



Ruto urges Africa to take charge of health systems through self-reliance and innovation

President William Ruto has called on African nations to work collectively toward self-sufficiency in medical supplies and health commodities

Page 8



Kirinyaga coffee Farmers reap record KSh7.4 billion as Waiguru promises continued support

Coffee farmers in Kirinyaga County are celebrating a record payout of KSh7.4 billion following strong performance in the 2025/2026 season

Page 15

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Courts Gachagua lawyers urged the court to award full remuneration and entitlements for the entirety of his five-year mandate

Gachagua's day in court



A former deputy president, a three-judge bench, and a question that strikes at the heart of Kenya's democracy — who really holds the power to remove an elected leader?

Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua walked into the Milimani High Court in Nairobi yesterday accompanied by his wife Dorcas, his legal team, and the weight of a constitutional battle that has been building for eighteen months — formally opening a three-day hearing that could redefine the limits of parliamentary power in Kenya.

Gachagua's legal team confirmed at the outset that the amended petition no longer seeks his reinstatement as Deputy President. The pivot is significant. What began as a bid to reverse one of the most dramatic political falls in Kenya's post-independence history has evolved into something with potentially longer-lasting consequences — a forensic examination of whether Parliament acted within the Constitution when it removed him, and what compensation he is owed if it did not.

Page 9



Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua with his wife Dorcas at Milimani High Court in Nairobi yesterday

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Gachagua shifts legal strategy in impeachment petition, seeks compensation

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

Some of the moments as captured in pictures

Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua yesterday revealed that he is no longer pursuing reinstatement to office in his ongoing impeachment petition, instead seeking compensation and declarations that his removal was unconstitutional.

The matter was heard at the Milimani Law Courts before a three-judge bench comprising Justices Eric Ogola, Anthony Mrima, and Freda Mugambi.

Yesterday marked the first hearing day with proceedings scheduled to continue on May 7th and 8th. Initially, the hearing was slated for yesterday, today and tomorrow but it was rescheduled due to Justice's judicial duties commitment elsewhere.

Through his lead counsel, Senior Counsel Paul Muite, Gachagua informed the court that his amended petition now focuses on compensation for loss of office, damages, and remuneration he would have earned had he served a full five-year term.

Court records and earlier filings indicate that this shift follows his decision to abandon reinstatement claims and pursue financial redress instead.

The petition challenges what he terms an "unlawful and unconstitutional impeachment," with his legal team arguing that the process violated due procedure.

The court allowed Previously amendments to the petition to reflect this new direction, which also seeks full-term benefits and associated entitlements.

In his brief statement after the day's proceedings, Gachagua thanked Kenyans for following the case and expressed confidence in the judicial process, calling for justice to prevail and peace in the country.

The case continues to attract significant public interest, with the three-judge bench expected to hear further submissions when the matter resumes next month.



Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times



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NEWS IN BRIEF



Kenya National Highways Authority (KeNHA) has been recognized for outstanding performance at the 3rd Internal Audit & Risk Awards organized by Institute of Internal Auditors Kenya in partnership with Public Sector Accounting Standards Board. The Authority won the Audit Committee of the Year – State Corporations category and was named 1st Runner-Up in both the Overall Audit Function of the Year and Internal Audit Function of the Year – Public Sector categories. Director of Audit CPA Stephen Musyoka emerged 1st Runner-Up in the Chief Audit Executive category, while the Director General was 2nd Runner-Up in the CEO category. Board Chairperson Winfrida Ngumi praised the achievement, saying it reflects KeNHA's strong commitment to transparency, accountability, and excellence in governance and public service delivery.



The luxury vessel Azamara Onwards cruise liner, arriving from Port Victoria and carrying 650 holidaymakers alongside 309 crew members, including four Kenyans, docked at the Kenya Ports Authority's (KPA) ultra-modern cruise ship terminal yesterday. The steady influx of cruise vessels is undoubtedly a significant boost to Kenya's ambitious target of attracting five million international tourists by 2027, underscoring renewed confidence in the country's security, stability, and rich tourism offerings.



Turkana governor Jeremiah Lomorukai has dismissed critics of his administration, affirming that he remains focused on development and service delivery. Speaking in Loitanit village in Kaaleng-Kaikor Ward, Turkana North, he said his leadership prioritises cross-border peace, pastoralism support, water provision and improved livelihoods over politics. He highlighted key projects, including construction of the Napak Road and feeder roads to enhance access in previously underserved areas, alongside investments in health, water, markets and ECDE facilities. Lomorukai added that the county will collaborate with the Ateker Leaders Council, leveraging community elders and cultural practices to strengthen peacebuilding efforts.



Environment, Climate Change and Forestry Cabinet Secretary Deborah Barasa (left) and the Minister of Environment and Climate Change of Mongolia, Tsendiin Sandag-Ochir (right,) when they engaged in a high-level bilateral meeting on the margins of the G7 Environment Ministers' Meeting in Paris, France. The CS said that the bilateral engagement between Kenya and Mongolia provided an important platform to strengthen cooperation on shared environmental priorities, particularly climate resilience, sustainable land management, and biodiversity conservation. She highlighted that a key positive outcome of the meeting was the mutual understanding to deepen collaboration through knowledge exchange on climate adaptation strategies, restoration of degraded landscapes, and the advancement of nature-based solutions.



Kiambu Town Member of Parliament Machua Waithaka has disbursed KSh64.7 million in bursaries to support 13,141 learners drawn from different wards within Kiambu Town Constituency. The MP said the bursary programme has undergone reforms to ensure a transparent, free, and fair process for all eligible applicants. He noted that the initiative is designed to ensure that no student is forced to drop out of school due to lack of fees.

Inmates at Kericho GK Main Prison spent time with their families during an open day event aimed at strengthening social ties and supporting rehabilitation. The initiative allowed prisoners to interact freely with relatives, share meals and rebuild strained relationships, offering emotional encouragement crucial for their reintegration into society. Officer-in-Charge Benjamin Boit said the programme reflects a broader correctional approach that goes beyond confinement to prioritise rehabilitation. He noted that maintaining family connections plays a key role in helping inmates prepare for life after release, emphasizing that such engagements foster support systems essential for successful reintegration.



Mau Mau The caucus announced plans to present a petition to Parliament this week, reinforcing its demand for inclusive compensation

Freedom fighters' caucus rejects selective compensation push, demands inclusive Mau Mau reparations

BY MKT REPORTERS
 @themkenyatimes

A group representing former freedom fighters and their descendants, operating under the MMV Associates CLG, has strongly opposed what it describes as attempts to “divide and alienate” communities in the ongoing debate over compensation for liberation war veterans.

Speaking during a gathering at The Blue Post Hotel in Thika, Director James Njuguna Mahuria said there is growing concern over a petition allegedly seeking compensation for only one section of the affected communities while excluding others who also participated in Kenya’s independence struggle. Addressing members drawn

from across the 47 counties, Mahuria, who was also installed as a Kikuyu elder during the event, warned that the caucus would resist any efforts to create selective benefit frameworks. He insisted that the history of the Mau Mau liberation struggle is well documented and must not be reinterpreted to favor specific groups.

“We will oppose any attempt to distort history or isolate certain communities from rightful compensation. The struggle for independence was collective, and recognition must reflect that reality,” he said.

The caucus announced plans to present a petition to Parliament this week, reinforcing its demand for inclusive compensation and equitable treat-

ment of all freedom fighters and their descendants.

The debate comes against the backdrop of ongoing parliamentary consideration of Public Petition No. 11 of 2025 on compensation and allocation of land to Mau Mau war veterans, which was formally introduced in August 2025 by North Imenti MP Abdul Rahim Dawood.

The petition argues that despite constitutional and legal frameworks recognizing national heroes, many Mau Mau veterans were never compensated for land dispossession, forced evictions, and colonial-era injustices. It further claims that previous government efforts were fragmented, with some groups excluded from land acquisition and reparation programmes.



MMV Associates CLG director James Njuguna Mahuria addressing the media in Thika last week.

It also highlights concerns over mismanagement of funds meant for veterans, lack of full representation in earlier associations, and failure by the National Land Commission to fully investigate historical land injustices linked to the colonial period.

Mahuria’s caucus now insists that any compensation framework must be broad-based, non-discriminatory, and reflective of the collective sacrifice made during the liberation struggle. The group maintains that selective reparations risk reopening historical divisions

rather than healing them. Parliament is expected to continue reviewing the petition as pressure mounts from various veteran groups seeking clarity on how historical injustices will be addressed.

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Business A battle over Kenya's most valuable company has arrived in court

Kalonzo seeks orders to block Safaricom stake sale, citing public interest

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyatimes

Wiper leader Kalonzo Musyoka has asked the High Court to issue conservatory orders blocking the government's sale of its 15 per cent stake in Safaricom to Vodacom, arguing the transaction is unconstitutional, opaque, and a direct threat to public interest.

The three-judge bench, consisting of Justices Francis Gikonyo, Tabitha Ouya Wanyama, and Roselyne Aburili, had scheduled a critical hearing for today specifically to weigh the request for a longer extension of the current freeze on the share sale. The case, which has drawn national attention and assembled an extraordinary legal team, strikes at the heart of one of the most consequential privatisation decisions in Kenya's post-independence history.

Musyoka, appearing as Senior Counsel for petitioners Tony Gachoka and Professor Fredrick Ogolla, has been characteristically unsparing in his language. "Safaricom happens to be the goose that lays the golden egg," he told the bench, warning that profits should not be flown out of the country in a manner that is not well known to the public. He added: "Every minute Kenyans transact via M-Pesa — a Kenyan innovation that has earned this country international accolades. We



Wiper leader Kalonzo Musyoka

should not lose this enterprise."

The constitutional arguments underpinning the petition are serious and wide-ranging. Musyoka contends the sale contravenes Article 10 of the Constitution, which demands that public participation be clear, comprehensive, inclusive, and genuine. He argues none of those standards were observed. He further accuses the government of bypassing key legal requirements and shielding the process from public scrutiny — describing the entire transaction as opaque and pre-arranged.

Musyoka also accused state actors of attempting to sidestep the court process during the recess period, after the National Assembly approved the sale effective 1 April — a move he termed unconstitu-

tional and undertaken in bad faith.

The financial stakes are enormous. The petitioners contend that the government's valuation of Ksh34 per share is a significant undervaluation, with the true intrinsic value estimated at between Ksh70 and Ksh80 per share — meaning the public could lose over Ksh250 billion in value. Under the proposed deal, the government would retain a 20 per cent stake, Vodacom would rise to 55 per cent, and the remaining 25 per cent would stay publicly traded.

The government, through Treasury Cabinet Secretary John Mbadi, has defended the transaction as fiscally sound. "This partial divestiture will generate approximately Sh244.5 billion," Mbadi

stated, adding that proceeds would support the National Infrastructure Fund and the Sovereign Wealth Fund.

Respondents, for their part, have challenged the legal basis of the freeze. Lawyer John Ohaga, representing one of the respondents, argued that status quo orders cannot supplant conservatory orders and are not a replacement, contending that the previous directive had expired.

The court's decision today will determine whether Kenya's most strategically important company continues on its current ownership path — or whether the judges agree that the public deserves a fuller hearing before the golden goose changes hands.

Court orders ten-day detention of hate speech suspect in viral video



Bare Sahara Ahmed

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyatimes

A Nairobi court has ordered the ten-day detention of a suspect linked to a viral video allegedly containing hate speech and ethnic incitement, as investigators race to build a case that authorities say threatens national cohesion.

Bare Sahara Ahmed is being held at Kilimani Police Station following orders issued by the Chief Magistrate's Court at Kahawa Law Courts. The Directorate of Criminal Investigations applied for the extended custodial period to allow sufficient time to complete inquiries into the alleged offences — a standard but telling indicator of how seriously the agency is treating the matter.

The court went further, authorising forensic examination of digital evidence, including call data records and financial transactions. That order suggests investigators are not merely pursuing the video itself, but are probing the wider network behind it

— who communicated with whom, and whether money changed hands in connection with the alleged incitement.

