector to boost production from 2 kg to 5 kg+ per tree, aiming for 150,000 metric tons.

‘No goon nonsense’: Matiang’i vows iron-fist crackdown on political violence if elected



Former Interior Cabinet Secretary and 2027 presidential hopeful Dr. Fred Matiang’i

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyaintimes

Former Interior Cabinet Secretary Dr Fred Matiang’i has vowed to eradicate politically sponsored violence in Kenya, declaring that goonism will have no place in the country if he wins the 2027 presidential election.

Speaking in Nyamira on Friday, the Jubilee Deputy Party Leader painted a stark picture of a nation where essential services are crumbling and hired gangs operate with the protection of powerful patrons. “One pledge I can make to Kenya as a presidential candidate — if I was given an opportunity to be president of this country, there will be no goon nonsense in this country,” he said. “Government must be government, and criminals must be criminals.” Matiang’i trained his fire on what he described as selective law enforcement, where individuals linked to influen-

tial figures are shielded from accountability while ordinary Kenyans bear the consequences. “It cannot work,” he said, rejecting what he characterised as a system that grants criminal licences to the well-connected.

The remarks carry particular weight coming from a man who once commanded Kenya’s entire security apparatus as Interior CS, overseeing the police service, immigration, and the National Intelligence Service. His record in that role remains contested — praised by some for restoring order, criticised by others for heavy-handed tactics — but few dispute that he understands the machinery of state security from the inside.

With political violence reports rising ahead of 2027, Matiang’i is making law and order his central pitch. Whether voters in Nyamira and beyond are listening is the question that will define his campaign.

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Linda Mwananchi

Orengo declares himself ODM's 'people's party leader' as Linda Mwananchi heads to Kisumu

A faction fight inside Orange politics is spilling into the open, with Sunday's rally set to test who truly speaks for the party's heartland.



Siaya Governor James Orengo

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

Siaya Governor James Orengo has declared himself the "people's party leader" of the Orange Democratic Movement, accusing the current party leadership of betraying Raila Odinga's legacy and opening ODM's doors to its political enemies.

Speaking in Kisumu on Friday, Orengo framed the Linda Mwananchi faction — of which he is the most prominent voice — as the last line of defence for an Orange party he says is being systematically undermined from within and pressured from without by the ruling United Democratic Alliance. "ODM is being sold to our political enemies so I will stand firm," he said. "Orengo is the people's party leader within ODM to make sure ODM is not swallowed, and secondly to make sure that the legacy and achievements of Raila Amollo Odinga are not destroyed."

The declaration lands ahead of a

charged weekend. The Linda Mwananchi campaign will stop in Vihiga on Saturday before culminating in a closely watched rally in Kisumu on Sunday — a gathering that is shaping up as a direct test of the faction's organisational muscle and popular support in ODM's traditional stronghold. Orengo struck a deliberately measured tone on the question of intent. "This is a tsunami, a people's movement, and we come in peace and we preach the language of peace," he said.

Not everyone is prepared to receive them warmly. Alego Usonga MP Samuel Atandi drew a firm line, warning that any perceived disrespect towards ODM party leader Dr Oburu Oginga would not be tolerated. "If you come here to abuse our leaders, to declare some mediocre, even to declare yourself the party leader of ODM — that is illegal and we are not going to allow you," Atandi said.

Sunday's rally will reveal whether Linda Mwananchi is a genuine corrective movement or a faction whose reach exceeds its roots.



United Alternative Government leaders

Opposition leaders fault government over SHA, governance and public trust in Coastal tour

Contd from page 2

Sharp criticism of governance and security

The opposition leaders painted a grim picture of the country's governance, accusing the administration of lacking a clear development agenda and being entangled in corruption and mismanagement. They criticized what they termed as increasing political violence, alleging that state agencies have enabled the use of organized groups to intimidate citizens and interfere with private property.

In particular, Gachagua cited recent incidents, including alleged land invasions in Nairobi, and called on security agencies to protect Kenyans.

"Kenyans are being bullied by a government they elected. Their taxes are being misused while essential services suffer," he said, adding that the country is "under stress" due to poor leadership and misplaced priorities.

Echoing these sentiments, Kalonzo Musyoka warned that law enforcement officers involved in misconduct would be held accountable, stressing the need for rule of law and protection of citizens' rights.

Musyoka also thanked residents for their support, describing the turnout during the tour as a sign of growing momentum behind the opposition's "Komboa Kenya" agenda.

The leaders officially opened a Wiper Patriotic Front office in Samburu, Kwale County, signaling efforts to strengthen grassroots mobilisation.

Questions over SHA funds

Democratic Party of Kenya leader Justin Muturi raised fresh concerns over accountability within SHA, alleging that about KSh8 billion contributed by Kenyans cannot be accounted for.

He warned that the alleged financial gaps are already affecting healthcare delivery, with hospitals facing shortages of medicine and delays in critical services.

"Registration numbers do not treat patients. Systems do. Kenyans contributed in good faith and deserve transparency on how their money is being used," Muturi said.

He added that wananchi across the Coast region expressed frustration over what they perceive as a failing healthcare system, calling for immediate accountability and restoration of services.

Call for change

The opposition leaders maintained that the government has lost direction, accusing it of focusing on political survival rather than addressing key sectors such as healthcare, education, and the economy.

The leaders noted that citizens are increasingly demanding change ahead of the 2027 General Election, saying Kenyans had expressed readiness for a new leadership direction.

They observed that time has come for the citizens to rebuild the country and ensure public resources are used for the benefit of all citizens. Other leaders who echoed similar sentiments included DPAK party leader Eugene Wamalwa as well as several former, current and aspiring leaders who accompanied them.

The team is expected to continue its tour with rallies scheduled in Nyali and Tononoka as it seeks to rally support and highlight governance concerns across the country. The tour forms part of a broader campaign by opposition leaders to position themselves as an alternative leadership while amplifying public grievances on service delivery, economic challenges, and accountability.

Politics “No amount of name-calling, incitement and propaganda will drive me out of this region. That is wishful thinking,” Ruto said.

Ruto Defends Mt Kenya Ties

The Head of State who was accompanied by several national and county governments officials unveiled multi-billion shillings development projects in Murang'a county

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyentimes

President William Ruto has dismissed critics seeking to undermine his relationship with residents of the Mt Kenya region, insisting that his ties with the area remain strong and are anchored on development delivery.

Speaking on Friday during a development tour of Murang'a County, the President said his engagement with the region spans over two decades and continues to be reinforced by ongoing government projects.

“No amount of name-calling, incitement and propaganda will drive me out of this region. That is wishful thinking,” Ruto said, adding that he will continue implementing programmes in infrastructure, agriculture, education, and healthcare.

He challenged opposition leaders to present alternative development agenda instead of what he termed as divisive politics, saying Kenyans will judge leaders based on their track record.

The President, who was accompanied by senior government officials including Cabinet Secretaries Alice Wahome and William Kabogo, as well as Governor Irungu Kang'ata and National Assembly Majority Leader Kimani Ichung'wah, outlined a series of development projects underway in the county.

Massive investments in housing and infrastructure

Ruto announced that the government is investing KSh27 billion in Murang'a to construct 6,800 affordable housing units, 25 modern markets, and student hostels to accommodate 7,000 learners.

He laid the foundation stone for a 580-unit hostel at Kiharu Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institution, a KSh300 million project aimed at improving student accommodation.

In addition, he launched the 165-unit Kiharu Affordable Housing Project, with an additional 370 units planned, and unveiled the 1,910-unit Gatanga and 730-unit Kandara housing projects.

To enhance electricity access, the



From left; DP Kithure Kindiki, President William Ruto, GVN Irungu Kang'ata and PS Patrick Mariru in Murang'a on Friday.

President said KSh1.1 billion has been allocated to connect 14,000 households across the county.

On infrastructure, he noted that KSh2 billion has been disbursed for the completion of Mau Mau roads and officially launched the construction of the 18.5-kilometre Kiriko-Kagumoini-Gitugi-Chui-Karugia road in Mathioya constituency.

