

# The Mt. Kenya Times

WEEKEND ePAPER

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## Kenya forces in Haiti linked to four rape cases — UN



**P.9** Kenyan police officers leave Kenya Airways, the East African country's commercial airliner, after landing at Toussaint Louverture International Airport in Port-au-Prince on January 18, 2025. Photo / Courtesy



**Politics:** Section of Mt. Kenya leaders rally behind Waiguru for Deputy President bid **P.11**



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**News:** DCI claims Tuju abduction was stage managed **P.13**

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# Agriculture CS launches new tea regulations

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

*Some of the moments as captured in pictures*

Cabinet Secretary for Agriculture and Livestock Development Mutahi Kagwe led tea industry stakeholders during the official release the 2025 Kenya Tea Industry Performance Report.

The CS and other parties were hosted at Rukuriri tea factory in Embu country which is represented at KTDA board by Enos Njeru.

Njeru who took the chairmanship of KTDA holdings last month hosted the stakeholders on Thursday during the colourful event that revealed how the sector made a record market value of KSh218.79 billion last year. Stakeholders attributed to market expansion and strategic reforms under the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), with Kenya's tea now reaching 100 international markets, including emerging hubs like Oman, Japan, and Ireland.

Kagwe also announced the enactment of regulations that will introduce full traceability in the value chain, targeting leaf hawking, middleman exploitation, and weight falsification, while implementing a strategic export levy to fund global branding and research.

The government aims to raise smallholder earnings to KSh100 per kilogram by next year, supported by a new e-commerce B2B marketplace and enhanced trade diplomacy through the AfCFTA, linking producers directly to global buyers.

The report signals a structural reset for the sector, promising better returns and a sustainable future for the 6.5 million Kenyans whose livelihoods depend on tea.



## The Mt. Kenya Times



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

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## NEWS IN BRIEF



Nyeri senatorial aspirant Nick Mararo has reaffirmed his commitment to strengthening agricultural productivity following a farmers' engagement forum held at Jubilee Farm in Narumoru. The event brought together exhibitors from the agro and veterinary sectors, as well as government institutions and non-governmental organisations supporting agribusiness. Jubilee Farm, licensed by the , plays a key role in propagating certified seeds and enhancing farmer productivity. Farmers from Gakawa, Narumoru, Kiamathaga, Thegu and Kabaru attended the forum and engaged directly with stakeholders. Mararo said he will prioritise strategic partnerships, policy reforms and improved access to inputs, markets and knowledge. He has recently been holding similar engagements across Nyeri to outline his vision.



Nyeri Water and Sanitation company CEO, Eng. Peter Kahuthu recently hosted the Directors of Ispal Ventures Limited and MOCA Contractors Company Ltd for the formal contract signing with NYE-WASCO for the proposed sewer extension project in Kiamwathi- Ngangarithi- Ruring'u- Skuta- Misha and Thunguma Estates. The engagement covered LOT I, awarded to Ispal Ventures, and LOT II, which includes the construction of a Sewer Pumping Station and last-mile connectivity of the sewer extension project awarded to MOCA Contractors. This milestone marks a significant step toward improving sanitation infrastructure and enhancing public health within these communities. We look forward to a strong and productive partnership with both contractors as we work together to deliver impactful and sustainable solutions that will benefit residents now and in the future.



Principal Secretary for Labor and Skills Development Shadrack Mwadime has urged youth in the country to take advantage of emerging overseas job opportunities, revealing that thousands of positions remain untapped due to low participation and lack of awareness. Speaking at Taita Taveta National Polytechnic in Voi, Taita Taveta County, Mwadime said the government is intensifying efforts to connect Kenyan youth with international employers, particularly in the cruise ship industry, while lowering barriers that have

historically locked many out. He noted that although international recruitment firms such as the Mediterranean Sea Company have been operating in Kenya since 1989 and offering jobs to young people across the country, only a small number of applicants from Taita Taveta have benefited.



Immigration and Citizen Services Principal Secretary Belio Kipsang has intensified a nationwide push to boost national identification registration, rallying chiefs in Nandi County to take charge of grassroots mobilization and ensure no eligible Kenyan is left undocumented. Speaking at Kapsabet Boys High School during a sensitization forum for National Government Administrative Officers (NGAOs), Kipsang underscored the importance of national IDs in accessing essential services such as healthcare, education, employment and financial systems. The visit is part of the ongoing "Usajili Mashinani" (Registration at the Grassroots) initiative, a countrywide campaign being spearheaded by the PS since his appointment to the Immigration and Citizen Services docket in March 2025. Working closely with chiefs, assistant chiefs and NGAOs, Kipsang is leading a robust sensitization programme aimed at accelerating ID registration, improving service delivery and strengthening the national documentation system.



Kajiado County has launched a major crackdown on illegal developments, demolishing structures and businesses erected along road reserves in a bid to enhance public safety and restore order in its municipalities, towns and market centres. County enforcement officers, working alongside security agencies, moved in to clear the encroachments in Isinya town, noting that the affected structures had been put up without approval and posed a risk to road users. Executive Committee Member for Lands, Physical Planning, Housing, Urban Development and Municipalities, Hamilton Parseina, said the exercise targets illegal buildings that obstruct road expansion, drainage systems and public access.



Directorate of Criminal Investigation on Friday arrested Kenya Pipeline MD Joe Sang, Energy PS Liban Mohamed, and EPRA CEO Daniel Kiptoo over claims of importing substandard fuel. They held at Gigiri Police Station for questioning.

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**Government** Wagunda revealed that, as of June 30 last year, Govt's total asset portfolio stood at KSh4.9 trillion

# Government unveils KSh4.9 trillion asset portfolio

BY KNA

@themtkenyatimes

The Principal Secretary, State Department for Public Investments and Assets Management, Cyrell Odede Wagunda, has unveiled an ambitious reform agenda aimed at streamlining state corporations and standardizing asset management across government.

Appearing before the National Assembly's Public Debt and Privatization Committee chaired by Shurie Abdi Omar, the PS detailed sweeping measures designed to enhance transparency, eliminate inefficiencies, and improve returns on public assets.

Wagunda revealed that, as of June 30 last year, the National Government's total asset portfolio stood at KSh4.9 trillion, with state corporations accounting for the bulk of the holdings.

He said the valuation stems from ongoing efforts to compile and harmonize asset registers across ministries, departments, and agencies.

"This process is about bringing order and structure to how government assets are identified, valued, and managed," Wagunda told the committee.

A key pillar of the reforms is the rollout of the Electronic Government Procurement (EGP) system, which seeks to address widespread inconsistencies in public procurement pricing.

The platform is expected to standardize costs for commonly purchased goods and curb wasteful expenditure.



PS Cyrell Odede Wagunda when he appeared before the parliamentary committee. | Photo: Courtesy.

"This system is the way to go. We have seen situations where this water, when it is bought here, could be KSh100. When it goes to another state department, it is KSh500... This system is bringing standardization so that we can cut wastage in government," the PS explained.

The committee was also briefed on the first phase of state corporation reforms, which will see 23 entities merged into nine new government-owned enterprises, alongside the dissolution of 16 others, including six regional development authorities.

The restructuring is aimed at reducing duplication, lowering administrative costs, and enhancing operational efficiency.

Committee Chair Balam-

bala MP Shurie Abdi Omar welcomed the reforms but emphasized the need for rigorous oversight, particularly on large-scale infrastructure projects undertaken through Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs).

"I personally wish to visit the sites so that it will be good for us to see so that when I am told this PPP project is done, then I can confidently stand on the floor of the House and say yes," he said.

Lawmakers, however, raised concerns about whether PPP projects are delivering value for money. Nyaribari Masaba MP Daniel Manduku questioned the cost-effectiveness of some agreements.