In a statement, the DCI was direct about its intentions. "We urge the public to exercise restraint in their communications and avoid actions that could incite division or hatred," the agency said, framing the arrest not merely as a response to one video but as a broader message about the limits of online speech in Kenya.

The case arrives at a charged political moment. With the country navigating a complex opposition realignment and ethnic tensions simmering in parts of the country, the authorities have grown visibly alert to content that risks inflaming divisions. The National Cohesion and Integration Commission has repeatedly warned that hate speech, particularly when amplified by social media, carries consequences that extend well beyond a single post.

In Kenya, words have consequences. This court has just underlined the point.

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Health Ruto stressed that Africa must transition from being a passive participant in global health to an active architect shaping its policies, priorities, and outcomes.

Ruto urges Africa to take charge of health systems through self-reliance and innovation

BY PCS

@themkenyatimes

President William Ruto has called on African nations to work collectively toward self-sufficiency in medical supplies and health commodities, emphasizing that stronger, more resilient health systems are critical for the continent's future. Speaking at the World Health Summit Regional Meeting 2026 in Nairobi, which brought together over 2,000 delegates from more than 40 countries, the President underscored the urgency of reducing reliance on external supply chains and positioning Africa at the center of global health decision-making.

Ruto stressed that Africa must transition from being a passive participant in global health to an active architect shaping its policies, priorities, and outcomes.

He noted that disruptions in global supply chains have exposed vulnerabilities in the continent's healthcare systems, making local production of medicines and vaccines an urgent priority.

Currently, Africa produces less than 2 percent of the medical commodities it consumes, despite carrying over 25 percent of the global disease burden while accounting for less than 3 percent of global health expenditure.

To address these disparities, the President called for a radical transformation anchored on three pillars: policy leadership, adoption of technology, and mobilisation of domestic resources. He said Africa stands at a critical juncture,

with both significant challenges and immense opportunities, including a youthful population, expanding digital infrastructure, and a growing culture of innovation that can drive scalable health solutions.

Ruto highlighted Kenya's own health reforms as a model of progress. Central to these reforms is the Social Health Authority (SHA), which has replaced the National Health Insurance Fund with a unified financing framework designed to expand coverage and reduce out-of-pocket expenses. According to the President, nearly 30.7 million Kenyans have registered under SHA, a significant increase from the 8 million previously covered.

The government has also mobilised substantial financial resources, collecting KSh169 billion across multiple health funds, including the Primary Healthcare Fund and the Emergency, Chronic and Critical Illness Fund. In addition, KSh124 billion has been disbursed to hospitals for services rendered, improving service delivery and financial stability in the sector.

Ruto noted that the new system ensures access to healthcare is determined by need rather than income or location. He pointed out that contributions have shifted from a flat monthly rate to a 2.75 percent income-based premium, enabling broader risk pooling and greater equity. These reforms, he said, have significantly transformed Kenya's healthcare landscape.

Primary healthcare has also been strengthened through the deployment of more than 100,000 community health

promoters across the country. This expansion has improved early disease detection, prevention, and continuity of care, while enhancing linkages between community-level services and higher-tier health facilities.

Technology, the President added, plays a central role in these reforms. Investments in digital systems are improving data integration, transparency, and decision-making, while enhancing efficiency and accountability in service delivery. He emphasized that reliable, real-time information is essential for effective health systems.

Ruto also cited cost savings achieved under the new system, particularly in the coverage of teachers. Previously, the government spent about \$200 million annually on private insurance for teachers. Under SHA, this cost has reduced to \$140 million, saving approximately \$60 million while expanding access to healthcare facilities from 900 to about 7,000 nationwide.

On the continental stage, the President urged African countries to increase domestic health financing, strengthen pharmaceutical manufacturing, and invest in training and retaining healthcare professionals. He also emphasized the need to address emerging challenges such as non-communicable diseases, mental health conditions, and the health impacts of climate change.

Ruto called for institutionalised preparedness for future health emergencies, including stronger primary healthcare systems, enhanced disease surveillance, and improved



President William Ruto addressing the delegates yesterday.

regional coordination. He further urged investment in biotechnology, genomics, and vaccine development to enable Africa to transition from a consumer to a producer of global health innovations.

He emphasized that partnerships with international stakeholders must be based on mutual benefit and aligned with national priorities, arguing that the key question is not whether to invest in Africa, but how to do so strategically and sustainably.

Other global health leaders echoed similar sentiments. Birgit Pickel highlighted the importance of international cooperation, noting that dis-

eases transcend borders. She pointed to progress made in reducing deaths from HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria, while calling for reforms in global health systems to enhance preparedness for future pandemics.

Mohamed Janabi stressed that disruptions remain a major barrier to robust health systems, warning that failures in one region can have global consequences, as seen during the COVID-19 pandemic. He underscored the importance of strong primary healthcare and technology adoption in driving reforms.

Jean Kaseya expressed concern over persistently high

maternal and child mortality rates in Africa. He urged governments to adopt bold policies and decisive actions to reverse these trends and improve health outcomes across the continent.

The summit concluded with a shared call for unity, innovation, and decisive leadership to transform Africa's health systems. Leaders agreed that with coordinated investments, policy alignment, and strengthened institutions, the continent can build resilient healthcare systems capable of delivering equitable and sustainable outcomes for its people.



A group photo of President William Ruto with senior officials from different countries.

Gachagua's day in court: Kenya's constitutional reckoning begins

A former deputy president, a three-judge bench, and a question that strikes at the heart of Kenya's democracy — who really holds the power to remove an elected leader?

BY MKT Team

@themkenyatimes

Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua walked into the Milimani High Court in Nairobi yesterday accompanied by his wife Dorcas, his legal team, and the weight of a constitutional battle that has been building for eighteen months — formally opening a three-day hearing that could redefine the limits of parliamentary power in Kenya.

Gachagua's legal team confirmed at the outset that the amended petition no longer seeks his reinstatement as Deputy President. The pivot is significant. What began as a bid to reverse one of the most dramatic political falls in Kenya's post-independence history has evolved into something with potentially longer-lasting consequences — a forensic examination of whether Parliament acted within the Constitution when it removed him, and what compensation he is owed if it did not.

His lawyers urged the court to award full remuneration and entitlements for the entirety of his five-year mandate, including general, punitive, and aggravated damages arising from alleged constitutional violations. The legal team told the bench they had already computed the figures and placed them before the court for determination.

The case is being heard by Justices Eric Ogola, Anthony Mrima, and Freda Mugambi — the same bench whose formation itself became a point of legal contention, after the Court of Appeal in May 2025 quashed a decision by Deputy Chief Justice Philomena Mwilu to constitute the panel, ruling that such authority rests exclusively with the Chief Justice. The Supreme Court later cleared the way for proceedings to resume, and yesterday's hearing marked the substantive beginning of that long-delayed reckoning.

Gachagua's lead advocate, Senior Counsel Paul Muite, came out swinging. His arguments were broad, systematic, and at times withering in their assessment of Parliament's conduct. Muite told the court that

the impeachment was deliberately accelerated so it could be finalised before its legality was thoroughly reviewed, arguing that the entire process was designed to avoid scrutiny and accountability and to ensure it was completed before any constitutional audit could take place.

The accusation is serious. If accepted by the bench, it would suggest that Kenya's legislature did not merely make procedural errors — it acted with intent to circumvent judicial oversight. Muite pointed to specific irregularities as evidence. He questioned the late-night transmission of the National Assembly's resolution to the Senate, saying it departed from standard parliamentary procedure, and asked why the Speaker of the National Assembly had already issued a notice for a Friday sitting before the Senate had concluded its deliberations — suggesting the outcome had been determined in advance.

The constitutional argument at the core of the petition is equally striking. Muite submitted that Parliament treated the impeachment as though Kenya operated under a parliamentary system, rather than the presidential model adopted under the 2010 Constitution, effectively subjecting Gachagua to a vote of no confidence — a mechanism that has no place in Kenya's constitutional framework. "The people of Kenya chose a pure presidential system in 2010," he told the bench. "It is not open to Parliament to remove a Deputy President simply because it has the numbers."

That argument, if it holds, carries implications far beyond this case. Kenya's 2010 Constitution was designed, in part, to insulate elected officials from removal through raw political arithmetic. A ruling in Gachagua's favour on this point would establish that impeachment is an extraordinary constitutional remedy — not a legislative tool to be deployed whenever an administration finds its deputy inconvenient.

The human dimension of the case was also placed before the court. Muite told the bench that Gachagua became seriously ill during the Senate proceedings, was admitted to



Justices Freda Mugambi, Justices Eric Ogola, and Anthony Mrima

the intensive care unit, and had expressed willingness to appear in person and take the stand — but that a request for a three-day adjournment was denied without adequate reason. The Senate, Muite argued, pressed ahead and upheld five of eleven charges against a man who was physically unable to defend himself. "Illness does not come knocking," he told the court. "He fell ill after very stressful and strenuous proceedings."

The original impeachment motion, tabled by Kibwezi West MP Mwenji Mutuse on 1 October 2024, contained eleven charges, including gross constitutional violations and inciting ethnic tensions. The National Assembly passed the motion on 8 October 2024 by 281 votes to 44. The Senate upheld five charges on 17 October 2024, and Gachagua became the first Deputy President in Kenya's history to be removed from

office.

Since then, he has founded the Democracy for the Citizens Party and positioned himself as a voice of opposition, his legal battle doubling as a political platform. Wiper party leader Kalonzo Musyoka argued that Gachagua's ouster was carried out "by fiat" and that the Constitution was not followed, while DAP-K leader Eugene Wamalwa described the judiciary as "the last line of defence" and said the hearings would test its independence.

One lighter moment broke through the gravity of proceedings. Lawyer Elisha Ongoya, part of Gachagua's legal team, drew laughter from the courtroom when he compared the impeachment to some of history's most notorious trials — including those of St Thomas More, Socrates, and Jesus Christ — arguing that what such trials shared was a predetermined outcome. The laughter was

brief. The stakes are not.

The matter will continue with further hearings on 7 and 8 May, after the bench indicated it could not sit on consecutive days due to commitments related to upcoming Supreme Court judge interviews, in which Justice Mrima is involved.

Kenya is watching. So, in many respects, is the continent. Few constitutional democracies in Africa have tested the machinery of executive impeachment as publicly, or as contentiously, as this. The three judges at Milimani now hold not only Gachagua's fate, but a verdict on whether Kenya's presidential Constitution means what it says — or merely what Parliament decides it means on any given October night.

When the ruling finally comes, it will be far more than a legal judgment. It will be a statement about who Kenya is.



Gachagua's lead advocate, Senior Counsel Paul Muite

Health Cabinet Secretary Aden Duale said the new centre will be critical in improving regional coordination and advancing health security.

Kenya to host Eastern Africa Health Hub as AU launches major reform push

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyatimes

Nairobi has strengthened its position as a regional health security hub after signing a framework agreement with the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) to establish the Eastern Africa Regional Coordinating Centre.

The facility will serve 14 member states and is expected to enhance preparedness, coordination, and response to public health emergencies across the region.

The agreement was signed during the inauguration of the High-Level African Health Leadership Ministerial Committee (AHLMC), an African Union initiative aimed at reforming the continent's health systems and strengthening Africa's voice in global health governance.

The launch took place on the sidelines of the World Health Summit Regional Meeting 2026.

Health Cabinet Secretary Aden Duale said the new centre will be critical in improving regional coordination and

advancing health security.

He noted that Africa is increasingly shifting towards homegrown solutions, including stronger institutions, reduced reliance on external financing, and expanded local production of medicines and vaccines.

The AHLMC, established under the African Union, will bring together health and finance ministers, the Africa CDC, and development partners to drive reforms in governance, financing, and health system resilience.

Its focus includes pandemic



During the signing event.

preparedness, equitable access to healthcare, technology transfer, and strengthening Africa's capacity for pharmaceutical production.