Agriculture and Healthcare Gains

Highlighting gains in the agricultural sector, Ruto said the government has reduced fertiliser prices from KSh7,000 to KSh2,500, boosting production.

He also noted reforms in the coffee sector, including the elimination of brokers, which have increased farmer earnings from an average

of KSh60 per kilogram to between KSh110 and KSh160.

He pledged an additional KSh10 million to support installation of solar dryers in coffee factories in Mathioya Constituency.

On healthcare, the President said over 452,000 residents in Murang'a have registered under the Social Health Authority, with the government paying KSh2.2 billion to hospitals in the county in the past year.

He also inspected ongoing works at Kenneth Matiba Hospital and committed KSh270 million for expansion to improve emergency services.

Digital skills and sports development

The president commissioned a modern ICT Jitume Lab at Kiharu

TVET equipped with 100 computers to help students develop and monetise digital skills. He also inspected the ongoing construction of the 10,000-seater Mumbi Stadium, a KSh950 million project expected to boost sports development.

Additionally, he toured the KSh50 million Kayole Modern Market, which will accommodate 200 traders and support small businesses.

Deputy President Kithure Kindiki reaffirmed the government's commitment to its development agenda, warning against leaders promoting division and tribal politics.

“Kenyans will decide their future based on facts, not propaganda,” he said.

Governor Kang'ata welcomed the partnership between the national and county governments, noting it will

accelerate industrialisation and job creation in the county.

Housing Cabinet Secretary Wahome said the Affordable Housing Programme has already created over 640,000 jobs nationwide, with the government targeting 500 modern markets across the country.

President Ruto maintained that his administration will continue focusing on service delivery, insisting that development, not politics will define leadership in the country.

Loan Kenyan borrowers win sweeping protection as judges draw a hard line on what lenders can legally recover

High Court caps loan interest at 100% of principal in landmark ruling

BY MKT REPORTER
@themtkenyatimes

The High Court has ruled that interest charged on any loan in Kenya cannot exceed the principal amount borrowed, delivering one of the most significant consumer finance judgments in recent memory. The decision, handed down yesterday, means that a borrower who takes out Ksh 100,000 can never be compelled to repay more than Ksh 200,000 in total, regardless

of how long the loan remains outstanding or what rate of interest the lending institution had originally applied. The ruling applies across the board — banks, microfinance institutions, mobile lenders, and any other entity in the business of extending credit. The judgment arrives at a moment of acute financial pressure for millions of Kenyans, many of whom have found themselves ensnared by aggressive digital lenders whose interest structures and penalty charges have, in

some cases, seen borrowers repay multiples of what they originally received. Consumer rights advocates have long argued that the absence of a hard ceiling on interest recovery has enabled predatory lending practices to flourish, disproportionately punishing low-income borrowers with limited financial literacy and fewer alternatives. The court's reasoning is straightforward and deliberately unambiguous: no creditor, however their contract is worded, can use the legal sys-



tem to recover more in interest than the sum they initially extended. It is a principle rooted in basic fairness, and the bench has now given it the force of law. The Central Bank of Kenya, which has in recent years tightened oversight of digital

lenders following sustained public outcry, is expected to issue guidance on how the ruling will be implemented across regulated and unregulated credit markets alike. For borrowers already locked in disputes with lenders over ballooning loan balances, the

ruling offers grounds for legal challenge and, potentially, significant relief. Kenya's lending industry will not be the same after yesterday — and for the millions of ordinary Kenyans who have borrowed simply to survive, that is long overdue.

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Health Muthoni announced plans to establish cessation and rehabilitation centres in at least 10 counties, including Laikipia, targeting regions with high substance abuse rates

Government raises alarm over tobacco imports as it expands mental health services



PS Mary Muthoni briefing journalists in Laikipia on Thursday. On her right is Laikipia Deputy Governor Rebeun Kamuri while on the left is Governor Joshua Irungu. | Photo: courtesy.

BY WMW

@themkenyatimes

The government has raised concern over the growing influx of imported cigars and novel tobacco products targeting the Kenyan market, even as it ramps up efforts to strengthen mental health services and tackle rising substance abuse.

Public Health and Professional Standards Principal Secretary Mary Muthoni warned that some tobacco products entering the country appear to be designed specifically for local consumption without being tested in their countries of origin.

“It is concerning that some of these products are tailored only for the Kenyan market. We have directed manufacturers to first sell them where

they are produced before introducing them locally,” she said.

“These trends are contributing to rising cases of depression, anxiety, poor academic performance, and reduced productivity among young people, which could undermine the country’s socio-economic development,” she warned.



Speaking during the 27th Annual Mental Health Nurses’ Scientific Conference in Laikipia County, Muthoni linked the emergence of such products to broader substance abuse challenges facing the country.

Data from the National Authority for the Campaign Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA) shows that more than two million Kenyans are affected by alcohol use disorders. The PS also highlighted troubling trends among young people, noting that up to half of university students have consumed alcohol, while many have experimented with cannabis, tobacco, and other substances.

“These trends are contributing to rising cases of depression, anxiety, poor academic performance, and reduced productivity among young people, which could undermine the country’s socio-economic development,” she warned.

In response, the government is scaling up interventions to curb substance abuse and improve mental health outcomes.

Muthoni announced plans to establish cessation and rehabilitation centres in at least 10 counties, including Laikipia, targeting regions with high substance abuse rates.

She added that mental health services are being integrated into primary healthcare under the Universal Health

Coverage programme, where screening and treatment are now offered free of charge to enhance access and promote early intervention.

“It is estimated that one in every four Kenyans seeking care for other services is diagnosed with a mental health condition. This underscores the urgent need to expand access to care and strengthen community-based support systems,” she said.

The PS called for innovative, inclusive, and integrated approaches to mental healthcare, emphasizing the importance of partnerships between government agencies, healthcare professionals, and communities.

She reaffirmed the government’s commitment to supporting mental health workers and improving service delivery across the country.

The conference brought together key stakeholders in the health sector, including Laikipia Governor Joshua Irungu, Deputy Governor Rebeun Kamuri, County Commissioner Duncan Muyesu, and National Nurses Association of Kenya Vice Chairperson Dennis Mbithi.

Muthoni reiterated that addressing substance abuse and mental health challenges remains a national priority, warning that failure to act decisively could have lasting social and economic consequences.



Some of the stakeholders in a group photo.

Anti-Corruption Mohamud formally assumed the position during the 16th EAAACA Annual General Meeting held in Nairobi from Monday to Friday.

EACC CEO Abdi Mohamud elected President of regional anti-corruption body

BY MKT REPORTER
@themkenyatimes

The Chief Executive Officer of the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC), Abdi Mohamud, has been elected President of the Eastern Africa Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities (EAAACA), marking a significant milestone in Kenya's leadership role in the regional fight against corruption.

Mohamud formally assumed the position during the 16th EAAACA Annual General Meeting held in Nairobi from Monday to Friday.

He takes over from Naluzze Aisha Batala, Inspector General of Government of Ugan-



Members of EAAACA who attended the forum.

da, who was praised for her leadership and contribution to strengthening cooperation among anti-corruption agencies in the region.

Prior to his election, Mohamud served as Vice President of EAAACA for two years.

In his acceptance speech,

Mohamud expressed gratitude to member institutions for the trust placed in him and pledged to build on the foundation laid by his predecessor.

He emphasized the need for stronger regional collaboration to effectively tackle corruption, particularly in



Ms Naluzze Aisha Batala handing over the EAAACA mantle to Mr Abdi Mohamud on Friday.

addressing cross-border financial crimes and illicit networks.

He outlined key priorities for his tenure, including strengthening mutual legal assistance and cross-border investigations, en-

hancing intelligence sharing among member agencies, and promoting joint operations. He also underscored the importance of harmonizing anti-corruption laws and policies across countries to improve enforcement and close legal gaps exploited by corrupt networks.

Mohamud further highlighted the need to promote peer learning and technical exchange programmes among anti-corruption bodies, noting that knowledge sharing is essential in adapting to emerging corruption trends.