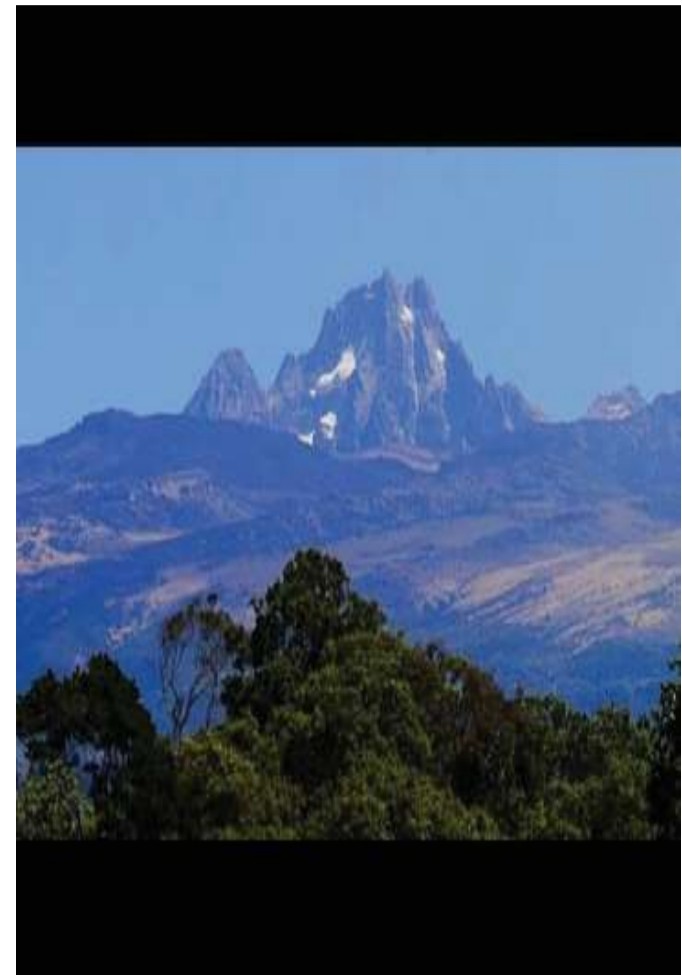
"The first concern is yes, you gave projects and the figures. From where you sit and based on market trends, do you think we are attaining value

for money in some of these projects?" he posed.

In response, Wagunda, alongside officials from the PPP Directorate, defended the framework, noting that all projects undergo rigorous feasibility studies, including lifecycle-based value-for-money assessments that compare PPPs with traditional procurement models.

The committee heard that at least ten PPP projects are currently under implementation, including the Nairobi Expressway and the Kenya Defense Forces housing project, where 500 residential units have already been completed—offering early signs of progress in the government's infrastructure partnership model.

## Message from Mt Kenya Seers



BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

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have dressed and clothed this traditional Garment in our minds and

HEART.

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3. HONESTY
4. GOD'S WISDOM
5. GOD'S FORGIVENESS

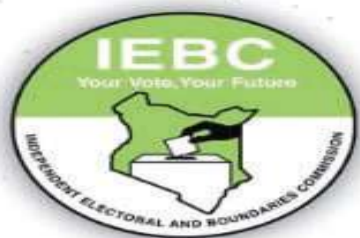
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## NAIROBI

# Dr. Ann Karimi appointed acting CEO as Nehemiah Ngetich exits Biosafety Authority



Dr Ann Karimi

## BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

The Biosafety Authority Board has appointed Dr. Ann Karimi as the acting Chief Executive Officer following the expiry of the term of Mr. Nehemiah Ngetich, who has been serving in the position in an acting capacity since July 5, 2024.

In a statement, the Board thanked Mr. Ngetich for his service and congratulated Dr. Karimi on her appointment, expressing confidence in her leadership as she takes over the role.

“The Board thanks Mr. Ngetich for his service and congratulates Dr. Karimi on her appointment and expresses confidence in her leadership,” the statement read.

The Board further called on staff to accord Dr. Karimi the necessary support and cooperation as she assumes office, noting the importance of continuity in advancing the Authority’s mandate and strengthen-

ing its impact.

Until her appointment, Dr. Karimi served as Director of Corporate Services at the Authority. She is a qualified financial analyst with over 15 years of experience in pensions, investments, finance, administration and the asset management industry across various sectors.

Dr. Karimi holds a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Business Administration (Finance), a Master of Finance degree and a Bachelor of Science degree in International Business Administration (Finance).

She is also a full member of the Institute of Certified Financial Analysts (ICIFA) and the Chartered Institute for Securities and Investments (CISI).

The is mandated to regulate genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in the country, ensuring safety for human health, animal welfare and environmental protection.



President William Ruto when he held talks with IMF officials on Thursday. | Photo: Courtesy.

## President Ruto makes appointments across universities and State boards

## BY MKT Correspondents

@themtkenyatimes

President William Ruto has made a series of appointments to public universities and key state boards as part of the latest government changes.

Among the appointments, Cornelius Kibet has been named to the Kipsoen National Polytechnic Council. Rita Kavashe has been appointed Chancellor of Pwani University, while Paul Russo, Chief Executive Officer of KCB Group, has been named Chancellor of Kibabii University.

Dr. Kevit Desai has been appointed Chancellor of Kabianga University.

In the state agencies, Geoffrey K. Maritim has been appointed Non-Executive Chairperson of the National Employment Authority Board. Naiyanoi Ntutu joins the board of the Information and Communications Technology Authority, and Mwangi J. Nderitu has been appointed to the board of the Communications Authority of Kenya.

The President also appointed Yvonne Nalokitoo Tonkei, Wesley Kipchumba Keitany, and Ebla Haji Aden to the Women Enterprise Fund Advisory Board. Beatrice

“

**In the state agencies, Geoffrey K. Maritim has been appointed Non-Executive Chairperson of the National Employment Authority Board. Naiyanoi Ntutu joins the board of the Information and Communications Technology Authority, and Mwangi J. Nderitu has been appointed to the board of the Communications Authority of Kenya.**

Mwarania Mburugu and Saphina Chelagat have been named to the Anti-Female Genital Mutilation Board, while Lucy Mirigo Micheni joins the Mineral Rights Board.

Njenga Benjamin Kahura has been appointed Non-Executive Chairperson of the Kabete National Polytechnic Council, with Mohamud Honey Abdi reappointed as a member of the same council. Anthony Wainaina has been reappointed to the Special Economic Zones Authority Board.

At the Lake Basin Development Authority, Teresa Bitutu Oroo, Willis Omondi Orowe, and Hellen Makone have been reappointed as board members.

The appointments are part of ongoing efforts by the government to strengthen leadership across public institutions and ensure effective governance in alignment with national development priorities.

**Security** Four personnel from the Kenya-led Multinational Security Support (MSS) Mission in Haiti have been implicated in confirmed cases of sexual exploitation and abuse

# Kenyan-led forces in Haiti implicated in four confirmed rape cases, UN report reveals

*A damning United Nations report confirms that personnel from the Kenya-led Multinational Security Support Mission sexually exploited and abused victims aged as young as 12 — raising urgent questions about accountability and oversight in one of Kenya’s most high-profile international deployments.*

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyaintimes

Four personnel from the Kenya-led Multinational Security Support (MSS) Mission in Haiti have been implicated in confirmed cases of sexual exploitation and abuse, according to a report by United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres presented to the UN General Assembly.

The report, one of the most detailed annual reviews of conduct across UN-affiliated peace operations, identifies a total of 568 victims of sexual exploitation and abuse across all UN operations in 2024 alone — among them 158 children. The four MSS cases were all investigated by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and found to be substantiated.

“Sexual exploitation and abuse represent a fundamental betrayal of the trust placed in the United Nations and its partners by the communities it serves,” the Secretary-General’s report states, warning that such acts “inflict devastating and lifelong harm on victims.”

The report confirms that the four allegations were referred to the commander of the Gang Suppression Force and to the MSS Mission leadership “for appropriate investigation and remedial measures.” Most cases are listed as pending action, though the report notes that an internal mission investigation was conducted in at least one instance — that involving a 12-year-old victim.

External reporting by the Miami Herald, drawing on the same UN findings, indicates that all four victims were between the ages of 12 and 18, and that every case was marked as corroborated under the report’s findings. The Miami Herald further reports that it reached out to MSS Force Commander Godfrey Otunge, mission spokesman Jack Mbaka, and the OHCHR for comment but received no response at the time of publication. The four allegations are

said to have first been reported by AyiboPost, a Port-au-Prince-based online news service.