Mary Muthoni, Principal Secretary for Public Health and Professional Standards, said the committee will coordinate Africa's position on global health architecture reforms.

She explained that its road-

map prioritises stronger governance, sustainable financing, and equitable access to health technologies and products.

Kenya's growing leadership in health reforms was also highlighted through its Universal Health Coverage agenda under the Social Health Authority, aimed at reducing out-of-pocket costs and improving access to essential

services.

Officials said the new regional centre and ministerial committee mark a significant step toward African-led health solutions, improved pandemic readiness, and stronger coordination in addressing future health challenges across the continent.

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Inquest A CCTV installer, James Githinji, told the court that cameras could only capture footage at the entrance of the two gates

CCTV evidence heard in Endarasha dormitory fire inquest



Investigators outside Hillside Endarasha Academy. Photo/courtesy.

BY Wangari Mwangi

@themkenyaintimes

A public inquest into the Hillside Endarasha Academy dormitory fire that claimed the lives of 21 boys on September 5, 2024 heard that the two dormitories did not have CCTV cameras.

During the inquest which resumed yesterday before Senior Resident Magistrate Mary Gituma, a Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) installer, James Githinji, told the court that cameras could only capture footage at the entrance of the two gates that led to the boys' and the girls' dormitories.

He also informed the court that the cameras at the school were serviced five days prior to the fire incident.

Githinji told the court that it was the school Director David Kinyua, who contracted him to service 11 CCTV cameras in the school compound. However, the scope of his work changed upon discovery that the image quality of five

cameras was poor and needed replacement.

The CCTV installer, who has seven years of experience in installing and servicing the surveillance equipment, told the inquest. In addition, he also fitted a new Digital Video Recorder (the core recording system in a CCTV which processes and stores video footage from the camera to a hard drive) and connected a surveillance monitor located in the Director's office to the power supply.

"One of the five cameras I installed was facing the main gate, another one was facing the kitchen and another was facing the gates that lead to the dorms. I also installed another camera inside the Director's office and another one at the assembly which was facing the windows of the office and the classrooms that are near the office," said Githinji.

"The Director informed me that the remaining cameras would be replaced gradually during the school holidays," he added.

It was his testimony that by

Githinji told the court that it was the school Director David Kinyua, who contracted him to service 11 CCTV cameras in the school compound. However, the scope of his work changed upon discovery that the image quality of five cameras was poor and needed replacement. The CCTV installer, who has seven years of experience in installing and servicing the surveillance equipment, told the inquest. In addition, he also fitted a new Digital Video Recorder (the core recording system in a CCTV which processes and stores video footage from the camera to a hard drive) and connected a surveillance monitor located in the Director's office to the power supply.



the time he left the school

compound on August 30, all the cameras and the DVR were in working condition, and the cameras could be monitored from the Director's office.

The next time he heard about the school was five days later when he received a phone call from one of his customers who resides in the area informing him about the fire incident. By the time he arrived at the school, the fire had already been put out.

Githinji told the inquest that his inspection around the school compound revealed that only one of the freshly installed cameras had been tampered with. He later learned from the first responders that it had been interfered with by the fire engine as it was making its way to the scene of the fire.

"I arrived at 4am, by which time the fire had been put out. The power supply had also been cut off, and upon inquiry, I was told it had been switched off when the fire started. Upon inspection of the cameras, I noticed that

one camera that was located at the assembly right opposite the Director's office had been tampered with. The cable had been cut, and the camera was facing downwards while the wire was dangling. All the other four cameras were intact," said Githinji.

The inquest is trying to piece together the series of events that took place at the school in September 2024, just two days after the school had reopened for the third term. The fire is reported to have broken out between 10pm and 11pm on that fateful Thursday night.

In February this year, Dr Grace Atieno, the pathologist who conducted the post-mortems, told the court that the victims inhaled lethal amounts of carbon monoxide in addition to suffering severe burns covering between 74 and 100 per cent of their bodies.

She told the inquest the victims' organs, including their lungs, liver and kidneys, were severely charred, and some children had parts of their brains completely destroyed by the night inferno.

Her analysis was further backed by evidence from Dennis Owino, an analyst from the Government Chemist, who told the inquest that carboxyhaemoglobin; a highly toxic complex form of carbon monoxide and haemoglobin was detected in the blood of all the 21 boys who lost their lives.

"This indicates that prior to death, the deceased had inhaled carbon monoxide gas, which could have contributed to their death. No other chemically toxic substances were detected in the post-mortem samples," he told the court.

Meanwhile, state prosecution has asked the court to issue summons to four experts, among them the immediate former Energy, Petroleum and Regulatory Authority (EPRA) boss, Daniel Bargoria, to testify in the public inquest.

The other three include an engineer from the Kenya Power and Lighting Company (KPLC), an analyst from the

Government Chemist and a solar technician.

According to State Prosecutor Claudette Obat, five experts had initially been expected to give evidence, but only one appeared in court during the inquest.

"The investigating officer received a communication from KP that indicated that the witness was unwell and was unable to attend court. On the 24th, the IO also received a communication from EPRA indicating that the witnesses who were to come to court were engaged in other official duties and therefore were seeking another date.

The solar technician had, however, indicated that he was taking his child to school and would not be available yesterday. The position from the government chemist is that he is on leave, and therefore we remain with the CCTV specialist who will be present in court," said Ms Obat.

The inquest continues today when four witnesses have been lined up to testify.

Githinji told the inquest that his inspection around the school compound revealed that only one of the freshly installed cameras had been tampered with. He later learned from the first responders that it had been interfered with by the fire engine as it was making its way to the scene of the fire.

"I arrived at 4am, by which time the fire had been put out. The power supply had also been cut off, and upon inquiry, I was told it had been switched off when the fire started. Upon inspection of the cameras, I noticed that one camera that was located at the assembly right opposite the Director's office had been tampered with. The cable had been cut, and the camera was facing downwards while the wire was dangling. All the other four cameras were intact," said Githinji.



Summit The four-day summit, running from yesterday to Thursday is themed “Uniting Africa’s Innovation for Inclusive Digital Markets”

Nairobi hosts Connected Africa Summit as leaders push for a unified digital future

BY Felix Njenga

@themkenyatimes

Nairobi is hosting the Connected Africa Summit 2026, bringing together policymakers, innovators, investors, and digital entrepreneurs from across the continent to accelerate Africa’s digital transformation.

The four-day summit, running from yesterday to Thursday is themed “Uniting Africa’s Innovation for Inclusive

Digital Markets,” focusing on reducing fragmentation in the continent’s digital economy and promoting cross-border collaboration.

Participants highlighted that despite Africa’s growing pool of innovative startups, expansion continues to be constrained by inconsistent regulations, limited infrastructure, and weak interoperability between national digital systems.

Organizers emphasized the

need for actionable commitments beyond discussions, urging stakeholders to develop frameworks that enable seamless digital trade across borders.

The summit has attracted ICT ministers, startup founders, developers, and investors working toward building a unified continental digital ecosystem. Key discussions focus on harmonizing policies, bridging infrastructure gaps, and expanding internet



William Kabogo Cabinet Secretary for Information, Communication and Digital Economy speaking at Mukuru Digital Classroom at the New Mukuru Primary School in Nairobi yesterday.

ICT

access to underserved populations.

Kenya’s position as host reflects its rising status as a regional technology hub, supported by continued investment in digital infrastructure and innovation ecosystems. Delegates noted that while Kenya has made significant progress in expanding connectivity and nurturing talent, broader continental success depends on collaboration.

Ahead of the main sessions, participants visited the Mukuru Digital Classroom at Mukuru Primary School in Nairobi, a flagship initiative aimed at expanding digital literacy in underserved communities. The demonstration, led by Cabinet Secretary for Information, Communications and the Digital Economy William Kabogo, showcased efforts to integrate technology into education and equip learners with essential digital skills.

Officials also highlighted the rollout of 5G technology, offering speeds exceeding 200 megabits per second, complementing existing fibre networks to improve connectivity for homes and businesses. Experts said such advancements are crucial in closing the digital divide, particularly in informal settlements where access remains limited.

Innovative service models were also introduced, including tokenized “pay-as-you-use” systems that allow con-

sumers to purchase internet and utilities in small, flexible increments. These models are designed to support users with irregular incomes, especially in low-income urban areas.

Plans were also announced to expand public Wi-Fi hotspots in regions without reliable electricity, ensuring that connectivity reaches marginalized communities. Stakeholders said these initiatives are based on market research to balance affordability for users and sustainability for service providers.

Throughout the summit, delegates are expected to explore policy harmonization, investment opportunities, and partnerships aimed at building a unified African digital market. Key focus areas include digital trade, infrastructure financing, innovation ecosystems, and inclusive access to technology.

Organizers stressed that Africa’s digital future depends on coordinated action, urging participants to move from dialogue to implementation. With Nairobi at the center of these discussions, the summit reinforces the continent’s ambition to transform its digital landscape through collaboration, innovation, and sustained investment.

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China-Kenya Data from Kenya's Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority and the International Energy Agency show geothermal has consistently contributed 40 to 48 percent of Kenya's electricity

China-Kenya partnership unlocks geothermal potential of Great Rift Valley

BY Xinhua News Agency

@themkenyatimes

Hell's Gate National Park, about 100 kilometers northwest of Kenya's capital Nairobi, is famed for its otherworldly landscape.

Less known is its central role in powering Kenya's electricity grid.

Sheer red cliffs rise like walls cloven by a giant's axe, their faces layered with the solidified scars of ancient magma flows. Between them, compact power units dot the savannah, while steel pipelines thread through acacia groves, channelling underground heat into turbines. Zebras, antelopes and giraffes graze freely, unfazed by the wisps of steam that periodically vent into the air. Here, heat drawn from the earth's interior is converted into electricity and fed directly into the national grid. This striking setting underpins a rare distinction: geothermal power supplies more than 40 percent of Kenya's electricity -- the highest share of any country in the world.

Anchor for power prices

Data from Kenya's Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority and the International Energy Agency show geothermal has consistently contributed 40 to 48 percent of Kenya's electricity in recent years, making it the foremost source by a considerable margin. The lion's share flows from the Olkaria geothermal field within Hell's Gate itself.

Located on the floor of the Great Rift Valley, Olkaria hosts one of the world's most concentrated and accessible high-enthalpy geothermal reservoirs. Kenya's total geothermal potential is estimated at around 10,000 MW, yet by the end of 2025, installed capacity remained below 4,000 MW -- leaving most resources untapped. Once built, geothermal plants have near-zero fuel costs. In Kenya, generation costs roughly 0.07 U.S. dollars to 0.08 dollars per kilowatt-hour, compared with over 0.20 dollars for heavy fuel oil -- a gap of more than two to one. For a country with limited fossil fuel reserves, this has proven transformative: expanding geothermal capacity has helped stabilize industrial tariffs, cushioning the economy from imported inflation and supporting manufacturing competitiveness. Unlike wind and solar, geothermal provides reliable baseload power, operating

around the clock with annual utilization exceeding 8,000 hours. During droughts, when hydropower output drops sharply, it fills the gap and keeps the grid secure.

Its applications extend beyond electricity. Near Lake Naivasha, the Oserian flower farm uses geothermal well water to heat its greenhouses, making it Kenya's only fully renewable-powered flower estate. The state-owned Geothermal Development Company (GDC) has expanded direct-use projects across agriculture, industry and tourism -- including milk pasteurization, aquaculture and greenhouse heating. From the national grid to the furrowed field, this subterranean heat is weaving itself into the fabric of the Kenyan economy.

Disrupting monopoly

Kenya's geothermal journey dates back to the 1950s. The commissioning of the Olkaria I plant in 1981 made it the first African country to generate electricity from geothermal energy.