A major highlight of his agenda is the upcoming launch of the Centre for Research on Ethics and Anti-Corruption (CEREAC), scheduled for June 2026 in Nairobi.

He said the centre will play a critical role in generating evidence-based research to support policy formulation, prevention strategies, and enforcement efforts across the region.

"The fight against corruption requires not only strong institutions but also data-driven approaches that inform action," Mohamud said.

He called on heads of anti-corruption agencies across Eastern Africa to actively support the regional agenda and participate in initiatives such as the CEREAC launch, describing it as a shared platform for innovation and col-

laboration.

Mohamud noted that his election signals a shift toward stronger regional coordination in the fight against corruption, moving beyond national-level interventions to a more integrated approach that enhances policy influence and operational synergy.

The AGM brought together representatives from eight East African countries and featured several high-level engagements, including the 31st Executive Committee Meeting, ARINEA Steering Group discussions, the 8th Asset Recovery Workshop, and a regional anti-corruption conference.

Participants used the forum to share experiences, build capacity, and strengthen institutional networks aimed at combating corruption more effectively.

Mohamud thanked delegates for their participation and reaffirmed Kenya's commitment to advancing integrity, transparency, and accountability across the region.

His election is expected to bolster cooperation among Eastern African nations as they confront increasingly complex and transnational corruption challenges.

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Abortion The bench upholds life from conception while carving out narrow legal exceptions for emergencies and maternal health

Court of Appeal rules abortion is not a constitutional right in Kenya

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyaintimes

Kenya's Court of Appeal has ruled that abortion is not a fundamental right under the Constitution, holding that it is only permissible under strictly defined circumstances prescribed by law.

In its judgment delivered on Friday, the appellate bench grounded its decision in Article 26(1) and (2) of the Constitution, which protects the right to life from the moment of conception. The court held that procuring an abortion ordinarily amounts to depriving an unborn child of that constitutional protection — a position that closes the door on any broad interpretation of reproductive choice as a guaranteed right.

“Abortion is not a fundamental right guaranteed under the Constitution,”

the judges stated plainly. “On the contrary, the Constitution expressly prohibits it but provides exceptions in limited circumstances.”

Those exceptions, the court clarified, are drawn from Article 26(3) and (4), which permit abortion where a trained health professional determines that emergency treatment is necessary, where the life or health of the mother is at risk, or where a separate written law expressly allows it. The ruling underscores that these are narrow gateways, not broad permissions, and that access to lawful abortion remains tightly conditional.

The judgment also sheds light on why Sections 158, 159, and 160 of the Penal Code — which criminalise unlawful abortion — remain on the statute books. Far from being relics of an older legal era, the court found them entirely consistent with the

constitutional framework, reinforcing the principle that abortion outside the permitted exceptions carries criminal consequences.

The decision is likely to reopen public debate on reproductive health policy in Kenya, particularly among medical practitioners, women's rights organisations, and religious groups, all of whom have long staked out sharply opposing positions on the issue. Healthcare providers operating in grey areas — especially in cases of rape, incest, or foetal abnormality — will be watching closely for any legislative response.

What the court has made clear is that in Kenya, the Constitution does not leave this question open — and Parliament, not the judiciary, holds the key to any future change.



The Mt. Kenya Times



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Mud-stained boots we wore—the joy was of a
different kind,
Running through the puddles—the bliss we left
behind.

Reflections in the murky water filled with
laughter and delight,
Childhood's sky was pouring happiness, shining

ever bright.

Mercury-like drops fall rhythmically, dancing on
the roof above,
Each single drop stirs my heart with memories
and love.
The hot bread Mother baked, the spring greens in
the pie,
Mix with the rain to soothe my longing, as the
clouds drift by.

The gurgling streams turn into floods, rushing
wild and free,
The water caught within my palms brings playful
warmth to me.
Though I dwell in the city's heart, longing for
those days of old,
When it rains, my village wakes in my mind, a story
to be told.

About the Author

Nigora Yo'ldasheva Sodiqjon qizi was born on
May 29, 1999, in the village of Birlashgan,
Yangiq'rg'on district, Namangan region.

Are You an Optimist or a Pessimist?



In today's world, many people spend their time
worrying about the past and the unseen future.
They forget to live in the present moment.
Instead of learning from their failures, they
depend on luck and feel discouraged when things
do not go their way.
But life teaches us a simple truth.

Even monkeys fall from trees. Though they are
skilled at climbing and jumping from one branch to
another, they sometimes slip and fall. Yet, they
do not give up. They rise again and continue their
journey. Our life is just like that.

Each one of us has been blessed with knowledge
and unique talents. By God's grace, no two
individuals are the same. We all have something
special within us waiting to grow and shine.

In nature, some plants, like climbers, need
support to grow. Similarly, in life, we also need
guidance and encouragement. Parents, teachers,
and well-wishers play an important role in shaping
our path.

Dear students, the first step to success is to
believe in yourself. Trust your abilities and listen
to the guidance of your parents and teachers.
Always choose to be optimistic.

Success does not come through luck alone. It is
the result of hard work, sincerity, practice, and
continuous learning. These are the true keys to
achieving your goals.

When you face struggles, do not cry or lose hope.
Instead, pause and ask yourself, "Why did I fall?"
Understand your mistakes, correct them, and
move forward with confidence. The next time,
success will be yours.

Listen to your inner voice. Let it guide you
towards positive thoughts. Train your mind to
see the good in every situation.
Above all, always speak the truth. Honesty builds
character and leads you to a life of respect and
dignity.

So, ask yourself today
Are you an optimist or a pessimist?
The choice is yours. Choose wisely, and let your
life shine with positivity and purpose.

V. JAYANTHI
Graduate teacher
Creative Writer
PUMS Konganancherry
Chengalpattu district
Tamil Nadu India

Don't ask me for poems – ask me of my pain



Don't ask me for poems — ask me of my pain,
I'll tell you everything from start to end.
I'll take just a little of your time, that's all,
Listen a while — I may feel a little lighter then.
Don't ask me for poems — ask me of my heart,
Calling "beloved," I have tortured myself for long.
I loved — but never found true loyalty,
In the end, I lost myself and went wrong.
Don't ask me for poems — ask me of my grief,
There are those who left my heart in ruins deep.

They made me love them, then went far away,
And left me in their love to wander and weep.
Don't ask me for poems — ask of my longing,
If you can bear it, I will speak it through.
You'll comfort me, say "smile," try to console,
But how can I laugh with such pain I carry too?
Don't ask me for poems, please, my friend,
What I write only deepens my despair.
I sigh and cry through nights and days,
As if Judgment Day itself were there.
Don't ask me for poems — ask me of my pain,
If I write, even the paper weeps in regret.
That unfaithful one who burned me in love,
Knows nothing of the sorrow I can't forget.
Don't ask me for poems — ask me how I am.

Doniyorbek Abduhomidov

Don't leave me here dad: school



Don't leave me here son: old age home:

Dear, don't leave me here:
Cute tiny hands holding stiff
Sobbing with nose sniffing
Pity! the small creature
But essential to withstand the future
Consoled remembering lovable teacher

And little soul with angel features
Just with the intention for future
Left soo to nurture.
But shaky hands of golden ager Holding as a
supportive stranger
Awaiting for the straight life line
With a question mark wrongly designed
Though organised by authorised paper
Yearning love which is locked by an evil stranger
And pushing into a pitiable atmosphere
As the fearful tears
gathered,
-For the last breathe to disappear...

G.Sarala.

United in Diversity



Different tongues, yet laughter sounds the same,
Different roots, yet dreams still light the flame.
From distant lands, from skies both near and far,

We meet as strangers—yet here we are.
A thousand cultures in every smile,
Each step we take bridges mile by mile.
Colors of stories, woven tight,
Turning our differences into light.

We learn new worlds in a single day,
Through simple words that find their way.
A shared lunch, a helping hand,
Builds a bond no map has planned.
Not just flags that stand apart,
But human beats in every heart.
For beyond each name and face we see,
Lives the truth of unity.
So let us rise, together stand,
Not divided by sea or land.
For in our voices, strong and free—
We are one, in diversity.