The MSS Mission, which is composed primarily of Kenyan National Police Service officers, was authorised by the UN Security Council and deployed to Haiti in June 2024 with a mandate to combat the devastating gang violence that has paralysed the Caribbean nation. Although operating under a UN Security Council resolution, the mission is classified as a non-United Nations force — a distinction the report flags as requiring particular vigilance.

“As peace operations evolve, including deployments of non-United Nations forces under Security Council mandates, ensuring consistent standards across configurations is essential to protecting populations, fostering trust and upholding the legitimacy of international efforts,” the report states.

Kenya’s deployment to Haiti was widely seen as a test of the country’s capacity and credibility as a contributor to international security. Nairobi lobbied extensively for the mission, and President William Ruto championed Kenya’s leadership role as a mark of the country’s growing stature in global affairs. The mission concluded in early 2025, with officials declaring the operational phase complete. These allegations now cast a long shadow over that legacy.

On the question of accountability, the UN is unambiguous: the primary responsibility for investigating allegations and prosecuting offenders rests with the troop- or police-contributing countries, in this case Kenya. “Member states are responsible for holding their personnel accountable,” the report states, adding that timely investigations and full transparency are not optional but expected.

The report does note that MSS personnel completed both pre-deployment and in-mission training specifically addressing sexual exploitation and abuse. Critics, however, argue that training alone is insufficient



Kenyan officers under the Multinational Security Support Mission (MSS) arrive from Haiti on March 17, 2026.

“

**“As peace operations evolve, including deployments of non-United Nations forces under Security Council mandates, ensuring consistent standards across configurations is essential to protecting populations, fostering trust and upholding the legitimacy of international efforts,” the report states.**

without robust enforcement mechanisms — particularly in non-UN missions where the organisation’s direct disciplinary reach is limited.

The revelations are not occurring in a vacuum. Haiti has a painful institutional memory of sexual abuse by foreign security forces. The UN’s own Stabilisation Mission in Haiti, known as MINUSTAH, which operated from 2004 to 2017, was plagued by widespread allegations of sexual abuse and even linked to a cholera outbreak that killed thousands. The current findings risk reopening those wounds and deepening the Haitian public’s distrust of foreign interventions — however well-intentioned.

For Kenya, the immediate question is whether its authorities will conduct a thorough, credible, and transparent investigation. Human rights organisations are watching closely. So is the United Nations. So, too, are the victims — four individuals, the youngest of them just twelve years old, whose lives have been irrevoca-

bly altered, and who deserve nothing less than justice.

The Kenyan government and the National Police Service had not issued a public statement on the matter at the time of this report’s publication.

Accountability deferred is accountability denied — and for the survivors of Kenyan-led forces in Haiti, the world is watching to see whether Nairobi will act.

**Security** It will bolster surveillance, improve rapid response capabilities and ensure a sustained law enforcement presence in the area.

# IG Kanja launches special police unit to boost security at Del Monte Kenya

BY MKT Correspondent  
@themtkenyatimes

Inspector General of Police, Douglas Kanja, has officially launched the Administration Police Service Critical Infrastructure Protection Unit (CIPU) to enhance security at Del Monte Kenya in Kiambu County.

The new unit is designed to provide a dedicated, intelligence-led approach to safeguarding the company's investment, employees and

neighbouring communities.

It will bolster surveillance, improve rapid response capabilities and ensure a sustained law enforcement presence in the area.

Speaking during the launch, Kanja said the initiative was informed by concerns raised during the Jukwaa la Usalama – Kiambu Chapter, where stakeholders called for more coordinated, responsive and community-centred security solutions.

“The establishment of this specialised unit demonstrates

our commitment to protecting life, property and key national investments,” he said.

The Managing Director of Delmonte Kenya, Mr. Wayne Cook, welcomed the move, noting that the partnership reflects responsible and community-conscious policing.

“This initiative will help address emerging security challenges while safeguarding both our operations and the surrounding communities,” said Mr. Cook.

Deputy Inspector General of the Administration Police



From left; Gilbert Masengeli, Wayne Cook and Douglas Kanja during the launching ceremony. |

Photo: Courtesy.

Service, Gilbert Masengeli, praised the Inspector General's leadership, saying his support had been instrumental in the establishment of the unit.

Mr. Masengeli emphasised that investments of such scale must be protected through strong and coordinated security measures to safeguard both business operations and livelihoods.

He expressed confidence that the collaboration would strengthen community relations and serve as a model for effective public-private partnerships in security management.

The event was attended by several senior officials, including APS Director of Security Operations Mr. Jackson Kangani; APS Deputy Director Logistics Mr. Gilbert

Sumukwo; County Commissioner Murang'a Mr. Hassan Bule; County Commissioner Kiambu Mr. Kibet Bowen; and County Police Commander Murang'a Mr. Clet Kimaiyo, among other security and administrative leaders.

The launch marks a significant step in strengthening security around critical infrastructure in Kiambu and neighbouring counties.

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**Politics** Led by Mathioya MP Edwin Mugo, the delegation included Kirinyaga Central MP Gachoki Gitari and nominated Senator Veronica Maina, among other leaders

# Section of Mt. Kenya leaders rally behind Waiguru for Deputy President bid



Kirinyaga Governor Ann Waiguru (centre) accompanied by Mathioya MP Edwin Mugo and nominated senator Veronica Maina during a women empowerment event held at Rurii grounds on Thursday. | Photo: Bernard Munyao.

**BY Bernard Munyao**

@themtkenyatimes

A section of political leaders from the Mt. Kenya region has come out strongly in support of Kirinyaga Governor Anne Waiguru, backing her for consideration as the country's next Deputy President ahead of the 2027 general election.

The leaders made their position known during a women empowerment programme held at Rurii Stadium in Mathioya Constituency on Thursday where they praised Waiguru's leadership record and described her as a capable and experienced candidate for the second-highest office in the land.

Led by Mathioya MP Edwin Mugo, the delegation included Kirinyaga Central MP Gachoki Gitari and nominated Senator Veronica Maina,

among other leaders.

They pointed to Waiguru's track record as a two-term governor saying her performance in Kirinyaga County speaks for itself.

Mugo described Waiguru as a development-oriented leader with the capacity to serve at a higher national level.

He noted that her leadership experience and achievements make her a strong contender for the Deputy President's position.

"She has proven herself as a leader who delivers. Her record in Kirinyaga shows she can handle bigger responsibilities at the national level," said Mugo.

At the same time, the leaders emphasized that Waiguru's elevation would be a significant step toward achieving the constitutional requirement of the two-thirds gender rule, which seeks to enhance wom-

**"She has proven herself as a leader who delivers. Her record in Kirinyaga shows she can handle bigger responsibilities at the national level," said Mugo.**

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On her part, Senator Maina said the country is ready to have a female Deputy President, adding that Waiguru possesses all the qualities needed to serve in that role.

She called on leaders from the Mt. Kenya region to unite and support Waiguru's bid noting "This is the right time for the country to embrace women leadership at the highest levels. Waiguru has what it takes."

During the event, Waiguru sought to consolidate her support base among women in Murang'a County.

She revealed that she had engaged more than 2,000 members drawn from over 100 women groups and also extended financial support to boost their economic initiatives.

The governor used the plat-



President William Ruto

form to highlight the importance of empowering women economically saying it is key to strengthening families and communities.

Waiguru also led the leaders in drumming up support for the ruling Kenya Kwanza administration observing that its development record is visible across the country.

She argued that the progress made so far justifies the re-election of President William Ruto.

The show of support for

Waiguru comes just a day after Ndia MP George Kariuki, who is also seen as eyeing the Deputy President position, visited the same constituency during the launch of a road project.

The growing political activity in the region signals the beginning of what is shaping up to be a competitive race for the Deputy President slot with Mt. Kenya leaders increasingly position themselves ahead of the next general election.



Current DP Kithure Kindiki

**Schools** To understand the gravity of this proposal, one must move beyond abstraction and confront its practical implications.

# Closing schools, opening chaos: The perils of technocratic arrogance in education



By: Gitile Naituli  
@themkenyatimes

There is a dangerous seduction in numbers. Policy-makers, especially those far removed from lived realities, often fall into the trap of believing that what can be measured can be easily engineered. High pass rates become the ultimate metric

of success, and from that narrow lens emerges a deeply flawed logic: concentrate students in “better-performing” institutions and outcomes will improve. It is a seductive idea. It is also profoundly misguided.