For decades, however, progress was slow, constrained by a technological monopoly held by Western and Japanese firms over core equipment. At its nadir, the GDC went more than a decade without commissioning a single new power station. That dynamic has shifted. Chinese companies have cracked the monopoly open, offering more cost-effective solutions. Leading the push is Kaishan Group, a private company from Quzhou in Zhejiang Province -- though its entry was not easy. "Initially, the Kenyan government was sceptical of us," chairman Cao Kejian has recalled. "So I personally funded the construction of the first plant -- over 53 million U.S. dollars out of my own pocket." The gamble paid off. Serving as EPC contractor, Kaishan built the Sosian Menengai plant -- the first privately operated geothermal facility at the Menengai field -- which began operations in August 2023 after passing rigorous third-party assessments.

With its credentials established, Kaishan moved from contractor to owner. In late 2023, it acquired Orpower 22, an independent power producer at Menengai, and immediately launched construction of a new plant. Completed in just 14 months, the facility began commercial operations in March 2026, becoming Africa's first geothermal project

fully invested in, built and operated by a Chinese enterprise. It is now regarded as the best-performing geothermal plant currently operating in Kenya.

The ambition does not stop at electricity. At Olkaria, Kaishan is developing the world's first integrated geothermal-to-hydrogen-and-ammonia project. A 165.4 MW plant will generate electricity to produce green hydrogen through electrolysis; that hydrogen is then combined with atmospheric nitrogen and naturally occurring carbon dioxide from the geothermal wells to manufacture green ammonia and fertilizer -- with raw materials drawn almost entirely from local sources. The project is expected to produce 180,000 tonnes of urea and 300,000 tonnes of calcium ammonium nitrate annually, plugging a gaping hole in Kenya's domestic fertilizer production and easing the burden on local farmers.

At the groundbreaking ceremony, President Ruto called the investment "efficient, reliable and sustainable," adding that it would bolster food security and "save Kenya vast sums of hard currency previously spent on importing fertilizer -- marking a significant stride toward climate-resilient green industrialization." Kaishan's general manager Dr. Tang Yan set out a broader vision. "We hope to work hand-in-hand with Kenya's energy sector," he said, adding that "leveraging Kaishan's modular geothermal technology and Kenya's extraordinary resources to build a green energy ecosystem covering clean power, green hydrogen, green ammonia and green methanol -- and together lead Africa toward a greener and more sustainable future."

Building green together

President Ruto has made "green industrialization" a central pillar of his agenda. At his inauguration, he told Kenyans the country was "on a transition to clean energy that will support jobs, local economies and sustainable industrialization," and called on fellow African leaders: "Africa can lead the world. We have immense potential for renewable energy."

Kenya aims not only to meet its own energy needs, but to demonstrate that developing countries can achieve rapid growth while honoring their climate commitments. In that effort, China has emerged as a decisive partner. At the Forum on



President William Ruto attends a groundbreaking ceremony for a Chinese-funded green fertilizer project held in Nakuru County, Kenya on Nov. 3, 2025. | Photo: Xinhua/Li Yahui.

China-Africa Cooperation Beijing Summit, China announced 10 partnership actions for jointly advancing modernization, including a Green Development Partnership committed to implementing clean energy projects across Africa. In Kenya, that commitment is visible across the map.

China Gezhouba Group's Thwake Dam will bring water security, irrigation and hydropower to over 1.3 million people in Kenya's historically water-scarce lower eastern region. In Garissa County, a Chinese-built 50 MW solar farm -- East Africa's largest photovoltaic facility -- supplies clean power to communities long cut off from the national grid. In Nairobi, Chinese firms are contributing to the Dandora waste-to-energy project, converting a longstanding waste management burden into a model of circular economy.

The grid itself has been transformed. China Energy Engineering

Group built the Kenya-Tanzania 400 kV interconnector, while China State Grid helped construct East Africa's first high-voltage direct current line, bringing Ethiopian hydropower into the Kenyan network. Together, they have turned an isolated national grid into a regional system. "As a global leader in this space," President Ruto has said, "Kenya continues to demonstrate how every nation can achieve sustained, rapid and transformative growth while remaining true to climate action commitments."

Deep in the Rift Valley, steam continues to rise ceaselessly from the earth's interior. Turbines hum quietly among the acacia trees, converting this subterranean energy into light for millions -- and soon, into nutrients for the nation's fields. In a turbulent world hungry for certainty in energy, Kenya's offers a compelling answer: the green transition can begin from the ground beneath your feet.



This photo taken on April 20, 2026 shows the Menengai Phase I Orpower 22 geothermal power plant project, constructed by China's Kaishan Group, in Nakuru County. | Photo: Xinhua/Xie Jianfei.

A beautiful soul is never forgotten



In this passing world of moments and time,
Where everything fades like a silent rhyme,
Some hearts leave marks that never depart,
A beautiful soul lives on in every heart.

Not in riches, nor in fame,
But in kindness, they earn their name.
With gentle words and a caring way,
They light the dark and guide the day.

They may be gone from sight one day,

But their love will never fade away.
In smiles they gave, in hands they held,
In stories of goodness, forever spelled.

Time may move and seasons change,
Life may feel a little strange,
Yet memories bloom like flowers bright,
Keeping their presence alive in light.

A beautiful soul is a gift so rare,
Felt in silence, seen in care.
Though they leave this earthly land,
They stay forever... in heart and hand.

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

The right people will stay with you



The right people will stay with you,
Even in times of trouble, they're true.
They find solutions to all problems,
They find remedies instead of blame,
They stand by you in all issues,
They never leave you alone
They never hurt

They stand till the end, they don't run away

They're pain killers, not pain givers, in every way
They are near when you are upset,
they care like a mother
They understand your mistakes, and love you
more, they're fair and smart

They find reasons to appreciate
They inspire you to rise, to be your best
They see the good, not the bad,
They never make you sad

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

That closed door saved you



From the severe problem
Notifying that GOD protects you
Have you ever noticed in random
Unsolved problems are numerous

Seldom found we know the plan
After realisation, everything becomes humorous
What's in mind, nobody can scan
Better things happen after disappointment

Wisdom makes you keep silence
Rejuvenate yourself with enjoyment
Rectifying self mistakes shows your prudence

N. SIVASANKARI
B. T. ASSISTANT IN ENGLISH
GMGBHSS PERAIYUR MADURAI DISTRICT
TAMILNADU



There are many jealous people with friendly
faces—be careful.
There are many friends in my life, but some are
jealous.
Don't worry about that; be happy in your life, and
stay careful.
They talk to you as if they are friendly,
but inside, they are poison.
Don't trust them.
They don't reveal their jealousy.
They watch all your actions and your behavior,
and they try to use it against you.
I have faced this in my life too.
So, don't trust such poisonous people.
If you want to know their true face,

observe their small actions and behavior.
Then you will understand—
whether they are good or bad.
If they are good, you have a true friend.
If they are bad, they are not your friend at all.
Many jealous people never reveal their real face,
so you must always be careful.
Don't trust everyone—
take time to know who they truly are.
In this life, be careful, but don't be afraid.
Be a good person, and you will find good friends.
Enjoy your life.
Be bold.
Face your problems yourself—
don't wait for others to fight them for you.
People will talk and move on,
and often, they talk behind your back.
Don't let that trouble you.
Stay happy.
Be a good person.
This is your life—
you should live it, not anyone else.
So enjoy your life to the fullest.

S.P. Ambuja

Even monkeys fall from trees



but sometimes they fall unknowingly.
It may happen for various reasons.
People are also talented in many ways;
however, they may slip sometimes.
It is common for everyone.
Even an elephant can slip.
This Tamil proverb means that even the
strongest, wisest, or most experienced person
can make mistakes or face setbacks.
Therefore, don't worry about your mistakes.
Mistakes are not what matter; recovery is
important.
Mistakes make a person better.
So, be confident, stay active, and move forward
it will lead you to success.

__G.YasminSirajudheen
Secondary grade teacher
Villupuram Dt

Monkeys are very talented at jumping from
branch to branch,

Sometimes Life



Sometimes I feel life
As an empty box;
Sometimes life overflows
With joy, fun, hope and fortune;
Sometimes I feel
Satisfied as full moon;
Sometimes I long for
What is not in my hands;
Sometimes life takes me
To the summit of ecstasy;

Sometimes life kicks me away;
Sometimes melancholy chokes me
For no reason;
Sometimes I feel bright as a day
When fortune favours me;
Sometimes I feel dull as night
When troubles and failures befriend me;
Sometimes I feel poisoned by
Words and silence
From dear ones;
Sometimes I feel enthralled
By unconditional love;
This unpredictable life
moves on and on
Playing hide and seek.

By
Shyni. S. S,
ENGLISH TEACHER,
GHSS RAMESHWARAM.

Coffee At Thirikwa Cooperative, Chairman David Njomo reported production of about 1.566 million kilograms of cherry, translating to over KSh200 million in earnings.

Kirinyaga coffee Farmers reap record KSh7.4 billion as Waiguru promises continued support

BY MKT REPORTER
@themkenyatimes

Coffee farmers in Kirinyaga County are celebrating a record payout of KSh7.4 billion following strong performance in the 2025/2026 season, marking one of the highest earnings ever recorded in the region. The payments ranged between KSh104 and KSh157.40 per kilogram of cherry, with an average of KSh139, reflecting improved productivity and quality driven by ongoing reforms and county support.

Top-performing cooperatives included Thirikwa Farmers' Cooperative Society, which posted the highest average payout at KSh157.15 per kilogram, followed by Rung'eto at KSh155.62 and Rwama at KSh152.03.

Factories under Baragwi and



Officials and farmers at Thirikwa Coffee Factory inspect drying coffee at Gakuyu-ini Coffee Factory. | Photo: courtesy

Rung'eto societies dominated the top returns, with Nyanja Factory leading at KSh157.40 per kilogram, closely followed by Kiangoi, Kii and Karimikui factories. Guama Factory also recorded strong

returns at KSh151.30. Of the total payout, farmers received KSh6.99 billion directly for their deliveries, while the remainder catered for operational costs. Coffee production rose from

45,717 metric tonnes in the previous season to 49,100 metric tonnes, signaling steady growth in the sector.

Governor Anne Waiguru attributed the success to sustained reforms, strong co-

operative management and targeted county interventions. She noted that Kirinyaga continues to rank among the top coffee-producing regions in Kenya, crediting farmers for improving both the quantity and quality of their produce.

The county government has implemented several measures to support farmers, including subsidized high-quality seedlings and fertilizer, enhanced extension services, continuous training and the installation of modern solar dryers at factory level. Additional initiatives include construction of a warehouse for the union dry mill and improved market access through the Kirinyaga Slopes Coffee Brokerage Company.

Baragwi Coffee Cooperative Society Chairman Francis Muriithi said the payout reflects a steady improvement from last season, with average earnings rising by about KSh5 per kilogram.

He credited the gains to better quality coffee, timely access to farm inputs and improved support systems, while urging the national government to consider waiving farmers' debts to boost net earnings.

Farmers on the ground reported tangible benefits from the reforms.

Francis Gachoki from Kagongo Factory said his earnings increased from KSh128 to KSh135 per kilogram, attributing the growth to improved management and better market access.

At Nyanja Factory, farmer Julius Muriuki highlighted the impact of soil testing, fertilizer distribution and farmer training in enhancing productivity.

At Thirikwa Cooperative, Chairman David Njomo reported production of about 1.566 million kilograms of cherry, translating to over KSh200 million in earnings.

Farmer Emily Wanjiku noted that timely inputs and improved storage facilities have made farming more efficient and profitable.

Despite the gains, the lowest payout stood at KSh104 per kilogram. However, farmers remain optimistic that continued reforms, improved governance and favorable market conditions could push future earnings beyond KSh200 per kilogram, further strengthening livelihoods and cementing Kirinyaga's position as a leading coffee producer.

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Courts EACC has a wide range of cases involving former senior government officials, Members of Parliament, county officers and private entities accused of corruption

EACC court week: Former governors, MPs, senior officials and companies face multiple corruption cases

BY MKT Correspondents

@themkenyaintimes

The anti-corruption courts yesterday began an extensive week of hearings, rulings and mentions in different parts of the country.