Sangeeta Khattar
TGT English
DAV Public School
NH-3, NIT, Faridabad
India

True love is felt, not seen



True love is felt, not seen,
True love can't be sought anywhere.
It reflects nowhere,
Yet it only can be felt.
Mother's love is confidentially true,
With a mixture of affection and care.
Father's love is more silent,

Friend's love is confident.
Brother's love is very strict,
Would be's love is romantic.
Teacher's love is very affectionate,
Wife's love shows selfishness.
Husband's love is hazardous,
Many of them get sprinkled.
Some of them go scattered,
Some of them are still shattered.
Love is the rhythm of the heart,
It's the melodious music.
Of the heart only can be felt,
But can't be shown or seen in vision.

— V.R. Vijayalakshmi, Graduate Teacher, CW
Writers Group, Kanchipuram District, Tamil Nadu,
India

Court Lawyers for the Gichiab family say fake title deeds, armed intruders, and official inaction threaten a property held since 1929.

Paradise Lost: family claims century-old land rights, alleges fraudulent takeover

BY MKT REPORTER
@themkenyatimes

The owners of the disputed Paradise Lost land have gone public, claiming ownership of the more than 200-acre property dating back to 1929 and accusing unknown individuals of orchestrating a fraudulent scheme to seize it.

Speaking to the press on Friday and flanked by their advocates, Danstan Omari and Duncan Okatch, the owners — led by Isaack Gichiab — said the land was originally acquired by their father through a bank loan in 1929. The family remained in possession from 1976 until the property was later transferred to Ndunde Investment Limited, a transaction they say was legitimate and documented.

The trouble, according to the



Owners of the disputed Paradise Lost land addressing the media at the Milimani Law Courts

lawyers, began in 2024, when what they describe as a co-ordinated fraudulent scheme

emerged, involving fake title deeds and illegal claims over the land. Despite filing com-

plaints with the Ministry of Lands, the Chief Land Registrar in Kiambu, and Principal

Secretary for Lands Nixon Korir, the family says they were met with indifference at every turn. “Our clients went there but never got help,” advocate Omari said bluntly.

The situation has since deteriorated from a paper dispute into something far more menacing. The lawyers allege that a group of individuals invaded the property, uprooted vegetables, felled trees, and now patrol the land around the clock to prevent the purported rightful owners from accessing it. “They are very daring,” said advocate Okatch. “They are patrolling the property day and night and using wananchi as a front.”

Court documents filed on April 11, 2026, before the Kiambu Law Courts, detail the alleged unlawful occupation and destruction of property. The family says multiple police reports have been filed, yet no arrests have been made. The lawyers are unsparing in their criticism of law enforcement, accusing officers of actively frustrating the genuine owners rather than protecting them. “We have seen big names being mentioned, and the fact that police are frustrating the real owners is worrying,” they said.

Two separate legal actions are

now in motion. A case filed in 2026 is scheduled for mention on April 30, while a constitutional petition over the same property will come before Justice Bahati Mwamuye on May 19. The family has sued individuals allegedly holding fraudulent title deeds and is pursuing accountability against senior government officials, including the Inspector General of Police, over alleged failure to protect the property and compensate for damages. “We hold the IG personally responsible for the damage caused,” the lawyers stated.

The stakes, the advocates argue, extend well beyond one family’s misfortune. “This is a cry for the right to property,” said Omari. “If this continues, then anyone holding a title deed is simply holding a piece of paper.”

The lawyers closed with a stark public warning: anyone being approached to purchase portions of the land at unusually low prices should walk away. “Do not buy until this matter is fully heard and determined,” they said.

The Ministry of Lands and the Inspector General of Police had not responded to requests for comment at the time of publication.



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Politics The PLP leader tells Kirinyaga farmers that reckless diplomacy, not bad luck, emptied their pockets — and she wants them to know exactly who is responsible

Karua blames Ruto's RSF ties for billions in losses to Mt Kenya tea farmers



People's Liberation Party (PLP) leader Martha Karua

BY MKT REPORTER

[@themtkenyatimes](#)

People's Liberation Party leader Martha Karua has accused President William Ruto of costing Mt Kenya tea farmers billions of shillings through what she describes as reckless foreign policy, specifically his government's alleged links to Sudan's Rapid Support Forces.

Karua made the remarks in Kagio, Kirinyaga County, on Friday, speaking at the launch of her three-day "Purple Train" tour across the region. The 2027 presidential aspirant used the platform to draw a direct line between Nairobi's diplomatic conduct and the economic pain now being felt in tea-growing households across Central Kenya — pain she says is not incidental but consequential, and entirely avoidable.

At the heart of her argument is Sudan's indefinite ban on Kenyan imports, announced last month. Sudan is not a peripheral market for Kenya's tea industry. Before the ban, the East African nation imported more than 10.7 million kilogrammes of Kenyan

tea annually, generating between Ksh 3.88 billion and Ksh 5.17 billion in revenue. With the suspension now in force, Karua warned that total industry losses could climb to as much as Ksh 7 billion — a figure that, if accurate, would represent one of the most damaging single blows to Kenya's tea export economy in recent years.

"When Sudan, a major importer of the tea you grow, announced an indefinite ban on Kenyan imports last month, it was you who suffered, and continue to suffer," Karua told the crowd. "It is your families that are left wondering how to pay fees, and this is a direct result of a diplomatic fallout with our neighbours."

The diplomatic fallout, she alleged, stems from reports that Algene Hamdan Dagalo — brother of RSF commander Hamdan "Hemedti" Dagalo — was issued a Kenyan passport. The RSF has been internationally condemned for atrocities committed during Sudan's devastating civil war, and the reported passport issuance drew sharp criticism from Khartoum earlier this year. Kenya's government has not offered a detailed pub-

lic accounting of the matter, a silence that Karua argues speaks volumes.

"It is a tragedy of leadership," she said. "While Ruto traverses the country claiming to have the massive support of Central Kenya, his policies are systematically emptying the pockets of the very people he claims to love."

The Kenya Tea Development Authority, which oversees smallholder tea farming across the Mt Kenya region, has previously acknowledged the importance of Middle Eastern and North African markets to Kenya's tea export performance. Sudan has historically ranked among the most consistent buyers of Kenyan orthodox tea, and its absence from the market leaves a gap that alternative buyers are unlikely to fill quickly or fully.

Karua did not limit her criticism to foreign policy. She also trained her sights on the stalled Thiba Dam expansion project in Mwea, a constituency whose rice farmers have waited years for an irrigation infrastructure upgrade that remains unfinished. Citing findings from Parliament's Public Accounts Committee, she told

the crowd that more than Ksh 42 million in taxpayer funds had already been lost to interest penalties arising from the government's delayed payments to contractors — money she said belonged to the very communities being failed.

"When they waste over Ksh 40 million on penalties instead of finishing irrigation canals, they are eating the future of your children," she said.

The Thiba Dam expansion has been a source of persistent frustration in Mwea, where smallholder rice farmers depend on reliable irrigation to sustain yields. Delays in the project have disrupted plant-

ing schedules and reduced water availability during critical growing seasons, according to farmers and local leaders who have previously raised the matter in Parliament.

More broadly, Karua accused the Kenya Kwanza administration of systemic neglect across the agricultural sector, arguing that farmers working in tea, coffee, and rice value chains were being left to absorb shocks that competent government intervention could mitigate or prevent. She called for full transparency in Kenya's foreign engagements, particularly those with implications for trade relationships, and demanded urgent action to stabilise export

markets and restore farmer confidence.

Her tour of the Mt Kenya region carries unmistakable political intent. Central Kenya has long been regarded as a decisive electoral bloc, and the Kenya Kwanza coalition has invested considerable effort in cultivating its support ahead of 2027. By arriving in Kirinyaga with detailed grievances, credible figures, and a message framed around betrayal rather than mere policy disagreement, Karua is making a calculated argument: that the region's loyalty has been taken for granted, and that its farmers are paying the price.