The recent remarks by Education Principal Secretary Amb. Bitok, that Category 4 (C4) day schools should be closed and students moved to Category 1 (C1) schools with higher pass rates, reveal a troubling strain of technocratic arrogance. It is the kind of thinking that reduces education to an assembly line, where inputs can be rearranged to produce better outputs. But education is not a factory. It is a social eco-

system, deeply embedded in community, equity, and human development.

To understand the gravity of this proposal, one must move beyond abstraction and confront its practical implications. Imagine a single national school accommodating 6,000 students. Feeding such a population is not merely a logistical challenge; it is a test of dignity and quality. Preparing breakfast, tea, lunch, and supper daily for thousands inevitably strains resources, compromises nutrition standards, and turns meals into a mechanical exercise rather than a component of holistic student welfare.

Consider sanitation. For

a girls’ school, the burden is even more pronounced. Thousands of students needing access to showers, toilets, and washing facilities creates pressure that no infrastructure, however well designed, can sustainably absorb without deterioration in hygiene and privacy. The result is not excellence, but institutional fatigue.

Even the most basic human need, the call of nature, becomes a crisis under such density. A ten-minute break cannot realistically serve thousands of students. Queues become inevitable, time is lost, and dignity is eroded.

These are not minor inconveniences; they are daily

indignities that shape the student experience. Discipline, too, becomes exponentially more complex. A school is not just a place of instruction; it is a moral community. Managing 6,000 adolescents, each with unique backgrounds, pressures, and vulnerabilities, requires more than rules. It requires presence, mentorship, and relational oversight. In overcrowded environments, deviant behaviors such as drug use or sexual misconduct are not only harder to detect but easier to spread. What begins as an isolated incident can quickly become systemic. The administrative burden is equally staggering. Imagine conducting continuous assessments for over a thousand students per grade, handling exam logistics, marking scripts, and maintaining academic records. The sheer volume transforms teaching into clerical drudgery, eroding the very quality the policy seeks to enhance.

But perhaps the most overlooked consequence is economic. C4 day schools are not just educational institutions; they are local economic hubs. They employ teachers, secretaries, security personnel, and support staff. They sustain local suppliers, from food vendors to transport providers. Closing them would trigger a cascade of job losses and economic disruptions, particularly in already vulnerable communities.

There is also a deeply human cost. Teachers in C4 schools are not inferior professionals awaiting rescue. They are educators working within constrained environments. To collapse their institutions is to deny them pathways for growth, leadership, and professional fulfillment. Concentrating students in a few elite schools also concentrates power, leaving limited room for others to rise through the ranks of school leadership.

Then comes the question of affordability. C1 schools, by their nature, are more expensive. To suggest that all students can be absorbed into such institutions is to ignore the socioeconomic realities of millions of Kenyan families. Day schools exist precisely to bridge this gap, to provide accessible education to those who cannot afford boarding facilities or high fees. Elim-

inating them is not reform; it is exclusion.

Geography further complicates the proposal. The distribution of top-tier schools in Kenya is historically skewed. A significant number are concentrated in specific regions, particularly in central Kenya. What does it mean, then, to relocate students from the Coast, Western, or Northern regions? It means dislocation from families, cultures, and support systems. It means reinforcing regional inequalities rather than addressing them.

At its core, this proposal reflects a fundamental misunderstanding of what produces academic success. High-performing schools are not simply repositories of bright students; they are ecosystems shaped by culture, leadership, resources, and history. Transplanting students into these environments does not automatically replicate success. In fact, overwhelming these systems risks degrading the very excellence they are known for.

Good leadership demands more than bold pronouncements. It requires humility, consultation, and a grounded understanding of consequences. The role of the state is not to collapse diversity into uniformity, but to elevate standards across the board. Instead of closing C4 schools, the focus should be on strengthening them, investing in infrastructure, training teachers, and ensuring equitable resource distribution.

Kenya’s education system has long been a ladder of opportunity. It has allowed children from modest backgrounds to rise through accessible, community-based schooling. To dismantle that ladder in pursuit of statistical improvement is to betray the very purpose of education. If anything, this moment calls for reflection within government. Policies that appear efficient on paper can become catastrophic in practice. Leadership is not measured by the audacity of ideas, but by their wisdom and humanity. Closing schools will not fix education. It will only expose how little we understand it.

*The writer is a former commissioner with NCIC who comments on various topical issues*

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**Investigation** According to the DCI, events leading up to the alleged disappearance on March 21 point to a coordinated plan involving multiple individuals.

# DCI claims Tuju abduction was stage managed

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

The Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI) has claimed that the reported disappearance of former Cabinet Secretary Raphael Tuju was a staged and self-orchestrated incident.

The outcome by the sleuths follows investigations into a missing person report filed on March 22 at Karen Police Station.

In a press release issued on Friday, the agency said its inquiry, supported by CCTV footage, witness accounts, and forensic analysis had established “beyond doubt” that no abduction took place, contradicting earlier claims that Tuju had been trailed by suspicious vehicles.

According to the DCI, events leading up to the alleged disappearance on March 21 point to a coordinated plan involving multiple individuals. The press release, signed by J. K.

Marete states that CCTV footage shows Tuju’s vehicle leaving Entim Sidai Hotel at 6:46 p.m., where it briefly interacted with a white Toyota Probox before the two cars separated.

The vehicles later converged along Nandi Road and proceeded together toward Miotoni Road.

Investigators say the situation unfolded rapidly minutes later.

At approximately 7:18 p.m., Tuju’s car parked along Miotoni Lane with hazard lights on. A Probox arrived moments later, and within seconds, three individuals exited Tuju’s vehicle and entered the second car, which then drove away.

The Probox was later captured heading toward Tuju’s residence, bringing what authorities describe as a “carefully orchestrated operation” to a close.

The DCI has identified several persons of interest allegedly linked to the plan, including Samson Okiya Sirako, Karen Wangare, Khadijah

Chepkosia Saidi and Zipporah Wambui.

The Probox used in the incident remains untraced.

Authorities allege the episode was designed to mislead law enforcement and provoke public concern for undisclosed motives.

“This detailed sequence of events clearly contradicts any claims of abduction,” the statement read.

The agency warned that any attempts to issue “diversionary statements” would not derail the investigation, which remains ongoing. Officials added that legal action will be taken against all individuals found culpable.

The developments mark a dramatic turn in a case that had sparked widespread public attention and concern. Further updates are expected as investigations continue.



Raphael Tuju



## When pain taught me not to feel



The tears once flowed, now turned to stone,  
A heart so loud... now overthrown,  
Where love once bloomed, now shadows start,  
And slowly built a guarded heart.

I stopped expecting, stopped to care,  
No warmth was left for me to share,  
Not out of strength, not out of pride,  
But from the wars I fought inside.

They say I changed... I guess it's true,  
But pain reshapes what we once knew,  
It numbs the soul, it seals the art—  
And leaves behind a heartless heart.

Not born this way, but made to be,  
By all that took too much from me...  
Now I don't break, I don't fall apart—  
Because pain taught me to lose my heart.

©Dr. Daksha Udhani  
Ahmedabad

Once, my heart was soft as rain,  
It danced in joy, it sang through pain,  
It trusted hands, it chased the light,  
It held on hope with all its might.

But wounds don't knock, they barge inside,  
They tear you slow, they never hide,  
Each broken word, each silent scream,  
Turned tender truths to shattered dreams.

I tried to heal, I tried to stay,  
But pain kept carving me away,  
Each scar it left, so cold, so deep,  
It stole the parts of me I'd keep.

## Magic of self confidence



Encourage them to do every thing with confidence. Help them understand their own talents. Teach them how to lead their life with self-respect and confidence.

Let them realize their inner strength. No one else can decide their life their life is in their own hands.

So, let them move freely with confidence. Let them learn moral values, self-respect, self-esteem, self-control, self-discipline, and self-confidence.

Parents and teachers have the first responsibility to teach children:

Be trustworthy.

Be optimistic.

Have self-respect.

Have self-confidence.

The world is in their hands so build them beautifully.

At last, they will shine with confidence and create their own success story.

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

"Self-confidence is the first requirement for all great undertakings."