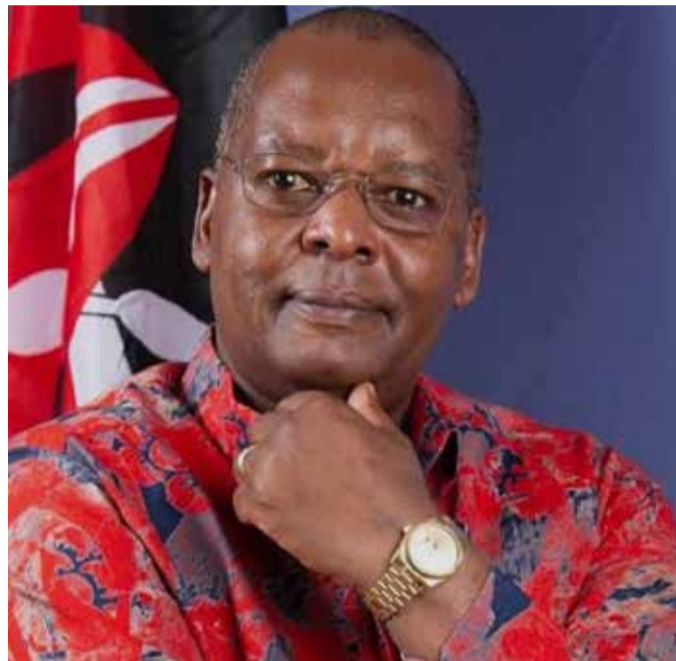
The Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) has a wide range of cases involving former senior government officials, Members of Parliament, county officers and private entities accused of corruption, abuse of office, fraudulent acquisition of public property and financial mismanagement across the country.

At the Milimani Anti-Corruption Court, former Kipipiri Member of Parliament and former Cabinet Minister Amos Kimunya is among those awaiting judgment on Thursday alongside three others. The case involves allegations of abuse of office and fraudulent disposal of public property relating to the illegal excision of 25 acres of land belonging to Njabini Farmers Training Centre without approval from the Ministry of Agriculture.

On the same day, former Nairobi Governor Mike Mbuvi Sonko and 25 others are expected to receive a ruling in a case where they face charges of conflict of interest and alleged embezzlement of KSh24.1 million from Nairobi City County through collusion with private company directors.

Also scheduled for ruling is a case involving former Homa Bay County Assembly Clerk Otieno Bob Kephais and six others, who are accused of conspiracy to commit corruption, abuse of office, money laundering and theft of KSh85.2 million belonging to the County Assembly of Homa Bay.

Former Murang'a Governor



Amos Kimunya



Mike Sonko

Francis Mwangi wa Iria will continue with a multi-day hearing running from yesterday to Thursday alongside Top Image Media Consultants and seven others.

The matter involves a Sh547 million recovery suit tied to alleged conflict of interest in county contracts awarded to companies associated with the former governor.

The Milimani court will also

hear a preservation application seeking to freeze KSh1.3 billion held in multiple bank accounts linked to Stephen Lowoton, trading as Napeyok Suppliers and Contractors, Trabano Investments Limited and Juliah Ekan Kamais, as investigators pursue suspected proceeds of crime.

A major part of the week involves multiple fraud and recovery cases linked to gov-



Mwangi Wa Iria



J. H. Oswago



James Gakuya

ernment payrolls and procurement systems. One of the most significant is a civil suit involving Ben Gethi and 14 others concerning alleged fraudulent National Youth Service vouchers amounting to KSh6.1 billion, with the EACC seeking to block payments and recover losses linked to breach of fiduciary duty and misfeasance in public office.

Other Milimani matters include a recovery suit seeking KSh615 million in unexplained wealth from Joseph Chege Gikonyo and others, as well as a KSh468.4 million recovery case involving

former employees of the National Museums of Kenya accused of disguising salaries for non-existent employees.

The court will also hear a KSh420 million recovery case involving Mary Wanjiku trading as Maymill Enterprises and six others allegedly linked to Nairobi City County funds, as well as a KSh43.1 million irregular payment case involving Kasarani CDF accounts and PMC funds.

Yesterday and today, the Milimani court will be hearing a case involving Sammy Kipngetich Kirui, Mary Ngethe, Alexander Musee and 11 others accused of conspiracy to commit corruption in the irregular purchase of cemetery land by the City Council of Nairobi. Another land-related matter involves former Lands Commissioner Wilson Gachanja and 10 others in a recovery case over public land at State House Crescent, allegedly belonging to Nairobi City County.

At the same time, Embakasi North MP James Mwangi Gakuya and 10 others face charges of conflict of interest and fraudulent acquisition of public property linked to alleged misallocation of KSh40 million CDF funds to road projects already undertaken by the Kenya Rural Roads Authority.

In Kakamega Law Courts, Amos Majisu Shidzugane is expected for hearing over allegations of using a fake academic certificate to secure employment at the IEBC and earn KSh11.6 million in salaries, while similar forgery cases will be heard at Milimani involving Dick Manwa, Keli Gichuri Muiruri, Moseti Mabera and James Gitau Mbugua, all former employees of the Nairobi City Water and Sewerage Company accused of using forged KCSE certificates to secure jobs and earn millions in salaries.

At the Eldoret Anti-Corruption

Court, Allan Manthi Muntunga, a former technician at the Rural Electrification and Renewable Energy Corporation, will also face charges of forgery and fraudulent acquisition of public funds amounting to KSh406,693.

In Garissa, Abdi Ibrahim Daar and three others will attend hearing over alleged irregular payments of KSh109 million by the county government to a private company linked to the first defendant, involving charges of conspiracy, abuse of office and forgery.

In Kitale, Ken Kiptoo and others face a land recovery suit involving illegal allocation of public open space while another Kitale case involves Silvan Onyango Ogođa and Pamela Achola Mudha trading as Source Enterprise Company over alleged KSh43.1 million irregular payments.

In Nyeri, Michael K. Kituto, a former district accountant, faces a recovery suit for alleged embezzlement of KSh53 million from the County Council of Kirinyaga.

Additional mention hearings at Milimani include Humphrey Obanda Oswago, former CEO of the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission, and two others over procurement irregularities in ballot paper purchases, as well as former National Museums boss, Mzalendo Kibunjia and 10 others accused of misappropriating KSh468.4 million at the National Museums of Kenya through fraudulent salary payments.

The court will also handle mention of Joseph Chege Gikonyo's unexplained wealth case, and another involving Silvan Onyango Ogođa and Pamela Achola Mudha in relation to CDF funds.

EACC says the packed court schedule underscores ongoing efforts to recover public resources, enforce accountability, and address systemic corruption across national and county governments, with cases spanning land fraud, procurement irregularities, payroll fraud, fake academic credentials and misuse of development funds.

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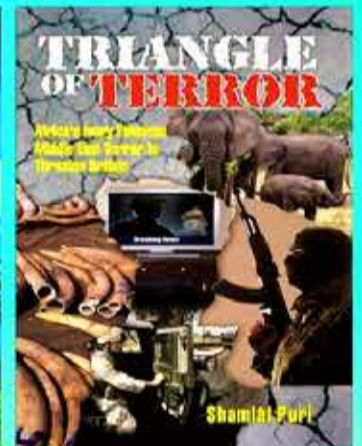
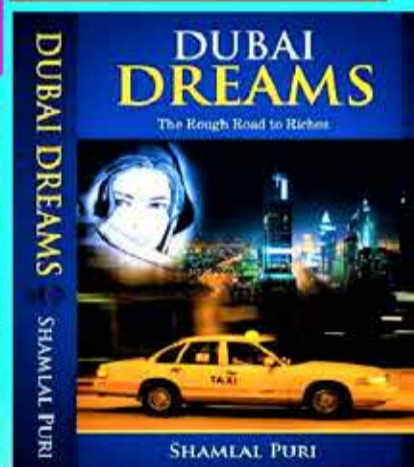
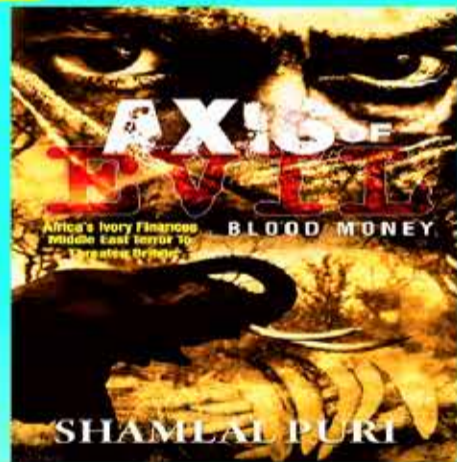
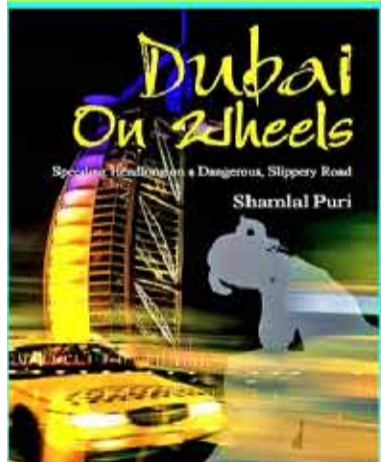
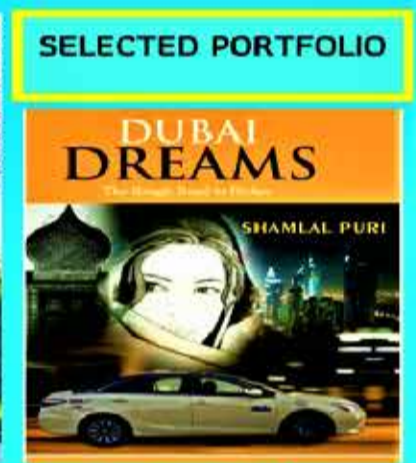
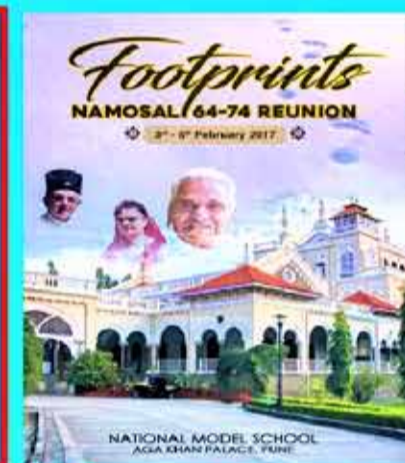
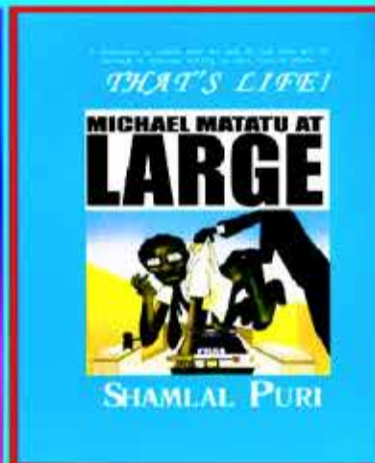
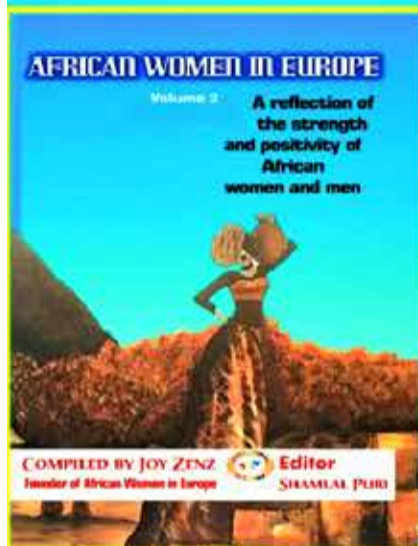
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Voter Kenyan politicians have become remarkably skilled actors, capable of re-entering public life after years of silence with ease of long-lost relative returning home.