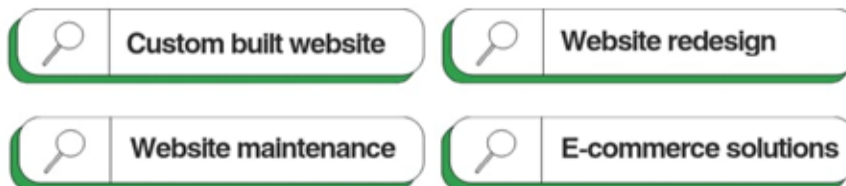
Whether the figures she cites translate into political movement will become clearer as her Purple Train tour continues. But in Kagio on Friday, the message landed with the precision of someone who has done her homework — and who is betting that numbers, not slogans, are what Mt Kenya farmers need to hear right now.



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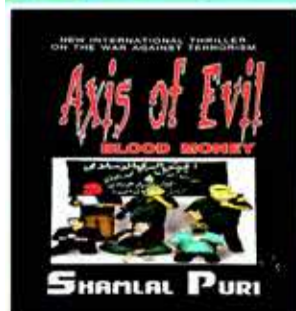
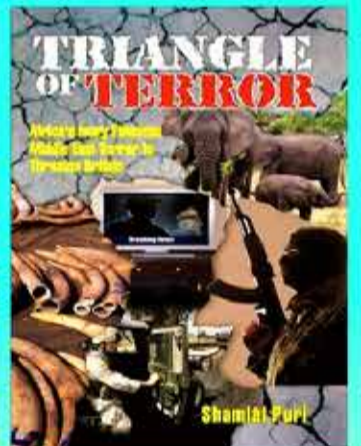
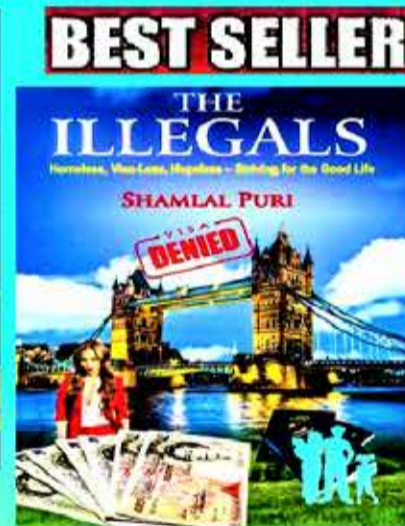
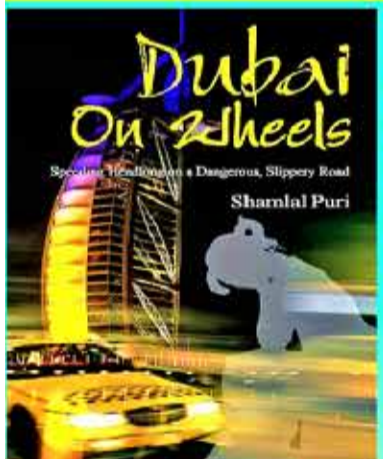
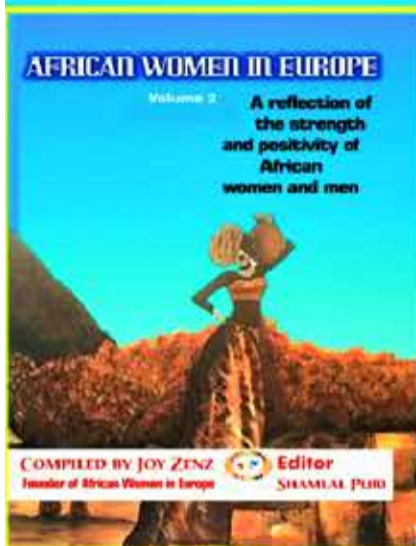
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PWDs Beyond the home, the community often mirrors this difference. Cultural stigma, misinformation, and entrenched prejudice isolates PWDs into the margins of social life.

A nation that looks away: The silent despair of persons with disabilities in Kenya



BY Fredrick Chelimo

@themtkenyatimes

There is a quiet, persistent suffering unfolding across Kenya – one that rarely makes headlines, seldom shapes policy urgency, and almost never receives that dignity of sustained national attention. It is the lived reality of persons with disabilities (PWDs), a reality marked not just by hardship, but by system exclusion so deeply embedded that it has become normalized. From the earliest stage of life, many PWDs are confronted not by opportunity, but by rejection. Maternal neglect, often unspoken but deeply felt, sets the tone. In some homes, the birth of a child with a disability is reserved not with protection but with withdrawal emotional, social, and somatic. As these children grow, layers of inclusion harden. Some parts of exclusion harden. Some parents disengage. In crueler instances, even siblings, products of the same household, become agents of neglect. What should be the first line of support becomes the first barrier to dignity.

Beyond the home, the community often mirrors this difference. Cultural stigma, misinformation, and entrenched prejudice isolates PWDs into the margins of social life. They are seen, but not included; acknowledged, but not empowered. The result is a population forced to navigate not just physical and cognitive challenges, but a hostile social environment that compounds their vulnerability.

Yet perhaps the most profound failure lies within the structure of governance. Kenya is not short of policy. The country boasts progressive legal frameworks, including the Persons with Disabilities Act, which promises rights, protections, and inclusion. On paper, the vision is clear. In practice, it is a mirage.

County governments, tasked with frontline services delivery, are



Persons with Disabilities (PWDs)

grappling with what can only be described as fragmented and inadequate interventions. Efforts to provide free medical care for PWDs are sporadic at best. Even where such programs exist, they are hollowed out by the glaring absence of essential medicines and assistive devices. A wheelchair, a hearing aid, a prosthetic limb – these are luxuries. They are gateways to participation in society. Their absence is not an oversight; it is a denial to humanity.

The much-publicized Social Health Authority (SHA) stands as a stark symbol of this disconnect. Touted as a transformative healthcare solution, it has, for many PWDs, remained an abstract promise – well articulated, heavily marketed, but painfully out of reach. It is a system that exists more convincingly in policy documents than in hospital corridors. For those who depend on it most, it has yet to translate into tangible relief. Hope in this context, becomes a cru-

el placeholder for action deferred.

Economic hardship has only deepened this crisis. The government's cash transfer of Kenya shillings 2,000 to vulnerable PWDs is, by any honest measure, insufficient. It barely covers the transport to a health facility, let alone food, medication, assistive care, and the needs of caregivers. It is a token in the face of profound need, a gesture that risks being interpreted as commitment, while functioning as neglect.

Caregivers, often parents, especially mothers, have begun to raise their voices with increasing urgency. Organizations such as Nexus of Caregivers and Parents of Children with Disabilities (NCP-CDK) are emerging, not driven by ideology but desperation. They are demanding what should be basic: access to healthcare, meaningful financial support, inclusive education and opportunities, including dignity for those they care for. Their message is

clear – the current system is failing, and silence is no longer an option.

Equally troubling is the wasted potential. Across Kenya, there are countless PWDs with the capacity to contribute meaningfully to the national development. They are educated, skilled, and willing. Yet they remain locked out of opportunities by inaccessible infrastructure, discriminatory hiring practices, and the absence of deliberate inclusion policies. This is not just a social injustice, but an economic miscalculation of staggering proportions.

What emerges, then, is a portrait of a governance system that appears unresponsive to one of its most vulnerable constituencies. It is a system that, metaphorically speaking, is struggling to see the suffering before it, too insulated to feel the urgency and detached to respond with compassion. The consequence is a growing sense of despair among PWDs – a feeling that their lives are

an afterthought in national agenda.

But the despair, if left unaddressed, has consequences. It erodes the trust in institutions. It weakens social cohesion. It breeds a quiet resentment that can no longer be contained within the margins. The question is no longer the challenges facing PWDs are known – they are. The question is whether there is the political will, administrative discipline, and societal empathy to act decisively. In-

clusion cannot remain a slogan. It must become a lived reality, visible in budgets, employment opportunities, reflected in infrastructure, enforced in law, and felt in every day life. Anything less is not just a policy failure. It is a failure of conscience.