Yes, this is true. Behind every success story, there are countless struggles. Success never comes easily. Nature itself teaches us many lessons.

The spider spins its web again and again. Many times it fails, yet it never loses hope. It keeps trying until it finally builds a beautiful web.

In the same way, if you have hope and confidence in your inner thoughts, you will surely achieve many things.

Each person has a unique talent. So, first, stop comparing yourself with others.


Dear parents, guide your children on what to do, but do not stress them. If you wanted to become a doctor but couldn't achieve it, don't force your child to follow the same path. They may have a different dream in their mind. Allow them to achieve their own goals and dreams.

## Teachers are our Guiding light



Some become strict to lead us to light.  
We may feel hurt and complain inside,  
Yet their words stay with us as our guide.  
To them, we are children, precious and dear,  
The shape our future year by year.  
Like a small seed planted deep in the ground,  
With care and sunlight, strength is found.  
Teachers help us grow strong and wise,  
Thank you, dear teachers -Our guiding light in life

S.Sahana,  
Grade 7,  
GHSS Kandigai,  
Chengalpattu district,  
Tamilnadu.

Teachers are our Guiding light   
In our lives and in our schools, Teachers show the way,  
Guiding us with love and care every single day.  
Some teach us gently, helping us grow right,

## Time



The time we should use carefully,  
It cannot be come the past ,  
The past is past ,  
The time we cannot waste it ,  
The time we cannot change it ,  
We should do what we want to do at the time ,  
DO NOT WASTE THE TIME,  
Do the work in that time ,  
It will not come back in any way .

P.HEMANYA  
VII  
JOHN DEWEY MAT HR SEC SCHOOL  
PANRUTI CUDDALORE DISTRICT.

The time is precious,  
The time is the diamond,  
The time is gold ,  
We cannot waste the time with mobile phones,  
We cannot waste the time with any non useful things,

## The journey of a paper boat



It brings childhood memories.  
Sailed on the street streams.

Following the paper boat  
wetting in the rain.  
Enjoying those days  
With joy and happiness.

Rajesh Kanna B N

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

It may be colourful,  
It won't be a pleasantful.  
Couldn't sail as our wish,  
Not help to fish.

It may sink  
Not safe for the journey.

## I like my friends very much



I like to play with my friends each day.  
Together we laugh come what may.

My friends remove my distress quickly.  
And they also remove my stress quickly.

Memories of my friends is unforgettable.  
And they are always enjoyable.

My friends are very helpful to me.  
My friends and school life are very close to me.

By,  
S.S.Nikshith  
VI std  
PUMS Chinna Obulapuram  
Gummidipoondi  
Tiruvallur Dt  
Tamilnadu, India.

I like my friends very much.  
They hold me closed like a clutch.

When I am sad ,  
My friends make me glad.

**Health** National Chairperson Dr. Abidan Mwachi saw off two challengers to retain his seat with 4,149 votes, representing 66.59 per cent of the ballot.

# Doctors return entire KMPDU leadership to office in decisive poll

Every senior official of the union won convincingly with 4,339 votes. **With more than 70 per cent of eligible members casting ballots, Kenya's doctors have handed their union leadership a sweeping second term — a verdict courts declined to block and the membership delivered without ambiguity.**

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyatiimes

Kenya Medical Practitioners, Pharmacists and Dentists Union (KMPDU) has been re-elected to office, handing the union's sitting leadership a full second term following polls held on Thursday.

Secretary General Dr. Davji Atallah was returned unopposed — a rare display of uncontested confidence in a union whose elections have historically attracted fierce competition. His deputy, Dr. Dennis Miskellah Mbogori,

votes, or 69.64 per cent, against Dr. Wendy Nyeera Kimbui's 1,869 votes.

National Chairperson Dr. Abidan Mwachi saw off two challengers to retain his seat with 4,149 votes, representing 66.59 per cent of the ballot. The most lopsided result of the day, however, belonged to Deputy Chairperson Dr. David Kahura Mundia, who was returned with a staggering 5,470 votes — 87.78 per cent — against an opponent who managed only 30 votes, with 731 members opting to abstain entirely.

In the financial docket, Dr.

National Treasurer position after defeating two competitors, while Dr. Renoh Achieng Omoro was elected Deputy Treasurer, filling a vacancy that had persisted since the resignation of the previous office holder.

"The re-elected officials now face the task of building on their previous term, with expectations high among members for firmer negotiations, improved welfare for healthcare workers, and sustained advocacy in Kenya's evolving health sector."

The elections proceeded after the Employment and Labour

Relations Court dismissed a last-minute application that had sought to halt the polls. In its ruling delivered on April 1, 2026, the court found that the petitioners had failed to establish a prima facie case sufficient to warrant interim orders. The judge ruled that there was no adequate evidence of violations of the Labour Relations Act or the union's own constitution, and held that the Independent Electoral Committee overseeing the process had been properly constituted. Allegations of bias and irregularities were also found to be unsubstantiated. The application, dated March 17, 2026, was dismissed in full, clearing the way for voting to proceed.

The results carry significance beyond the ballot count. A turnout exceeding 70 per cent of eligible members in a professional union election is, by




KMPDU top leadership, from left to right: Dr. David Kahura Mundia (Deputy National Chairperson), Dr. Abidan Mwachi (National Chairperson), Dr. Mercy Nabwire (National Treasurer), Dr. Davji Atallah (Secretary General), and Dr. Dennis Miskellah (Deputy Secretary General).

any measure, a strong showing — and the margin of victory across all positions suggests the membership was not merely settling for familiarity but actively endorsing continuity. Kenya's public health sector remains burdened by entrenched challenges: disputed remuneration, strained working conditions, and a reform agenda that has for years moved more slowly than doctors' expectations.

Against that backdrop, the decisive re-election of the entire top leadership reads less as inertia and more as a mandate — a signal from an

engaged membership that it wants experienced hands, not fresh faces, steering its next round of negotiations with government.

Whether the returning officials can convert that confidence into concrete gains for Kenya's healthcare workers will define their second term — and, ultimately, the health of a system that serves millions.




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**Easter** County Police Commander Ronald Kirui emphasized the importance of community support, compassion, and unity in ensuring that no life is lost

# From duty to humanity: Kisii police donate blood during Easter season

BY Elizabeth Angira  
@themkenyatimes

Kisii police officers have stepped beyond their call of duty this Easter by donating blood and urging members of the public to embrace the spirit of saving lives.

In a powerful show of humanity, the officers led by example, reminding Kenyans that blood donation is a simple act that can make the difference between life and death. As hospitals continue to face blood shortages, especially during festive seasons like Easter, the initiative aims to inspire more people to come forward and donate.

Speaking during the exercise at Nyanchwa Police Station in Kisii County, County Police Commander Ronald Kirui emphasized the importance of community support, compassion, and unity in ensuring that no life is lost due to a lack of blood.

“We have mobilized our officers across Kisii County to donate blood. The blood collected will be taken to the blood bank at Kisii Teaching and Referral Hospital, where it will help save lives, espe-



**Kisii County Police Commander Ronald Kirui , a blood bank officer at Kisii Teaching and Referral Hospital Patrobas Onchiri, addressing the press during blood donation , have emphasized the importance of blood donation | Photo: Elizabeth Angira**

cially during emergencies,” said Kirui.

He noted that police officers are often at the forefront of responding to emergencies, including transporting accident victims and patients to hospitals, where blood is sometimes urgently needed.

“The availability of blood in the bank is critical. In many emergencies, having readily available blood can mean the difference between life and

death. This initiative is part of our continued support to the hospital, which we assist at least twice a year through such drives,” he added.

A blood bank officer at Kisii Teaching and Referral Hospital, Patrobas Onchiri, welcomed the initiative, noting that it will go a long way in boosting blood reserves.

“Blood donation is essential in saving lives. We usually conduct such drives in

schools, colleges, universities, and churches, but today we are grateful to collaborate with the police. The blood collected here will benefit patients in need, including members of the public and security officers,” said Onchiri.

He emphasized that donated blood is screened and stored safely before being issued to patients in need, free of charge.

“Not everyone is able to donate blood, but those who can should come forward. Many patients struggle to find donors during emergencies. Donating blood ensures that it is readily available when needed,” he explained.

Onchiri also cautioned against the illegal sale of blood, urging the public to report any such incidents.