Catalysts, comedians, and the new Kenyan voter: A warning for power brokers



BY Fredrick Chelimo
@themtkenyatimes

If chemistry were to be taught in Kenya's political classroom, the chapter on catalysts would require a local case study. A catalyst accelerates a reaction without being consumed by it. It enters the process, alters outcomes, and exits untouched – no fingerprints, no consequences, only results. In Kenya contemporary politics, that role has been perfected by the modern broker; speeding up deals, aligning loyalties, igniting campaigns, and quietly repositioning when the dust settles. This is the season where such forces thrive.

The helicopters hum louder, the convoys lengthen, and hotel corridors have become informal command centers for power. Meetings stretch into the night, decisions are whispered into existence, and access – once the guarded preserve of protocol – now bends to influence. A call is made, a connection invoked, and doors open that would ordinarily require process, patience. And principle. What emerges is not governance in its formal sense, but choreography, carefully arranged, quietly executed and publicly denied.

Within this choreography, the performers have refined their craft. Kenyan politicians have become remarkably skilled actors, capable of re-entering public life after years of silence with ease of long-lost relative returning home. The smiles are warm, the handshake deliberate, and the tone – carefully deliberated to empathy – feels almost therapeutic. They speak softly, reassuringly, invoking shared struggle and collective hope. Yet within this polished delivery lies a contradiction too stark to ignore. These are often the same individuals who presided over, supported, or defended the very policies that deepened the hardships they now seek to soothe. They stand before the public not merely as ob-



Kenyan voter

servers of crisis, but as its architects, offering solutions to problem they helped design.

Promises, in this environment, flow with astonishing ease. Jobs will be created, infrastructure expanded, opportunities distributed, and social protection strengthened. Everything is pledged, often in contexts where lived reality tells a different story. The evidence is neither hidden nor scarce. Citizens have seen patterns – contracts circulating within familiar networks, employment favoring known circles, opportunities clustering around proximity to power. At the same time, the public systems meant to serve all continue to strain under neglect. Schools remain underfunded, healthcare systems remain overstretched, and social safety nets fragile or in most cases absent.

Meanwhile, those making the loudest promises often operate from positions of insulation – educating their children abroad, accessing the best private health care and securing their future beyond the very system they pledge to reform. Around them a secondary cast has emerged – loyalists whose primary role is to amplify, defend, and embellish. Sycophancy has evolved into a polished discipline. Language is no longer used

to clarify but to signal allegiance. New terminologies are coined with impressive speed, each crafted to demonstrate deeper loyalty than the last. Public discourses become theatrical, filled with exaggerated praises, elastic truths, and statements that would seem implausible outside the political arena. Yet within it, they are normalized, applauded and repeated.

The result is a political environment that increasingly resembles a grand stage – a theatre of antics where performance often outweighs substance, and contradiction is seamlessly woven into the script. At the center of this production remain the broker, the catalyst of the system, facilitating access, accelerating outcomes, and maintaining their ability to move between sides without consequence. When their preferred ~~outcomes prevail, they benefit from~~ proximity and reward. When they do not, they simply adapt, recalibrate, and reappear in new configurations. The reaction changes; they remain unchanged.

Beneath this elaborate performance, a quiet and decisive shift is unfolding. The Kenyan citizen is no longer the passive observer of this theatre. Once beaten, twice shy has evolved into a collective strategy. Armed with

digital tools and supported by rapidly advancing analytical technologies, including artificial intelligence, the public has developed a new form of political memory – one that is precise, accessible, and unforgiving.

Promises no longer fade with time; they are archived and retrievable within seconds. Speeches are replayed, comments revisited, and records scrutinized. Parliamentary contributions, sponsored bills, voting patterns, and public engagement are no longer abstract notions. They are documented realities. Leaders no longer need to narrate their achievements – the digital ecosystem has already done so, often more accurately and comprehensively than any campaign speech.

More importantly, this awareness is not confined to abstract data. It is grounded in lived experience. Citizens know who was employed, and who was overlooked and why. They remember how many calls went unanswered, how many requests were ignored, and how often their representatives were absent. These are no vague impressions but detailed recollections – anchored in specific dates, days, and times. This is no longer rumor, it is structured knowledge, reinforced by publicly

available information and collective memory.

The sources of campaigns generosity are no longer beyond scrutiny. The money distributed in moments of political convenience is increasingly traced, questioned, and contextualized. What was once perceived as benevolence is now, in many cases, interpreted as a partial return of public resources that had been diverted or concentrated elsewhere. The electorate engages with this reality pragmatically – accepting what is offered, but doing so with awareness rather than illusion.

In this evolving landscape, political fate is no longer determined solely in the heat of campaigns. It is shaped gradually, through years of documented behavior, visible patterns and accumulated evidence. By the time the rallies begin and the speeches intensify, many decisions have already been quietly made. Reputation has become data driven. Trust has become evidence-based.

As one sharp observer might put it “in today's Kenya, a politicians greatest opponent is no longer the rival across the stage, but the record behind them – patient, permanent, and painfully precise” This shift carries a clear and unavoidable message for political brokers and the networks they sustain. The environment in which they operate has fundamentally changed. The traditional assumptions – that memory fades, that narratives can be reset, that performance can override history – are steadily eroding. The citizen is no longer watching blindly. They are watching with evidence, listening with memory, and deciding with data.

Kenya now stands between two realities. One is familiar; a system driven by informal networks, sustained by performance, and mediated by brokers who accelerate outcomes without bearing their consequences. The other is emerging; a citizenry that is informed, analytical, and increasingly unwilling to separate words from actions. The choice is not political; it is structural. It is a question of whether governance will remain a performance or evolve into a practice grounded in accountability, transparency, and institutional strength. For those operating as catalysts within the system, the warning is clear. The reaction they help accelerate is changing – and this time, they may not leave it unchanged.

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Politics When power is caught, it rarely confesses — it choreographs.

The art of the diversion: They never hide the truth, but they want you distracted



By: Mukama Phillip Kahigiriza
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Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher

When the architecture of authority begins to crack — through scandal, incompetence, or the quiet arrogance of self-serving decision-making — those who occupy it rarely choose confession. They choose choreography. The diversion, in all its theatrical forms, is the oldest sleight of hand in the repertoire of power. Roman emperors staged gladiator games when grain ran short. Kings declared holy wars when treasuries ran dry. The script is ancient. Only the production values have improved.

A diversion is not mere distraction. Distraction is accidental. A diversion is deliberate — the intentional construction of an alternative crisis to eclipse an inconvenient truth. It succeeds by exploiting three constants of human psychology.

The first is the scarcity of attention. The public mind cannot sustain two moral panics simultaneously. Introduce a louder, simpler, more visceral narrative and the complex, damning one quietly recedes. In 1973, as the Watergate scandal — the criminal cover-up orchestrated by US President Richard Nixon's administration that would eventually force his resignation — threatened to consume his presidency, Nixon ordered the dismissal of the independent special prosecutor investigating him in what became known as the Saturday Night Massacre. Yet weeks earlier, the revelation that he had secretly authorised the bombing of neutral Cambodia had bought him precious time, shifting public fury toward the question of war rather than the question of his character.

The second is the appetite for tribalism. A diversion re-unifies a fractured public by manufacturing an enemy. The faltering leader points outward and says, "Look there" — and suddenly domestic failure is reframed as wartime necessity. In 1982, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher — whose Conservative government was deeply unpopular at home amid recession, mass unemployment, and widespread civil unrest — saw her political fortunes dramatically reversed when Argentina invaded the Falkland Islands, a small British overseas territory in the South Atlantic. Thatcher's swift and decisive military response united the country behind her, won her the 1983 general election by a landslide, and buried the domestic grievances that had threatened her government. A decade and an ocean away, the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States handed President George W. Bush — then barely eight months into his presidency and struggling for a defining purpose — a moment of national unity that transformed his approval ratings overnight and provided the political capital for two wars that would define the following decade. The third is the bias toward the immediate. Humans weigh present outrage over past betrayal. A new scandal, even a manufactured one, feels more urgent than an old one already under-

stood. By the time the smoke clears, the original wound has scarred over in public memory.

Diversions come in recognizable forms. The moral panic: a leader caught in corruption leaks an emotive cultural story — migrants, teenagers, moral decline. The issue need not be real; it need only provoke. The public argues about virtue while audits go unread. The external enemy: when the misstep is material — economic collapse, military blunder — a border dispute conveniently flares, a terror plot is foiled, an embassy threatened. Nothing converts critics into patriots faster than shared peril. In 2018, as Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro faced mounting criticism over deforestation policy and human rights concerns, nationalist rhetoric and the framing of political opponents as existential threats to the nation became a reliable tool for displacing scrutiny. The spectacle: when legitimacy is bankrupt, power reaches for pageantry — royal weddings, celebrity arrests, sporting triumphs. The media, hungry for content, becomes an unwitting accomplice while a budget that guts healthcare passes quietly. The institutional fire drill, perhaps the most elegant form of all: a committee is formed, a resignation tendered, an inquiry announced. The machinery of accountability is performed without being enacted. Brit-

ain's repeated public inquiries into press phone-hacking, police corruption, and political misconduct — each announced with great solemnity, each concluding years after the news cycle had moved on — offer a textbook illustration. By the time the report lands eighteen months later, the public has forgotten the question.

Cynicism, notably, is not immunity. You can know the magician's trick and still watch the wrong hand. Diversions work because they offer what scandal does not — resolution. A corruption case is murky, legal, and slow. A terrorist arrest is clean, binary, and immediate. The mind prefers a story with a villain and an ending.

A society governed by diversion suffers two slow deaths. First, the death of proportion — when every week delivers

a new existential crisis, citizens lose the ability to rank genuine threats. This is how democracies do not sleepwalk into authoritarianism through one great lie, but through a thousand trivial emergencies — a pattern visible from Hungary under Viktor Orbán, who methodically dismantled press freedom and judicial independence while culture wars consumed public attention, to the United States under successive administrations where the volume of daily outrage made sustained accountability nearly impossible. Second, the death of trust. Diversion is a loan taken against credibility. It may buy a month or an election cycle, but the interest compounds. Eventually the public learns what abused children learn: that the shouting from the next room is to cover the bruises. Once that lesson sets, no subsequent

truth is believed — even when it should be.

The inoculation is deliberate and unglamorous. Watch the timing. Ask what story appeared forty-eight hours after the damaging headline, and who benefits from your outrage shifting. Refuse to abandon the original story — the strength of a diversion depends entirely on your forgetting. And distinguish urgency from importance. A bomb threat is urgent. A procurement bill that quietly sells your water rights to a foreign corporation is important. Divisions weaponise urgency to kill importance. Maturity is the capacity to say: I see the fire, but I will finish reading the will.

The next time a scandal breaks and, with suspicious symmetry, a new enemy or fresh spectacle erupts alongside it — pause. Ask the quiet question: what am I not supposed to be looking at right now?

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Food “I feel betrayed,” Katie Peyrey, a 66-year-old struggling grandmother and caregiver from Burbank, California, told Xinhua.