“There is no greater disability in life than the neglect by those you have devoted your life, energy, and resources to care. Present circumstances do not determine where one can go, but merely determine where to start.”

Mr. Fredrick Kipchumba Chelimo
PWD

Chairperson, Jiamini Disability network Community Based organization

Email: jiamini.network@gmail.com

Religion Attending every service and missing every person is the quiet crisis hiding in plain sight inside our places of worship.

Why the most religious people can be the least human

Attending every service and missing every person is the quiet crisis hiding in plain sight inside our places of worship.

We have mastered the choreography of faith. Hands lifted on Sunday, foreheads on the mat on Friday, verses memorised, fasts completed, tithes paid on time. The building is full. The street is empty. We have become fluent in the language of God and illiterate in the grammar of being human.

This is not an argument for atheism. It is a reckoning with a quieter tragedy — the tragedy of becoming deeply religious while remaining profoundly inhuman. Of quoting sacred texts with conviction and failing entirely to see the person standing right in front of you.

Somewhere between the pulpit and the parking lot, religion and humanity quietly divorced — and then kept living together for appearances. We outsourced conscience to ritual. Prayed? Check. Fasted? Check. Attended? Check. But the checklist never said “listen to your neighbour” or “pay your worker on time” or “don’t gossip in the group chat after the service.” So we didn’t. We assumed ritual would auto-complete character. It doesn’t. A full mosque on Friday and a hollow heart on Saturday are not contradictions. They are, for too many people, simply the system.

We confused proximity to God with superiority over people. If I am close to God, then surely anyone who offends me must be far from Him. So the hijab becomes a reason to sneer. The clerical collar becomes a licence to condescend. Religion stops being a bridge and becomes a balcony — something to look down from, not out from. The service ends, and the judgment begins.

We have professionalised faith and casualised cruelty. There are conferences dedicated to holiness and no apprenticeship whatsoever for basic kindness. We recite the



Church

deadly sins and commit them before lunch, because they were taught as theology rather than as things that bleed. We weep during worship and dismiss the pregnant employee on Monday morning. The sanctuary taught us to cry on cue. Nobody taught us not to cause harm when the cameras are off.

And this is not the old, familiar story of hypocrisy. Hypocrites, at least, know they are faking. What we are describing is something more unsettling: sincerity without substance. These people genuinely believe. They genuinely attend. They would die for the creed. They simply will not live for the neighbour.

Consider the theology of self-exemption. “God knows my heart” has quietly become a loophole for every unkindness imaginable. I can underpay you, because God knows my heart. I can humiliate you in public, because God knows my heart. But the heart God

knows is rarely the heart the neighbour actually meets. Then there is the morality of the tribe — compassion that is not dead, merely rationed. It flows freely to those who vote, dress, pray, and post like us. It stops dead at the boundary of the group. The man who would donate a kidney to a fellow church member will call the police on a homeless person sleeping near the church entrance. We have not lost the capacity to love. We have lost the capacity to love without a membership card.

This split is, in a troubling sense, incentivised. Religion without humanity is cheaper. It costs nothing to attend a service. It costs everything to actually become someone. You can complete a two-hour service and feel righteous. Becoming genuinely gentle takes years of unglamorous, unrewarded work. The crowd applauds the prayer. Only your conscience rewards fairness — and many of us fired

that particular employee long ago.

Religion without humanity also scales better. You can build a megachurch on doctrine. You cannot build one on difficult, honest conversations. You can grow a movement on shared enemies. You cannot grow one around shared tables. So we chose the faith that fills seats rather than the one that heals streets. The pews are packed. The people are still alone.

When religion outlives humanity, the consequences are severe and far-reaching. The world does not read scripture — it reads us. When religious people are cruel, the verdict is never “that individual is cruel.” It is “their God is cruel.” Every act of pettiness performed in holy clothing is, effectively, evangelism for atheism.

The next generation is already drawing its conclusions. They are not leaving God. They are leaving people

who used God as a reason to avoid becoming human. They watched you post the scripture verse and then punish the waiter. They heard you sing about grace and watched you let go of the single mother. They are scrutinising the gap between your mouth and your hands — and they are entirely right to do so.

The most committed among the religious are often also the most exhausted, and it is not difficult to understand why. Performing religion while starving one’s own humanity is full-time work. You must pray and simultaneously maintain the grudge. Fast, and protect the lie. Attend the service, and carefully avoid the person you slandered last week. The soul registers the contradiction. The body keeps the score. That is why the most intensely religious spaces are so frequently the most anxious — we are worn out from carrying a God we refuse to let change us.

The solution is not less religion. It is more humanity, pursued so consistently that eventually the two words mean the same thing. Drag your faith to the scene of the crime. If your theology cannot compel you to pay back the man you cheated, it is not theology — it is poetry. If your piety cannot move you to apologise to the child you once shamed, it is not piety — it is theatre. The true test of belief is whether it makes you careful with people who can do absolutely nothing for you.

Let your rituals be interrupted by people. The holiest moment in your week should not necessarily be the sermon. It should be the moment you stopped — when it was genuinely inconvenient — to help someone who needed it. If your prayer time is more fiercely protected than your neighbour’s dignity, you have confused the signal for the source. God never asked for a performance. He asked for a person.

The tragedy of our age is not empty churches. It is full churches with empty people. So here is the test worth applying when the service ends: does God walk out with you? Or does He stay behind in the building, waiting for your return next week, because He already knows He is not welcome in your home, your business, or your daily conversation?

The world does not need more religious people. It needs more human ones — people whose faith has made them genuinely gentler, slower to speak, quicker to repair, and easier to live alongside. People who, in some recognisable way, smell like the book they claim to have read.

The final judgment, by most accounts, will not ask for your attendance record. It will ask what you did in the unseen moments, and who could breathe a little more freely simply because you were in the room.

Religion was always meant to make us more human. If it has not done that yet, then we are simply not finished. The pew is not the finish line. It is the starting line. The real service begins the moment you stand up and walk back outside.

Gang Civilian protection, the prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and adherence to human rights law are central to our planning

Gang suppression force in Haiti in early phase of establishment

BY Xinhua News Agency
@themtkenyatimes

Jack Christofides, special representative for the Gang Suppression Force (GSF) in Haiti, said Thursday that the force is in an early phase of establishment.

"We are at a critical early phase of establishing the GSF," Christofides told the Security Council in a briefing on the situation in Haiti. "The GSF is being built as a disciplined, accountable, and partnership-driven mission, designed to deliver targeted security results while upholding the highest standards of conduct and full respect for Haitian sovereignty." A deployment plan has been developed in consultation with the Haitian authorities, focused on priority areas and leveraging the specialized capabilities

of contributing forces, he said. "The objective is clear: to degrade the operational capacity of gangs to a level that Haitian institutions can sustainably manage, thereby creating the time and space necessary for the state to reassert its authority."

In parallel, efforts are being made to advance civilian deployment and establish the core structures necessary to support intelligence-led mission planning, coordination and oversight. The concept of operations has been finalized, and pre-deployment and induction training are being prioritized, said Christofides. Efforts continue to broaden participation and ensure that the mission is equipped with the capabilities required to fulfill its mandate. Maritime and border dimensions for the mission will be particu-

larly important, including support for Haiti's capacity to manage its ports and commercial entry points, he added.

"Civilian protection, the prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and adherence to international human rights law are central to our planning and operations. Clear guidance, training, and oversight mechanisms are being put in place to ensure that all personnel operate in accordance with the highest standards of conduct and accountability," said Christofides. "We are working closely with the Haitian authorities to ensure that arrangements related to detention and the treatment of individuals are consistent with legal standards and operational realities," he said, adding that particular attention is being given to the capacity of national institu-



A gang in operation

tions, so that apprehensions can be effectively sustained through a judicial process. "The GSF is designed not as an end in itself, but as a means to enable Haitian institutions to regain control and to create the conditions for longer-term stability," Christofides said.