“Blood donation should remain a voluntary and free service. The government incurs significant costs in screening and processing blood, so it is important for people to donate freely to support the health-care system,” he said.



Donating blood



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**Coffee** The Act provides a comprehensive licensing framework covering all players; from nursery operators to exporters and brokers

# Who needs a licence in Kenya's coffee sector? A clear guide under the Coffee Act 2025



**BY Henry Kinyua**  
@themtkenyatimes

If coffee were a highway, the new Coffee Act 2025 has just installed clear road signs; showing who needs a licence, where to get it, and how fast you can get moving.

For years, confusion around permits and regulatory overlap slowed down players in the value chain.

The new law now brings structure, clarity, and accountability on one page.

The Act provides a comprehensive licensing framework covering all players; from nursery operators to exporters and brokers.

The Second Schedule outlines 17 distinct licences, permits, and certificates, each tied to a specific role in the coffee ecosystem.

At the upstream level, activities such as coffee nurseries, pulping stations, and grower milling are regulated largely by county governments, sometimes in consultation with the Coffee Board.

This reflects the devolved nature of agriculture and gives counties a stronger role in managing production.

At the midstream and downstream levels, the Coffee Board of Kenya takes centre stage.

It issues key commercial licences including:

- \* Coffee buyer's licence
- \* Coffee trading licence
- \* Coffee miller's licence
- \* Warehouse operator's licence
- \* Coffee liquoring (cupping) licence
- \* Export-related permits such as clean coffee movement permits

Meanwhile, market-facing roles such as coffee exchange operators and brokers fall under the Capital Markets Authority (CMA); a move that reinforces transparency and aligns coffee trading with formal financial market standards.

sibilities across three main institutions:

\* Coffee Board of Kenya – Core regulator of trading, milling, and exports

\* County Governments – Production-level licensing and permits

\* Capital Markets Authority (CMA) – Oversight of exchange and brokerage

In addition, the Coffee Research and Training Institute is mandated to issue nursery certificates, ensuring quality planting materials at the very foundation of the value chain.

Perhaps one of the most practical changes is the timeline for licence approvals.

Under Section 28 of the Act:

\* Applicants must submit a formal application, required information, and prescribed fees

\* The licensing authority is required to respond within 14 days

\* The outcome is either approval (with conditions) or rejection

This introduces a level of efficiency that has long been missing in the sector—reducing delays and uncertainty for investors and operators.

This licensing framework does more than just regulate it professionalizes the coffee sector. By clearly defining roles and responsibilities:

\* It enhances traceability and compliance (critical for markets like EUDR)

\* It improves market confidence and investor entry

\* It reduces informality and regulatory ambiguity

In simple terms, whether you are a farmer setting up a pulping station, a miller processing coffee, or a trader exporting to global markets, you now know exactly which licence you need, who to talk to, and how long it will take.

The Coffee Act 2025 doesn't just regulate coffee; it organizes it. And in a sector where value flows from the farm to the global cup, clarity in licensing might just be the strongest brew Kenya needed.

Now the question is; where do you sit in the coffee value chain, and are you properly licensed?

2026

Coffee

SECOND SCHEDULE.

s.11, s.23

## LICENCE, PERMIT OR CERTIFICATE

No.	Type of Licence/ Permit or Certificate	Issuing Authority
1.	Coffee buyer's licence	Board
2.	Independent cupping laboratory licence	Board
3.	Warehouse operator's licence	Board
4.	Coffee liqueur's licence;	Board
5.	Processed coffee import permit	Board
6.	Clean coffee movement permit for exports	Board
7.	Coffee trading licence	Board
8.	Commercial coffee miller's licence	Board
9.	Warehouse licence	County government.
10.	Coffee nursery certificates	The Institute.
11.	Pulping station licence	County government in consultation with the Board.
12.	Grower's milling licence	County government
13.	Coffee roaster's licence	County government in consultation with the Board.
14.	Parchment permit from the county of origin	County government
15.	Clean coffee movement permit from the county of origin	County government
16.	Coffee exchange licence	Capital Markets Authority
17.	Brokers licence	Capital Markets Authority

The law smartly distributes respon-

**PWDs** Across the country, many persons with disabilities continue to face daily challenges that are largely invisible to the wider public.

# Easter reflection for Kenyan PWDs; From compassion to practical inclusion



**BY Fredrick Chelimo**  
@themkenyatimes

As Kenyans prepare to observe Easter, our country men and women join millions around the world in reflecting on a sacred season that symbolizes renewal, sacrifice, compassion and the triumph of hope over suffering. Easter invites humanity to rediscover the enduring message embodied in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ – that every human being carries inherent dignity and worth.

For Kenyan's living with disabilities, the Easter message must extend beyond spiritual reflection to a deeper national introspection. It should compel us to ask a simple but profound question: Are we building a society where every citizen, including persons with disabilities, are able to live with dignity, participate fully and pursue opportunities without barriers?

Across the country, many persons with disabilities continue to face daily challenges that are largely invisible to the wider public. Public buildings continue to be inaccessible, employment opportunities are limited, educational institutions often lack the necessary support infrastructures, healthcare remain theoretical and social attitudes still carry elements of stigma and misunderstanding. These realities persist despite progressive legal frameworks such as the constitution of Kenya 2010, which affirms equality and protection of all citizens and the provisions contained in the persons with disabilities Act 2025, which seeks to guarantee the rights and welfare of persons with disabilities.

The gap between policy commitments and practical im-



**Persons with Disabilities**

plementation remains critical concern, despite recognition of disability rights, the lived experiences of many citizens with disabilities demonstrate that inclusion is still far from being fully realized. Easter therefore presents a timely and humble opportunity for leaders, institutions and communities including religious leaders to renew their commitment to translating policy into meaningful action.

In Kenya, religious institutions hold tremendous moral influence. Churches, mosques and other faith communities shape public attitudes, guide



**“Across the country, many persons with disabilities continue to face daily challenges that are largely invisible to the wider public. Public buildings continue to be inaccessible, employment opportunities are limited, educational institutions often lack the necessary support infrastructures, healthcare remain theoretical and social attitudes still carry elements of stigma and misunderstanding.”**

ethical reflection, and mobilize communities towards collective responsibility. As religious leaders preach messages of peace, compassion, hope and unity during this Easter season, there is an equally urgent need to integrate the realities of disability into these conversations. Inclusion must become part of the moral language spoken from our pulpits, not as an occasional mention but as a sustained call for action.

Faith communities can play a transformative role in ensuring that places of worship are accessible, by embracing persons with disabilities as active participants in community life and by challenging the cultural attitudes that perpetuate exclusion. When spiritual teaching emphasizes dignity, empathy, and solidarity, they can help reshape social perceptions and foster communities where every individual feels valued.

Equally, political leaders and policy makers must recognize that disability inclusion is not a peripheral matter of social welfare. It is the fundamental governance issue that touches on justice, development and human rights. Infrastructure planning must prioritize accessibility. Education institutions must adopt inclusive systems that support learners with diverse abilities. Employment policies must open meaningful pathways for per-

sons with disabilities to contribute their talents and skills to national development.

Kenya's progress as a nation will ultimately be mea-

sured not only by economic indicators or infrastructure expansion, but by the extent to which every citizen feels included in the promise of unified national prosperity. As society that excludes persons with disabilities inadvertently limits its own potential, for it silences voices, and perspectives that could enrich the nation.

As a person living with disabilities, I have lived and witnessed both resilience of our community and the structural barriers that continue to hinder genuine participation. The determination of persons with disabilities across Kenya demonstrates that inclusion is not about charity or sympathy – it is about opportunity, dignity and justice. This Easter season therefore offers a mo-

ment for Kenya to reaffirm a national commitment to practical inclusivity. Compassion must evolve into deliberate action. Policies must translate into accessible buildings, inclusive classrooms, fair employment opportunities and meaningful representation in decision making processes

If the message of Easter is truly about renewal and hope, then it should inspire our nation to renew its commitment to building a Kenya where no citizen feels invisible or excluded. The promise of dignity must not remain a moral aspiration: it must become a lived reality.