Rising food, gas, utility costs squeeze Americans amid tariff, war concerns

BY Xinhua News Agency

@themkenyatimes

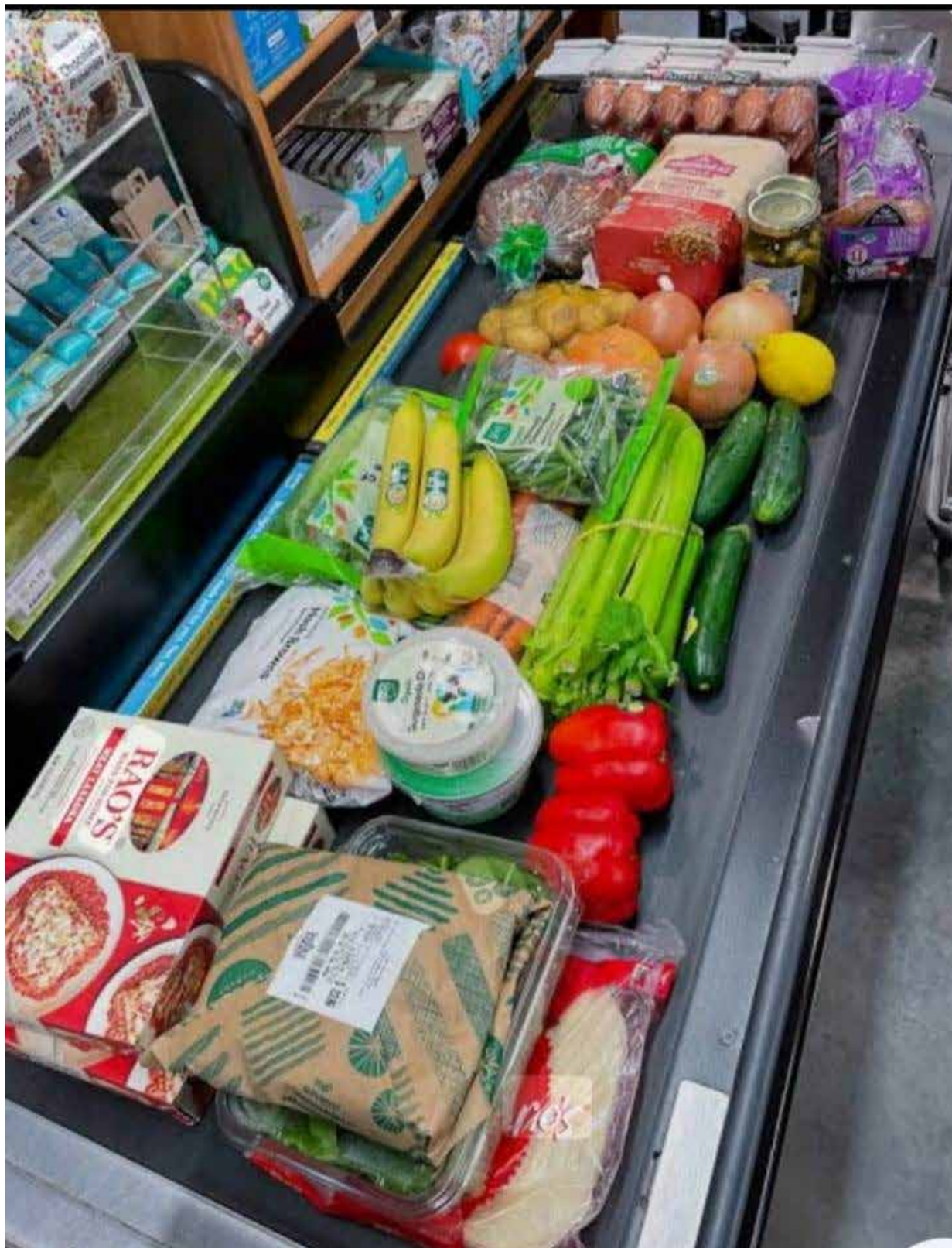
Americans are feeling the strain as the cost of groceries, gasoline, and utilities continues to rise. Economists say a one-two punch of new U.S. tariffs and a war-driven spike in global energy prices are pushing up everyday expenses and threatening to slow growth just as households had begun to regain some breathing room.

“I feel betrayed,” Katie Peyrey, a 66-year-old struggling grandmother and caregiver from Burbank, California, told Xinhua.

She is a minimum wage janitorial worker at a rehab facility who supports herself and her autistic grandson on minimum wage. “I voted for (Donald) Trump because he promised to make things better for us,” she said. She said her household expenses, including rent, utilities, groceries, gas, clothing, taxes and healthcare for her grandson had totaled around 2,300 U.S. dollars per month before Trump came into office, which she was barely able to cover with her meager income of 2,400 dollars per month. “But now,” despite careful budgeting, she feels increasing financial pressure. “My expenses have shot up to over 2,500 dollars a month and I can’t make ends meet anymore,” she told Xinhua. She explained that she had borrowed as much as she could from family and friends, who were going through similar hard times. She feels her future looks bleak.

“

Peyrey is not alone in her concerns about the future. Christian Devito, a 34-year-old health and safety worker at a large-chain grocery store in Los Angeles, told Xinhua his monthly bills have jumped by at least 15 percent in the last three months. “LA is all spread out, so commuting to work jumped from 50 dollars a week to over 70 dollars.



Groceries in a shop

Peyrey is not alone in her concerns about the future. Christian Devito, a 34-year-old health and safety worker at a large-chain grocery store in Los Angeles, told Xinhua his monthly bills have jumped by at least 15 percent in the last three months. “LA is all spread out, so commuting to work jumped from 50 dollars a week

to over 70 dollars. And my food and utility bills shot up, too. That’s killing me,” he complained. “First, I just cut down on going to movies and getting haircuts, but now I have to cut back on food.” He enjoys his job in health and safety, but is concerned about the future if prices keep spiraling as the war in the Middle East

drags on and tariffs drive inflation up. The latest U.S. government data support his worries, showing overall consumer prices are still rising, with energy costs doing much of the damage. In March, energy prices jumped 10.9 percent month over month, led by a 21.2 percent surge in gasoline, according to the U.S. Bureau of La-

bor Statistics.

That matters for consumer spending, which powers about two-thirds of the U.S. economy, and for the Federal Reserve (Fed), which has signaled it will keep interest rates higher for longer if price pressures broaden. For many families, the mix is especially painful: gasoline spikes hit commuters immediately, higher utility bills arrive with a lag, and food inflation -- even when modest overall -- tends to concentrate in staples. Higher borrowing costs, from credit cards to auto loans, add another layer of strain as the Fed keeps rates elevated to keep inflation in check. “I used to feel like 200 dollars at Costco could fill up your entire shopping cart, but now it doesn’t even cover the bottom. Everything is getting more expensive,” Allen Wang told Xinhua at a Costco store in Azusa, California, adding: “Even a box of cat litter has gone up by 2 dollars to 3 dollars over the last 12 months.”

Tariffs are a key part of the renewed inflation debate. A Fed analysis published in April estimated that tariffs implemented through November 2025 lifted core goods prices in the personal consumption expenditures index -- the Fed’s preferred inflation gauge -- by 3.1 percent through February 2026, while researchers also found a “dollar-for-dollar” pass-through: When tariffs raised retailers’ costs, consumer prices rose by roughly the same amount over time. Economists at the Peterson Institute for International Economics have warned that broad tariffs can function like a tax increase on households. In a February 2025 analysis, they estimated that tariffs announced on imports from Canada, Mexico and China would cost the typical U.S. household more than 1,200 dollars a year, even before accounting for potential knock-on effects such as higher prices from domestic producers competing with imports.

At the same time, energy cost spikes from the ongoing war with Iran can ripple through the economy well beyond the pump, raising shipping and production expenses for everything from groceries to manufactured goods. For now, economists say the trajectory will hinge on how long energy markets stay disrupted and whether tariffs expand further or begin to ease. The next CPI report, due May 12, will offer an early read on whether April brought broader price increases beyond energy -- and whether Americans should brace for a longer stretch of sticker shock heading into the next year. “I hope there is good news soon,” Peyrey told Xinhua. “We can’t survive another year like this one.”

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Calvin Gaucho's appointment: merit or reward in disguise?

The appointment of Calvin Gaucho to the board of Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital has done more than ignite online debate. It has exposed a fault line running through Kenya's public life: what genuinely qualifies someone for public service, and where does education fit in that calculus?

Hospital boards are not ceremonial posts. They carry real responsibility — oversight, policy direction, and ensuring institutions serve citizens effectively. These roles demand technical grounding, sound judgement, and informed decision-making. In that context, education is not merely a certificate. It is a foundation for competence.

Gaucho's appointment has been widely read as part of a broader pattern in which visibility, political loyalty, and social media influence can outweigh formal qualifications. Supporters counter that leadership is not confined to degree



holders — that lived experience, communication ability, and grassroots connection carry genuine value. They are not entirely wrong.

But the argument cuts both ways. For millions of young Kenyans, education has been sold as the primary path to opportunity. When high-profile appointments appear to sidestep those qualifications, the message lands badly: that years of study may matter less than knowing the right people.

If the system consistently rewards alignment over expertise, it risks eroding the very institutions it purports to serve — and quietly discouraging the next generation from pursuing rigorous professional paths.

The controversy is not really about Gaucho. It is about the standards Kenya chooses to uphold — and who pays the price when those standards bend.

By Oliver Ouma — student journalist, Rongo University

Shadows of the gown: Kenya's abortion ruling and the women it leaves behind

On the morning of 24 April 2026, three judges in flowing red robes took their seats at the Court of Appeal in Malindi and delivered a verdict that will reshape the lives of women across Kenya for years to come.

Outside the courtroom, young women sat on wooden benches, hands folded tightly, waiting. Many were university students. Some were pregnant. Some had already made impossible choices. The 2022 High Court ruling had given them something rare in Kenya's legal landscape — hope. It had declared safe abortion a fundamental right protected by the Constitution. For a brief moment, the law had seemed to see them.

On Tuesday, that moment ended.

In a calm, measured voice, presiding judge Justice Gatembu Kairu read the decision:

"The Constitution protects the life of the unborn child. Abortion is not a fundamental right." The 2022 landmark ruling was overturned. The restrictions of the 1963 Penal Code were reinstated. Abortion remains largely criminal, permitted only when a trained health professional certifies an emergency threat to the mother's life or health. Anything else carries a sentence of up to 14 years in prison.

Outside, protesters held placards reading "My Body, My Choice." A representative from the Centre for Reproductive Rights faced the cameras, her voice steady but heavy. "This is a deeply disappointing decision," she said. "We will appeal to the Supreme Court. But today, many women will suffer in silence."

She is right. In clinics and villages across the country,



healthcare workers will hesitate longer. Young girls will carry heavier secrets. Women in crisis will weigh their lives against the law — and wonder which the courts value more.

The shadow of the gown has grown longer. For now, the light is fading.

By Vivian Asenath — student journalist, Rongo University

Numbers vs. influence: The architecture of Bien's reign over Kenyan pop

In the chaotic, ever-shifting landscape of Kenyan music, the throne is rarely held for long. Yet as the mid-2020s take shape, one name keeps surfacing — on the airwaves, the streaming charts, and deep in the cultural conversation: Bien-Aimé Baraza. The question is no longer whether he is successful. The question is whether success, in this industry, is the same thing as sovereignty.

For years, Bien was the towering frontman of Sauti Sol, a group that arguably defined a generation of East African sound. The band's chemistry was its superpower — four voices, one vision, an audience that grew up alongside them. When they announced an indefinite hiatus, the sceptics were loud. Could any single member carry the full weight of that legacy? Bien did not answer the question with words. He answered it with a structural takeover.

The data is unequivocal. Recent Spotify Wrapped figures place him firmly at the summit of Kenyan music consumption — a remarkable position in an era when international artists routinely crowd out local talent on domestic playlists. His debut solo album, *Alusa Why Are You Topless?*, landed with confidence at home while simultaneously cracking open doors abroad. Sold-out tour dates across Europe, from Paris to London, confirmed a deliberate pivot towards the diaspora — a market that rewards authenticity and storytelling in equal measure. Singles such as *Extra Pressure* and *All My Enemies Are Suffering* completed his transformation from beloved ensemble player to standalone Afropop force, capable of filling rooms on his name alone.

But streaming figures and sold-out venues, impressive as they are, do not make a king. True cultural authority demands something more durable: an identity that outlasts the algorithm. And this, perhaps, is where Bien's most underappreciated work has been done.



He did not merely release music after Sauti Sol stepped back. He engineered a narrative. The "Bald Men Love Better" movement was a masterstroke of self-branding — taking a physical characteristic and transforming it into a community, a philosophy, and a commercial proposition all at once. It was quirky enough to go viral, warm enough to feel genuine, and clever enough to attract brand partnerships without cheapening the artistic persona behind it. By weaving vulnerability and humour into a relentlessly engaged social media presence, Bien constructed a public image that feels simultaneously larger than life and entirely approachable. He corporatised himself without losing his soul — a balance that eludes most artists who try it.