The Security Council in September 2025 adopted a resolution to transition

the Multinational Security Support mission in Haiti to the GSF. The resolution authorizes the GSF to adopt urgent temporary measures on an exceptional basis to assist the Haitian National Police in maintaining basic law and order and public safety, including through arrest and detention.

Trump says ceasefire between Israel, Lebanon to be extended by 3 weeks

U.S. President Donald Trump has announced that the current 10-day ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon will be extended by three weeks, shortly after the two countries held their second ambassador-level talks on Thursday afternoon.

The United States is going to work with the government of Lebanon to help it protect itself from Hezbollah, Trump said in a post on his social media platform Truth Social. Trump said he met with representatives of Israel and Lebanon in the Oval Office, along with U.S. Vice President JD Vance, Secretary of State Marco Rubio, and U.S. ambassadors to Israel and Lebanon. "The Meeting went very well!" Trump claimed, providing no details. "I look forward in the near future to hosting the Prime Minister of Israel, Bibi Netanyahu, and the President of Lebanon, Joseph Aoun," Trump added. Trump said last week he was expecting to meet Netanyahu and Aoun at the White House "over the next week or two" in hopes that the two sides could broker a peace deal, which will also address Hezbollah.

The 10-day ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon came into effect on April 16, following weeks of intensified cross-border fighting amid the U.S.-Israeli war against Iran. Israel and Lebanon have no formal diplomatic relations, and Hezbollah has long been viewed by Israel as a "proxy" of Iran. The negotiating party with Israel is the Lebanese government, not Hezbollah. The truce has remained fragile as tensions along Lebanon's southern border have continued during the current ceasefire.

BY Xinhua News Agency
@themtkenyatimes



President Donald Trump

ICC The court declared its jurisdiction over the case and rejected the defense's request for Duterte's immediate and unconditional release.

ICC confirms trial against former Philippine President Duterte

BY Xinhua News Agency
@themtkenyatimes

The International Criminal Court (ICC) has confirmed all three counts of "crimes against humanity" against former Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte and committed him to trial.

The court said in a statement that there are "substantial grounds" to believe that the over-80-year-old Duterte is responsible for "the crimes against humanity of murder and attempted murder."

The ICC said the decision was based on the evidence and arguments presented by the Prosecutor and the De-

fence during the confirmation of charges hearing from Feb. 23 to 27, 2026, as well as on the submissions and documents of the parties and participants. Following the transfer of the case to an ICC Trial Chamber, the Chamber will determine the next steps, the ICC said.

The court on Wednesday declared its jurisdiction over the case and rejected the defense's request for Duterte's immediate and unconditional release. Philippine Senator Imee Marcos criticized the ruling, saying that it "disregards the Philippines' sovereign withdrawal from the Rome Statute." "Justice must be pursued in a manner consis-

tent with our Constitution, our laws, and the integrity of our own judicial processes," she said in a statement on Wednesday.

Duterte served as president of the Philippines from 2016 to 2022.

He was arrested and transferred to ICC custody in March 2025 under a warrant linked to his controversial anti-drug campaign, a move he has challenged. His initial appearance before ICC Pre-Trial Chamber I took place on March 14, 2025, and on Nov. 28, 2025, the court rejected an appeal seeking his release on grounds of age and declining health.



Rodrigo Duterte

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Kenya's opposition coalition at a crossroads

Kenya's opposition is fracturing — and 2027 is closer than it looks.

Once a formidable force built around Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) and Raila Odinga's decades-long crusade for governance reform and social justice, the coalition today is a coalition in name more than in practice. Wiper, rump Jubilee factions, and smaller regional outfits orbit the alliance with dwindling conviction, united less by shared vision than by shared opposition to William Ruto's UDA government.

That is not enough.

Internal disagreements over strategy, leadership, and messaging have deepened publicly in recent months. Some voices urge a grassroots rebuild; others want early campaign momentum. Neither faction has won the argument, and the indecision shows. Meanwhile, Ruto's administration holds Parliament, controls key institutions, and has proven adept at



absorbing opposition pressure without absorbing opposition ideas.

The succession question compounds everything. Odinga's influence remains towering, but the next generation of opposition leadership remains undefined. Kalonzo Musyoka and Martha Karua command genuine respect, yet no consensus exists on who carries the banner forward. Without clarity, internal rivalry will do what the government cannot — break the coalition apart.

And yet Kenya needs a cred-

ible opposition. In a political culture with a powerful executive and weak institutional checks, opposition voices are not optional. They are democracy's pressure valve.

The coalition must choose: unite around a common national agenda or fragment into irrelevance chasing personal ambitions.

In Kenyan politics, the cost of disunity is never abstract. It is always electoral.

By Diana Thyaka, Laikipia University

Degrees to desks: unmasking the silent struggle of student attachment in Kenya

Industrial attachment promises a bridge between campus and career — for most Kenyan students, it feels more like a plunge into the deep end.

By Faith Kemuma, Communication student, Rongo University, Migori

For thousands of Kenyan university students, the final stretch of their academic journey is not defined by lecture halls or examinations, but by the gruelling ritual known as “tarmacking” season. Industrial attachment is sold to students as the golden bridge between theoretical knowledge and the professional world. In reality, for the average undergraduate, it is less a bridge and more a baptism by fire — and it is time we talked honestly about what that actually costs them.

Long before a student walks through any office door, anxiety has already taken up residence. It is not simply the fear of underperforming. It is something more insidious: the quiet, persistent voice of imposter syndrome, whispering that the degree they worked so hard for will not be enough when a seasoned supervisor asks the wrong question. Students arrive clutching their academic notes like a shield, terrified of being exposed. This fear is compounded by what might be called the “silent office” dynamic — the bewildering challenge of decoding unwritten workplace hierarchies and navigating office politics while simultaneously trying to appear composed and professional. Many feel the weight of something even larger than themselves. They are not just representing their own abilities. They feel they are carrying the reputation of their university, their family, their county.

Then there is the ordeal of actually securing a placement. The process begins weeks or months before any first day of work, and it is a high-stakes exercise in endurance. Students traverse the streets of Nairobi and other urban centres, envelopes of CVs and application letters in hand, knocking on doors that largely stay shut. Human resource departments offer silence where guidance should be. The systemic barriers are stark and well-known but rarely honestly confronted. The “who you know” prob-



lem remains stubbornly entrenched. Merit is the ideal everyone espouses and fewer people practise. For students without the right connections, the playing field is tilted before the game even begins. Alongside this sits the financial burden, which in the current economic climate has become something close to a crisis. In an era of punishing inflation, paid internships remain the exception rather than the rule. Students are expected to fund their own transport, meals, and professional attire, often leaning on parents who are already stretched to breaking point by tuition fees. What is framed as a learning opportunity quietly becomes a financial penalty for pursuing an education in the first place.

For those who do secure a placement, the culture shock is immediate. Students arrive expecting mentorship, hungry to apply the frameworks and theories they have spent years absorbing. What many find instead is a steady diet of photocopying, filing, and running errands. These tasks are not without value — every workplace has its unglamorous necessities — but the consistent failure to integrate interns into meaningful business processes is a missed opportunity that neither side can afford. Students leave feeling like an extra pair of hands rather than emerging professionals. Employers lose access to fresh thinking and motivated talent. Everyone loses.

And yet, for all its frustrations, industrial attachment remains the single most formative period in an undergraduate's development. It is the crucible where soft skills are truly forged — not taught, but earned. For students currently in the thick of it, the advice is straightforward even if it is not easy: take ownership of your presence. If meaningful work is not offered, ask for

it. Seek out the person whose role you most admire and find a way to be useful to them. In a busy office, mentorship is rarely handed out freely — it is earned through consistent observation, quiet reliability, and the willingness to show up fully even when the task feels beneath you.

Your logbook is more than a graduation requirement. Treat it as a record of your professional becoming. The technical skills you pick up matter, but your punctuality, your emotional intelligence, and your ability to conduct yourself with grace in a complex human environment are the qualities that will define the arc of your career long after the attachment is over.