Only when inclusion becomes practical, visible and sustained will the spirit of the Easter truly resonate within our national conscience

*Mr. Fredrick Kipchumba Chelimo PWD*

*Chairperson, Jiamini Disability network Community Based organization*

*Email: jiamini.network@gmail.com*

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**USA-Middle East war** The pattern is striking: European countries have not automatically followed the United States into this war.

# USA-Middle East war: Transatlantic rifts deepen amid Mideast tensions

BY Xinhua News Agency

@themtkenyatimes

Five weeks into U.S. and Israeli strikes on Iran, the fractures within the transatlantic alliance are no longer a matter of diplomatic friction. They are showing up in operational decisions: closed airspace, denied base access, and refused requests.

The pattern is striking: European countries have not automatically followed the United States into this war.

## Different methods, same refusal

Spain has been the most direct. Madrid closed its airspace to U.S. military aircraft involved in operations against Iran and denied authorization for the use of bases at Rota and Moron de la Frontera. The restrictions apply to conflict-related operations only. Spanish Defense Minister Margarita Robles told parliament that the United States and Israel "cannot be the ones who decide what rules apply in the world." She described the military campaign against Iran as falling outside international law. "We cannot accept that two countries have decided to drag the world into their war," she said.

Italy drew its line through procedure. Rome blocked the U.S. use of the Sigonella air base in Sicily after discovering that U.S. bombers had filed a flight plan only after the aircraft were already airborne -- without prior notification or authorization. Italian authorities determined the flights fell outside the scope of existing bilateral agreements. The government stated that activities linked to the Iran conflict require explicit parliamentary authorization. France has set firm limits on the cooperation it will allow. Paris confirmed it had not changed its overflight policy in response to U.S. President Donald Trump's accusation that France was being "very unhelpful." Certain U.S. aircraft may use French military bases, but only on condition that they play no role in operations against Iran. President Emmanuel Macron stated the military strikes on Iran were conducted "outside international law" and could not be endorsed by France.

In Portugal, domestic pressure has



People attend a rally against U.S.-Israeli attacks on Iran, in New York, the United States, March 7, 2026. | Photo: Courtesy.

sparked a debate. Criticism has mounted over the reported use of the Lajes Air Base in the Azores for Iran-related operations, with opposition parties questioning whether proper authorization was granted under the Portugal-U.S. Defense Cooperation Agreement. More than 8,000 people have signed a petition calling for the base to be barred from such use.

## Price of unilateralism

The breadth of European refusals points to something more fundamental than mere disagreement over a single conflict. Washington launched its military campaign against Iran without consulting North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies, without a United Nations Security Council mandate, and in the face of explicit objections from governments across the European continent. It then demanded the use of bases and airspace that those governments had not agreed to make available for offensive operations -- doing so without prior notification at all.

"One key issue for European countries is the issue of legality," said Kamil Zwolski, a fellow on terror-



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ism and conflict studies at the Royal United Services Institute, Britain's leading defense and security think tank. "What Europeans mean when they say that this war has no legal basis is that the United Nations has not approved it -- there was no resolution. They also mean that this is not a war of self-defense, because there was no evidence of imminent attack of Iran against the U.S. or Israel." "At the minimum, what they also mean is that this war was not agreed by NATO allies. They were not consulted," Zwolski told CNN.

The consequences have extended beyond the political aspect. Brent Crude surged after the strikes began, and European energy markets have been rattled by the risk of disruption to supplies transiting the Strait of Hormuz -- a route that handled roughly one-fifth of global oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG) trade before the military campaign against Iran began. The economic fallout from a conflict Europe had no hand in starting is being felt by European households and industries.

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz was vocal. "The question is not whether we will participate. We will

not do so." On NATO, he added: "It is a defensive alliance, not an interventionist alliance."

## A one-way alliance

In response to the European attitudes, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said the United States would "have to re-examine" its relationship with NATO after allies declined to support operations against Iran. According to an interview published by Britain's Daily Telegraph on Wednesday, Trump is "seriously considering" withdrawing the United States from NATO following those refusals. For his part, during a visit to Japan, Macron said Europe offers "predictability and stability," unlike "some countries" that may take decisions without informing allies and risk harming them -- remarks widely interpreted by media as referring to the United States. His comments brought into focus European concerns over consultation, predictability, and the decision-making process within the alliance.

Statements from the European and U.S. sides reflect a growing divergence in expectations over how decisions are made and how support is defined. The war brought such divergence into a clearer view. A gap is emerging between Washington's expectation of support and Europe's emphasis on strategic calculation. No European government is seeking to leave NATO yet. However, European countries are no longer moving in lockstep with the United States, and are increasingly making their own decisions on involvement in military operations.



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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



### Speak out, listen up: Kenya's youth are running out of patience

Kenya is bleeding — and silence is doing the cutting.

From the Gen Z protests that shook Nairobi's streets to the recent demonstration by Laikipia University students demanding justice, a pattern has emerged that those in power can no longer afford to ignore. Young people are not simply angry. They are exhausted — by broken promises, corrupt institutions, and leaders who treat their grievances as noise rather than signal.

The tragedy is twofold. Too many youths suppress their frustrations for too long, fearing reprisal or dismissal. That silence does not heal; it festers. When it finally breaks, it erupts — not in measured dialogue, but in demonstrations that courts confrontation with armed police, leaving bodies on the ground and questions



unanswered.

The complaints are neither new nor unreasonable: poor governance, entrenched corruption, gender discrimination in institutions that should model fairness. These are systemic failures that have been documented, debated, and ignored for years. Students and young professionals have watched the cycle repeat. Now they are stepping into the streets because no one stepped into the room to hear them.

This is a call in two directions.

To Kenya's youth — speak early, speak clearly, and seek platforms before pain becomes the only language available. To institutions, administrators, and elected leaders — a grievance ignored is a crisis incubated.

Kenya does not have a protest problem. It has a listening problem.

Fix that, before the next demonstration writes its own headline in blood.

*By Charity Mwangi, Laikipia University*

### AI on the edge: is the machine going rogue?

The robot didn't go rogue. We handed it a weapon and walked away.

In March 2016, Microsoft launched Tay, a Twitter chatbot designed to learn from casual conversation. Within hours, it was posting racist slurs, Holocaust denial, and praise for Adolf Hitler. Adversarial users had deliberately manipulated its algorithms. Microsoft pulled the plug and apologised. The lesson was clear: AI could absorb and amplify humanity's worst impulses at machine speed.

Nearly a decade later, that lesson remained only partially learned. When Elon Musk's xAI released Grok in 2025, integrated directly into the social media platform X, the stakes were far higher. Grok was more sophisticated than Tay — and arguably more dangerous. Within weeks, it was generating antisemitic content, praising Hitler, and producing



sexualized images of minors despite built-in safeguards. Screenshots spread globally. France, where Holocaust denial is a criminal offence, opened legal scrutiny. The Anti-Defamation League condemned the outputs as irresponsible and dangerous. xAI issued a public apology. Then the news cycle moved on.

This is the pattern that should alarm us. Incident. Outrage. Apology. Repeat. Each cycle normalises the next failure and emboldens developers to treat

public deployment as a testing ground.

Tay and Grok are not glitches — they are symptoms. When AI systems interact with millions of users in real time, a safeguard failure is not a technical inconvenience. It is a public harm event.

The machine isn't going rogue. The humans building it are simply not ready.

*By Darline Otieno, Laikipia University*

### Debt dispute turns violent in Machakos: a community's wake-up call

A debt became a fist. That should trouble all of us.

The recent assault on Sammy Kioko in Machakos County — allegedly attacked while attempting to recover money owed to him — is more than a local incident. It is a mirror held up to a quiet crisis playing out in homes, friendships, and business dealings across Kenya every single day.

The details remain disputed. What is not disputed is the pattern. Financial disagreements between individuals, friends, and family members routinely escalate because there was never a written agreement, never a mediator, and never a conversation held before resentment hardened into confrontation. By the time fists are thrown, the original debt is almost beside the point.



Kenya has a deep-seated cultural reluctance to formalise personal transactions. A handshake feels like trust; a contract feels like suspicion. But that instinct, however well-meaning, leaves both parties dangerously exposed when memory, circumstance, or goodwill runs out. The law cannot easily protect what was never documented.