Yet the broader industry refuses to stand still, and any honest assessment of Bien's reign must reckon with its limits. Kenya's musical ecosystem is deeply fragmented, and fragmentation does not favour monopoly. Vernacular artists — working in Kikuyu, Luo, Kalenjin and beyond — command grassroots loyalty and live attendance figures that urban pop rarely matches. Their audiences are not necessarily on Spotify. They are at the village fête, the church fundraiser, the rural concert where ten thousand people gather without a single tweet being sent. That is a different kind of power, and it is real.

Lyrical purists, meanwhile,

continue to place Nyashinski in a category of his own. His poetic precision and cross-generational resonance represent a standard of craft that chart positions cannot fully capture. And hovering at the edges of the mainstream, a restless generation of independent artists is quietly democratising the airwaves, releasing music on their own terms and building audiences that owe nothing to the traditional industry infrastructure. The mainstream monopoly, in other words, is under permanent siege.

So where does that leave Bien? If kingship is measured by the intersection of vocal talent, brand intelligence, commercial savvy and cultural consistency, the verdict is clear. He has expanded the Sol Generation empire, anchored the region's pop conversation, and done so without surrendering the artistic credibility that made people care in the first place. He has commercialised his art without hollowing it out — which, in the modern music industry, is no small achievement.

He may share the broader cultural landscape with vernacular titans and indie disruptors who play by entirely different rules. But in the fiercely competitive arena of mainstream Kenyan pop, Bien has not merely claimed the throne.

He built the castle — and he holds the keys.

By David Nyaga — music and culture correspondent

SPORTS NEWS

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Sports >> *Mohit Mediratta, playing under the Safaricom sponsorship banner, began the defence of his ambitions in style yesterday

Mohit claims victory in opening leg of the PGK Equator Golf Tour

By: Martin Weche

Mohit Mediratta, playing under the Safaricom sponsorship banner, began the defence of his ambitions in style yesterday, storming to victory in the opening leg of the second edition of the PGK Equator Tour at Vetlab Sports Club in Nairobi — a performance capped by a stunning hole-in-one that had the gallery buzzing long after the final putt dropped.

Mediratta carded a four-under-par total of 284 to claim top honours on a tightly contested leaderboard that separated champions from contenders by the narrowest of margins. On a course that demanded precision, patience and nerve in equal measure, the Safaricom-backed golfer delivered all three, holding his composure through what organisers described as one of the most competitive fields the tour has assembled.

Finishing in joint second place were his fellow Safaricom teammates Mutahi Kibugu and Samuel Chege, both posting totals of 287. They were tied with Jastas Madoya, who also finished on 287, making for a three-way battle for the runners-up position that underlined the remarkable depth of talent on display across the four-day event.

For Mediratta, the hole-in-one was the undoubted highlight — a moment of pure golf that electrified proceedings and, by his own admission, caught even him off guard. “I am excited to have won the first leg. The hole-in-one came as a complete surprise — it’s a rare moment for any golfer, and I am truly happy about it,” he said. “The course was quite challenging and the competition was tight, but I managed to stay focused.”

Looking ahead to the remainder of the season, the champion sounded a note of quiet confidence. “The break has given me



Mohit Mediratta reacts and poses with his honors after winning the opener leg of the PGK Equator Tour at the Par 72 Vetlab Sports Club .

valuable time to practise and prepare, and I am hopeful for a strong rest of the season as I aim to finish top together with my team. This win gives me great confidence, and I am really looking forward to the next legs. I hope to maintain this form throughout the season.”

Rounding out the top ten were Greg Snow and C.J. Wangai, who finished on 289 points, followed by Robinson Owiti and debutant John Lejirma on 290. Dismas Indiza came in at 291, while the trio of Njoroge Kibugu, Daniel Nduva and David Wakhu all finished on 292 to share the final spots in the leading group.

The tournament attracted 52 of Kenya’s finest professionals, including six debutants making their tour bow and three women who have transitioned from the amateur ranks — a development that reflects the broadening appeal and ambition of competitive golf in Kenya.

This year’s edition of the Equator Tour will traverse 11 courses across the country, taking the game to every corner of the Kenyan golfing map. With the first leg now concluded, attention turns swiftly to Thika Sports Club, which hosts the second leg and is expected to produce another fiercely competitive field.

The tour’s broader mission is

as compelling as the golf itself. Organisers have been clear that the competition is designed not merely as a domestic exercise, but as a structured pathway to international competition — with the Magical Kenya Open and the 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles firmly in mind as benchmarks for the players cutting their teeth on the Equator circuit.

For Mediratta, however, the horizon can wait. For now, a hole-in-one and a first-leg title are quite enough to be getting on with.

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *Liverpool manager Arne Slot admitted on Sunday that the club faces an agonising “wait and see” over whether Mohamed Salah has played his final match in a red shirt

‘A Game Of Wait And See’ — Has Salah played his last game for Liverpool?

By: **Martin Weche**

Liverpool manager Arne Slot admitted on Sunday that the club faces an agonising “wait and see” over whether Mohamed Salah has played his final match in a red shirt, after the Egyptian forward limped off during the Premier League champions’ 5-1 victory over Crystal Palace at Anfield.

Salah, 33, was withdrawn in the 59th minute after pulling up sharply and clutching his left hamstring, casting a shadow over what had otherwise been a celebratory afternoon on Merseyside. He walked from the pitch unaided but slowly, pausing to turn and applaud all four sides of the ground in a moment that carried the unmistakable weight of farewell.

The forward confirmed last month that he will depart Liverpool when his contract expires at the end of the season. That announcement leaves him, in theory, with time to recover before the club’s final home fixture of the campaign — a send-off against Brentford at Anfield on 24 May. But with several matches remaining between now and then, the concern is immediate.

“It’s too early to say, but we all know Mo and how hard it is for him to leave the pitch,” Slot told the BBC’s Match of the Day. “For Mo to leave the pitch, it shows you something — but we have to wait and see how bad it is.”

Speaking separately to Sky Sports, the Dutchman was candid about what was almost certainly passing through Salah’s mind as he was helped from the field. “My honest answer is yes, the way he came off,” Slot said. “It went through his mind because there are only a few weeks to go. But we are hoping he plays for us again. You have tests to do, and then we have to wait for the prognosis.”



Mo Salah acknowledges fans after the game against Brighton. PHOTO/LIVERPOOL FC

The immediate concern is Sunday’s fixture — Liverpool travel to Old Trafford today to face rivals Manchester United, a ground where Salah has carved out something close to mythology. In 18 appearances against the Red Devils in Liverpool colours, he has scored 16 goals, a record that underscores just how much his absence would be felt in the fixture that matters most to both sets of supporters.

After the Manchester United encounter, Liverpool return to domestic duty with a home match against Chelsea on 9 May, before making the trip to Aston Villa on

17 May, with the Brentford finale rounding out a title-winning season that will be remembered for generations.

Salah’s place in Liverpool’s history is already secure, regardless of how his final chapter plays out. Since joining from AS Roma in the summer of 2017 for a then-club record fee, he has assembled a trophy collection of remarkable depth: two Premier League titles, the UEFA Champions League, the FIFA Club World Cup, the UEFA Super Cup, the FA Cup and two EFL Cups, along with the Community Shield.

His 257 goals in 435 appearanc-

es place him third on Liverpool’s all-time scoring charts, behind the untouchable Ian Rush (346) and Roger Hunt (285) — figures that, given the modern game’s demands, speak to a longevity and consistency that few forwards anywhere in the world have matched.

Whether Sunday’s applause at Anfield was a temporary goodbye or a permanent one, few inside the ground were taking any chances. They cheered as though it might be the last time. They may yet be right.

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A voice for dignity and change



By: Anila Bukhari
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Worth Noting:

- From early on, Faith demonstrated a natural inclination toward storytelling. However, for her, storytelling has never been merely about narration or creativity—it has always been about impact. She understands that stories have the power to shape perspectives, influence decisions, and bring hidden realities into the light. This belief has guided her path and fueled her passion for amplifying voices that often go unheard, particularly those from marginalized and stigmatized communities.
- Faith's work has gained international recognition through her involvement with World Pulse, where she is celebrated as both a featured changemaker and an award-winning storyteller. This recognition reflects not only her talent but also her authenticity and dedication to meaningful storytelling.

Faith Mwende Muli is an emerging force in the world of journalism and social impact, a young woman whose journey reflects resilience, purpose, and an unwavering commitment to using words as instruments of change. As a final-year student at Chuka University pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Journalism and Mass Communication, Faith has steadily shaped her identity as both a communicator and a changemaker. Her academic journey has not only equipped her with technical skills in media and storytelling but has also deepened her understanding of the responsibility that comes with holding a platform and a voice.

From early on, Faith demonstrated a natural inclination toward storytelling. However, for her, storytelling has never been merely about narration or creativity—it has always been about impact. She understands that stories have the power to shape perspectives, influence decisions, and bring hidden realities into the light. This belief has guided her path and fueled her passion for amplifying voices that often go unheard, particularly those from marginalized and stigmatized communities.

Faith's work has gained international recognition through her involvement with World Pulse, where she is celebrated as both a featured changemaker and an award-winning storyteller. This recognition reflects not only her talent but also her authenticity and dedication to meaningful storytelling. Through her contributions, she has been able to connect with a global audience, sharing narratives that highlight social issues while inspiring dialogue and action. Her storytelling is characterized by empathy, clarity, and a strong sense of purpose, making her voice both relatable and impactful.

Beyond her academic and writing achievements, Faith is deeply committed to community service. She actively volunteers with organizations such as Hold My Hands Organization and Tumakinike Trust NGO. These experiences have played a significant role in shaping her worldview and strengthening her

resolve to use communication as a tool for advocacy. Working closely with communities has allowed her to witness firsthand the challenges people face, particularly in areas related to social inequality, stigma, and access to information. These interactions have not only informed her storytelling but have also given her work a grounded, human-centered perspective.

One of Faith's most notable initiatives is her leadership of the "Wings of Dignity: Community Reproductive Health Awareness and Dignity Project." This project is a collaborative effort aimed at addressing reproductive health stigma among women in Kabandi, Tharaka Nithi. Through this initiative, Faith combines her skills in journalism, advocacy, and community engagement to create safe spaces for conversation and education. The project focuses on empowering women with knowledge, restoring their sense of dignity, and challenging harmful societal narratives surrounding reproductive health.

For Faith, this work is deeply personal. She recognizes that stigma often silences individuals and prevents them from seeking help or sharing their experiences. By addressing these issues through storytelling and community dialogue, she aims to break barriers and foster understanding. Her approach is not just about raising awareness but also about creating lasting change by encouraging open conversations and promoting inclusivity.

What sets Faith apart is her ability to merge passion with purpose. She does not view storytelling as a passive activity but as an active responsibility. Every story she tells is intentional, aiming to inform, connect, and inspire. She believes that words have the power to heal, empower, and transform, and she uses this power with care and dedication. Her work consistently reflects her commitment to humanity, justice, and the belief that every individual's story deserves to be heard.

Faith's vision extends beyond her current achievements. As she pre-



Faith Mwende Muli

pires to graduate, she aspires to expand her impact in the fields of media and social advocacy. She envisions a future where storytelling continues to serve as a bridge between communities, fostering empathy and understanding across different cultures and experiences. She is determined to use her platform to advocate for issues that matter, particularly those affecting women and marginalized groups.

Her journey is a testament to the idea that meaningful change often begins with a single voice. Through her courage, creativity, and commitment, Faith Mwende Muli is not only telling stories—she is shaping narratives that challenge the status quo and inspire a more inclusive

and compassionate world. Her work serves as a reminder that storytelling, when rooted in purpose and authenticity, can become a powerful force for transformation.

In every aspect of her life, Faith embodies the belief that words matter. Whether through her academic pursuits, her volunteer work, or her leadership in community initiatives, she continues to demonstrate that storytelling is more than a skill—it is a calling. And through this calling, she is creating spaces where voices are heard, dignity is restored, and change becomes possible.