That said, the burden of making this work cannot rest entirely on the student's shoulders. Kenyan organisations need to take a hard, honest look at how they treat their interns. Attachment students are not a source of free labour to be deployed on tasks nobody else wants. They are the future of the workforce, and companies that invest in structured, mentored, and where possible compensated internship programmes are not being generous — they are being strategically intelligent.

Industrial attachment is a mirror. It shows students, sometimes painfully, exactly where they stand in the real world. The reflection is not always flattering, and that discomfort is part of the process. But by acknowledging both the emotional weight students carry and the systemic failures that make their path unnecessarily hard, we create the conditions for something better — an environment that prepares the next generation not merely to survive the workplace, but to one day lead it.

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Sports >> *A last-minute coaching change puts the Saudi football federation under the spotlight as the clock ticks down to North America.

Saudi Arabia gambles on Donis with World Cup weeks away

By **Martin Weche**, *Sports Correspondent*

Saudi Arabia have appointed Greek coach Georgios Donis as their new head coach, the Saudi Arabian Football Federation (SAFF) confirmed on Thursday, less than two months before the Green Falcons open their 2026 FIFA World Cup campaign against Uruguay on June 15.

The appointment is a high-stakes gamble. Donis, 56, takes charge of a squad that has already qualified for the tournament under his predecessor, Hervé Renard, who was sacked earlier in April in circumstances that left many football observers scratching their heads. Renard had done the hard work — steering Saudi Arabia through qualification for their seventh World Cup finals and their third consecutive appearance — only to be shown the door with the finishing line in sight. The SAFF has not offered a detailed public explanation for the decision, a silence that has done little to quiet the scepticism surrounding it.

Donis arrives with a coaching résumé that spans club football in Greece and Saudi Arabia. He has managed AEK Athens and Panathinaikos, two of Greek football's most storied clubs, and most recently served as head coach of Saudi Pro League side Al Khaleej, whom he joined in 2024. Familiarity with Saudi football culture may count in his favour, but critics argue that club management in the Pro League is a considerable step removed from international tournament football on the world's biggest stage.

In a statement posted on social media, the SAFF confirmed that Donis' contract would run until July 2027, suggesting the federation views this appointment as more than a short-term fix. "We are confident in his ability to lead the national team with



Georgios Donis

professionalism and ambition," the federation said, projecting a calm it may or may not genuinely feel.

The pressure is immediate and unforgiving. Saudi Arabia have been drawn into Group H alongside Spain, Uruguay, and Cape Verde at the World Cup, which runs from June 11 to July 19 across the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Spain are among the tournament favourites, and Uruguay, with a generation of world-class talent in

Luis Suárez's long shadow now filled by Darwin Núñez and Rodrigo Bentancur, will offer no courtesies. Even Cape Verde, increasingly competitive on the continental stage, cannot be taken lightly.

That Donis has so little time to work with the squad, study the opposition, and impose his tactical identity makes the SAFF's timing all the more puzzling. International coaches typically need months to establish trust, rhythm, and understanding with

their players. Weeks is barely sufficient.

Saudi Arabia's 2026 World Cup ambitions remain intact on paper — but whether a new coach, parachuted in at the eleventh hour, can hold them together under tournament pressure is a question that only June will answer.

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *Calling it determination may not fully capture it. Brian Karoney set off into the cold and rain in Nairobi, mounting his bicycle on Friday, April 24th, for a journey of more than 300 kilometres.

Brian Karoney takes on 300km Nairobi-Eldoret ride to raise awareness on blood disorders



Brian Karoney makes a brief stop along the Nairobi-Eldoret highway as he pedals through a 300km-plus ride in a single day, to drive action on blood-related disorders.

Calling it determination may not fully capture it. Brian Karoney set off into the cold and rain in Nairobi, mounting his bicycle on Friday, April 24th, for a journey of more than 300 kilometres. Alongside him were fellow cyclists who believed in his cause, riding not for medals, but for a cause named Little Bags of Life. For Karoney, the journey is rooted in loss, pain, purpose and a promise. He says he committed to his late wife, Janet Bett Karoney, who passed away in 2021 after battling aplastic anaemia. Not only to raise awareness about blood-related disorders, but to take meaningful action

to ensure those affected receive the support they need, including strengthening systems for treatment and access to care. Aplastic anaemia is a rare condition in which the body does not produce enough blood cells. It can leave patients severely fatigued, vulnerable to infections, and at risk of excessive bleeding. The riders are expected to arrive in Eldoret ahead of a community cycling event and blood donation drive scheduled for Saturday, 25 April at Eldoret Sports Club. Organised by the Little Bags of Life Foundation, the initiative brings together cyclists and residents in a collective effort to increase

awareness and participation in blood donation. Participants of all ages and abilities are expected to take part in a series of rides, alongside a day-long blood donation campaign. Activities will begin early in the morning, with a 100km expert ride and a 50km intermediate ride flagging off at 6:30am. A 25km "Warrior's Loop", designed for beginners, will follow at 9am, before a 5km family and children's ride begins at 10am. Throughout the day, organisers will conduct a donor registration exercise. The initiative seeks not only to encourage people to donate

blood, but also to build stronger systems that support patients living with blood disorders. Inspired by Janet's story, the Little Bags of Life Foundation works to raise awareness about aplastic anaemia and other conditions, while connecting donors with those in urgent need of life-saving transfusions, ensuring that her story continues to give not just hope to many, but tangible action and life-saving impact.

Capital sport

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SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



Sha-Abria Williams: Fashion Icon, Faith-Driven Speaker, Community Champion



By: Ayesha Talib
@themkenyatimes

Sha-Abria Williams is a distinguished model and inspirational speaker dedicated to empowering individuals to pursue their dreams and thrive in their purpose. With over a decade of experience in the fashion and beauty industry, she has graced national and international platforms, inspiring countless individuals with her journey of resilience, faith, and determination.

As a model, Sha-Abria has been featured in nine published works, including internationally recognized magazines such as BECOMING AN UNSTOPPABLE WOMAN, LOOKER, GMARO, MARIKA, and FIGGI. She has competed at the highest levels in the industry, earning recognition as a Top 3 Finalist for Face of America (2017), a Top 10 Model Finalist in Hype Hair Magazine's International Beauty Competition (2011), and a featured model for the Pro Beauty Show (2016). In 2020, she competed as a contestant for The Fashion Hero and 2024 most notably became a leading lady in the globally streamed TV series "Miss Fashion Global: Quest For The Crown," available on Amazon Prime and other major streaming platforms.

Beyond the runway, Sha-Abria uses her platform to uplift and encourage others. As an inspirational speaker, she has shared her insights with Majestic Models (Jerido Productions) and in "I Wanna Be a Model Too," offering guidance and motivation to aspiring talents in the fashion industry. She has also been featured in interviews on The Beauty in You Podcast with Dr. Chi Quita Mack and "The R Stories" Podcast with Simone Muschett.

Sha-Abria's impact extends beyond modeling and speaking, she is deeply committed to philanthropy and community service. She actively volunteers with Depaul USA for the homeless, DayBreak of Macon in her hometown and is a strong advocate for causes such as the Colorectal Cancer Alliance and Nami (National Alliance On Mental Illness).

Academically, Sha-Abria holds a degree in Health Information Management from Miller-Motte Techni-



Sha-Abria Williams

cal College and is a Certified Medical Health Records Specialist. She seamlessly integrates her professional background with her passion for inspiring others, proving that success is achievable with faith, determination, and a positive mindset.

Sha-Abria Williams is not just a model, she is a beacon of hope, strength, and purpose. Her mission is to remind the world that with unwavering faith and perseverance, anything is possible. She is committed to leaving a lasting impact, ensuring that her light shines to uplift others along their journeys.

Follow her journey and stay inspired:

📷 Instagram: @shaabria_the_modelofficial

📺 YouTube: Sha-Abria Williams @covergirl7

🎵 TikTok: Sha-Abria Williams @covergirl247



Sha-Abria Williams



Worth Noting:

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