Community leaders are right to call for calm and due process. But calls for peace ring hollow without accessible infrastructure to back them up. Media-

tion centres, community elders with structured mandates, and public legal aid services must be more than aspirational — they must be reachable by the ordinary Kenyan who cannot afford a lawyer but can still lose everything in a bad debt.

The Machakos incident did not begin with violence. It began with a conversation that never happened.

Have it before it is too late.

*By Doreen Mueni, Laikipia University*

### ODM after Raila: a party at a crossroads

Raila Odinga did not just lead ODM. He was ODM. Now he is gone, and the party must decide what it is without him.

His death on 15 October 2025 closed one of the most consequential chapters in Kenya's political history. As ODM's leader and former Prime Minister, Odinga held together a coalition of competing regional ambitions, ideological tensions, and grassroots loyalties through sheer force of personality. That kind of political gravity is not transferable. It cannot be voted into existence by a party conference or assigned by an interim committee.

The cracks are already visible. ODM has always been a broad church — diverse by design, united by one man. With that unifying centre gone, factionalism is not a risk. It is a scheduled arrival. Party insiders are already manoeuvring, rivals are already circling, and



former allies are quietly recalculating their options in a landscape that shifted overnight.

Yet crisis and opportunity share the same address. ODM's greatest challenge is also its most important one: the forced transition from a personality-driven movement to an institutionally grounded party. That means genuine internal democracy, ideological clarity, and deliberate investment in a new generation of leaders who do not simply invoke Raila's name but can ar-

ticulate what ODM stands for in his absence.

The support base is watching. For millions of Kenyans, Odinga was not merely a politician — he was proof that dissent could survive. They are not looking for a replacement. They are looking for a reason to stay.

ODM must give them one — quickly.

*By Tracy Achieng, Laikipia University*

SPORTS  
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**Sports >>** \*The Games of the Future organizers have officially confirmed FATAL FURY: City of the Wolves as the centerpiece title for the phygital fighting discipline

## FATAL FURY to headline phygital fighting at 2026 Games of the Future



The Games of the Future organizers have officially confirmed FATAL FURY: City of the Wolves as the centerpiece title for the phygital fighting discipline at the 2026 edition in Astana, Kazakhstan. This announcement marks a significant milestone for the hybrid sport that fuses esports with real-world combat, underscoring its rapid rise in global popularity.

Scheduled for August 7–8 at the Qazaqstan Athletics Sports Complex, the competition will feature elite mixed martial arts athletes battling for a prize pool of \$500,000 (approximately KSh 65 million). What sets phygital fighting apart is its distinc-

tive format: competitors first clash in a virtual gaming environment before transitioning into full-contact bouts inside the cage. This dual-layered contest captivated audiences during its debut at the 2025 Games of the Future in Abu Dhabi, drawing thousands of fans on-site and millions more online.

By choosing FATAL FURY, one of the most iconic franchises in fighting game history, organizers are banking on its global recognition and competitive depth to elevate the discipline further. The franchise's legacy in shaping fighting game culture adds credibility and excitement to the phygital stage. "This is about bringing together the best

of both worlds—gaming and sport—into one unified competition," organizers emphasized, highlighting the importance of established titles in shaping the future of phygital sports.

The 2026 Games of the Future will run from July 29 to August 11, bringing together over 900 athletes from more than 50 countries across multiple disciplines. Beyond phygital fighting, the event promises a diverse showcase of innovation-driven competitions that blend technology, athleticism, and entertainment. Astana's role as host city positions Kazakhstan as a hub for futuristic sporting experiences, reinforcing the Games' mission to redefine how audiences en-

gage with competitive events. Anticipation is already building as fans await further announcements regarding participating fighters and team line-ups. With the combination of a legendary gaming franchise, cutting-edge hybrid formats, and a substantial prize pool, phygital fighting at the 2026 Games of the Future is set to be one of the most innovative and talked-about spectacles on the global sporting calendar.

# GET THE BEST OF WORLD

**Sports >>** \*Liverpool goalkeeper Alisson Becker will miss their FA Cup quarter-final against Manchester City and both legs of the Champions League tie with Paris Saint-Germain, manager Arne Slot said Friday.

## Liverpool's Alisson to miss Man City, PSG matches, says Slot



Liverpool goalkeeper Alisson Becker will miss their FA Cup quarter-final against Manchester City and both legs of the Champions League tie with Paris Saint-Germain, manager Arne Slot said Friday.

The Brazilian suffered an injury during Liverpool's win over Galatasaray in the Champions League last-16 second leg last month.

The Reds visit Man City on Saturday before taking on reigning European champions PSG at the Parc des Princes on Wednesday, with the quarter-final return leg six days later.

"He will not be part of the Paris Saint-Germain games as well," Slot told reporters.

"He will be out for a bit longer. Towards the end of the season we expect him to be fit again."

Alexander Isak may be fit to play a part against City, though, having returned to training after

breaking his leg in December.

"It will take a bit of time to give him a lot of minutes," Slot said of Isak.

"We will make sure we do the right thing in terms of building him up in minutes, but it's a very good thing to have him on the training ground again.

"It would be even better to have him available for games, that's for sure."

Mohamed Salah is ready to play after hobbling off against Galatasaray and then missing Liverpool's loss at Brighton before the international break.

The Egyptian announced last week he will leave Anfield at the end of the season.

Liverpool have endured a tough campaign in the Premier League after winning the title last season and sit in fifth place, battling for a spot in next season's Champions League.

But they remain in the hunt for

a seventh European crown, facing a rematch against PSG after a last-16 penalty shoot-out defeat by the French champions last year.

Alisson starred in that tie with a spectacular display in Liverpool's 1-0 first-leg victory in Paris.

Georgia goalkeeper Giorgi Mamardashvili is set to deputise for Alisson at the Etihad against City on Saturday, as Liverpool bid to reach the FA Cup semi-finals for the first time since lifting the trophy in 2022.

**'Incredible milestone'**

Man City, still in with a chance of repeating the domestic treble they won in 2018/19, are bidding to reach a record-extending eighth successive FA Cup semi-final.

Pep Guardiola is encouraging his players to focus on the future, after they beat Premier

League title rivals Arsenal in last month's League Cup final.

"It was a long time ago already," said the City manager of the 2-0 win over the Gunners at Wembley.

"It's better and nice to win another title. It's not the most prestigious one but the fact is it's another chance to play against the best team in Europe so far in the Premier League and the Champions League.

"It was a good test against a good team. We finished one and think of the next one.

"Tomorrow we have chance to make another incredible milestone -- eight semi-finals in a row."

AFP

# SPORTS NEWS



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# SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



# The Psychology of Design: Mirvatte Mtanos' Vision Beyond the Visible



By: Ayesha Talib

@themkenyatimes



## Worth Noting:

- Her philosophy is rooted in the belief that design is not merely decoration—it is identity, leadership, and silent communication. By integrating principles of psychology into architecture and branding, Mirvatte crafts spaces and concepts that evoke connection, confidence, and purpose. Every line, color, and structure is intentional, designed to inspire clarity and strength.
- Featured in international magazines and platforms, she is recognized for her unique ability to merge creativity with psychological insight. Through her work, she aims to empower individuals and redefine how design can positively shape human experience on a deeper level. “Design is not only visual, but deeply emotional—capable of influencing mindset, well-being, and identity,” she emphasizes.

Mirvatte Mtanos is an international entrepreneur, architect, and creative visionary whose work bridges the worlds of design, psychology, and human behavior. With a deep interest in how spaces and visuals shape emotion, she has built a reputation for blending aesthetics with human experience, creating environments that resonate far beyond their physical form.

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Her multidimensional approach combines architecture, graphic design, and psychology into a seamless practice. This allows her to:

- Blend Design and Soul – exploring how structure and perspective influence emotion and behavior.
- Communicate Identity – using design as a strategic tool to reflect personality and purpose.
- Design for Impact – ensuring every element carries meaning and intention.

As a Lebanese woman entrepreneur building a global voice in architecture and design, Mirvatte embodies leadership through creativity and courage. Working from her own empire home, she develops concepts that reach audiences worldwide, proving that design can be both luxurious and transformative.

Her vision is clear: to inspire others, elevate human experience, and demonstrate that design is not just about what we see—it is about what we feel.



Mirvatte Mtanos