



Gachagua plans Kikuyu rally, unveils by-election candidate and leads in mourning MP
Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua has announced plans to hold a public rally in Kikuyu Constituency while also endorsing a candidate for the upcoming Emurua Dikirr by-election and joining mourners in Nyandarua County. Page 11



Kindiki pushes for speed cameras as Nyeri mourns road crash victims
Deputy President Kithure Kindiki has called for the urgent lifting of court orders that halted the installation of speed cameras and the implementation of instant fines. Page 16

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Diplomatic row In that call, Sing'Oei conveyed Kenya's solidarity with the UAE, anchoring Nairobi's position squarely behind diplomatic de-escalation efforts.

Iran faults Kenya's position on Gulf crisis



Foreign Affairs Principal Secretary Korir Sing'Oei

"I conveyed to him Kenya's solidarity — in line with President Ruto's well stated position on this matter — and assured him of our readiness to work with the UAE to respond through diplomatic means to this escalating situation," Sing'Oei wrote on X, signalling a careful but unmistakably clear alignment with Gulf partners.



Iranian Ambassador to Kenya Ali Gholampour at a past event

The Iranian Embassy in Kenya has publicly rebuked Foreign Affairs Principal Secretary Korir Sing'Oei, accusing Nairobi of ignoring critical context surrounding the rapidly deteriorating crisis in the Gulf region. Page 9

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Kindiki urges courts to lift ban on road safety measures

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

Some of the moments as captured in pictures

Deputy President Kithure Kindiki has urged the judiciary to lift court orders blocking the implementation of new traffic enforcement measures, following a fatal road accident that claimed 16 lives along the Nyeri-Nyahururu highway.

Speaking in Nyeri Town yesterday, Kindiki said the government had introduced far-reaching interventions last month, including installation of speed cameras, instant fines for traffic offenders, and strict demerit penalties for drivers causing death or injury through violations. However, the rollout was halted after courts issued an injunction.

“The Government appeals to the Judiciary to lift the interim orders or allow implementation of these measures even as the case proceeds,” said Kindiki.

The Deputy President spoke during an interdenominational memorial service held at Kabiruni Show Grounds to honour the victims of the crash near Dedan Kimathi University.

Later, he visited survivors receiving treatment at Nyeri Level 5 Hospital, offering condolences and support to affected families.

Nyeri Governor Mutahi Kahiga said the injured victims were recovering well, with one survivor; a nine-year-old boy already discharged and recuperating at home.

“Though the road to healing may be long, we remain hopeful for the full recovery of all survivors,” Kahiga said.

Leaders and clergy present called for collective responsibility among road users to help curb rising road accidents and prevent further loss of life.



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NEWS IN BRIEF



The National Authority for the Campaign Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA) West Pokot County Coordinator, Scollah Komen, has officially flagged off a five-day caravan roadshow aimed at sensitizing residents on drug abuse across West Pokot. The campaign, which began on Monday will run until Friday, covering all sub-counties. Komen said the initiative seeks to reach communities at the grassroots level, particularly targeting youth and children during the school holiday periods. She noted that NACADA research indicates a worrying rise in alcohol and sustenance abuse among young people in the county and across the country, with cases reported among children as young as seven years old.



The Ministry will continue to engage stakeholders as it expands access to technology and skills and create jobs through the establishment of digital hubs across the country. Yesterday, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Information, Communication and the Digital Economy William Kabogo appeared before a joint sitting of the National Assembly Committee on Communication, Information and Innovation and the NG-CDF Committee, chaired by John Kiarie and Musa Sirma, respectively, to present progress on the Digital Hubs Project. The CS acknowledged the support received from Members of Parliament. During the meeting, he outlined the progress and the challenges that have affected the implementation of the programme and the measures undertaken to address them.



Centre for Mathematics, Science and Technology Education in Africa (CEMASTEA) is currently hosting a five-day STEM Boot Camp at its Karen Campus, for learners from Grade 4 to Form 4. The programme helps participants gain essential skills for a technology-driven world through hands-on learning in coding, robotics, and mentorship. Among the projects learners are engaging include mobile app development, 3D design, robotics, and practical math and science explorations. These experiences foster critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and innovation, while inspiring young minds to pursue STEM pathways. The Boot Camp prepares learners with foundational skills vital for success in the digital and innovation-driven job market.



Motorists queue for fuel at the Rubis petrol station in Nyeri town as a wave of panic-buying gripped the country. Long queues have been witnessed in other petrol stations within the country with motorists saying they are filling their tanks with fuel in preparation for the looming fuel scarcity.

Coast Region and UDA senior leadership led by Secretary General (SG) Hassan Omar (c), Sports Cabinet Secretary (CS) Salim Mvurya (R) lead delegates during a County delegates' engagement forum at the Burhani Sports grounds in Mvita yesterday.



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KIFWA The elections, held on 26th March at the Bandari Maritime Academy, were marred by chaos after some candidates, sensing defeat, switched off the microphone

KIFWA leaders call for unity after chaotic Mombasa election

BY Sadik Hassan

@themkenyatimes

The Kenya International Freight and Warehousing Association (KIFWA) Mombasa branch's newly elected officials have called for unity to advance members' interests and tackle long-standing industry challenges following a hotly contested election in March.

The elections, held on 26th March at the Bandari Maritime Academy, were marred by chaos after some candidates, sensing defeat, switched off the microphone during the announcement of the chairperson's results.

In a letter dated 30th March 2026, the Registrar of Societies, Teresia Gathagu, confirmed that Leonard Njiru was duly elected as KIFWA Mombasa branch chairperson. Others elected included Mary June (Vice chairperson), Clement Ngala (Secretary), and Wycliffe Adele (Treasurer) for a three-year term.

Newly elected chairperson said police are investigating the violence that erupted during the announcement of results, which led to the destruction of property at the academy, adding that those found culpable will be charged in accordance with the law.

"When you prevent the announcement of a winner, you do not stop the declaration of that person as the duly elected leader," Njiru said at KIFWA's office.

"We want to advise our worthy opponents to desist from unnecessary propaganda, confusion, and disinformation, as though the election did not take place," he added.



Kenya International Freight and Warehousing Association (KIFWA) officials addressing the media.

The chairperson affirmed that the new leadership is determined to address industry challenges through collaboration with various government agencies and will not be distracted. "We remain focused on solving the myriad issues we are facing," said the new chairman.

He further noted that they are keen to resolve motor vehicle valuation concerns, the mounting backlog of empty containers filling depots and resulting in huge demurrage charges, as well as the newly introduced levy by the National Environment Man-

agement Authority.

"We also have challenges in the handling of transit cargo, which has been a pain in the neck for far too long," said Njiru.

During his term, the chairperson aims to ensure the transformative Kenya Customs Agents and Freight Forwarders Bill is enacted, introduce an annual gala to recognize top-performing members, promote the empowerment of women and youth in logistics, and roll out the East Africa Customs Bond in conjunction with a consortium of insurance firms.

Branch Vice chairperson Mary June urged candidates who lost the election to join hands with the new leadership to steer the association to greater heights, noting that "there is strength in unity,".

She also advised members aspiring to vie in future elections to be prepared to concede defeat gracefully rather than disrupt the association.

"In any given election, there are two outcomes. You can either emerge as a winner or come out having been defeated, and you need to prepare for both scenarios," she stated.

Branch secretary Clement Ngala said the election outcome has been settled and should now be put behind, urging members to support the new leadership, noting that power is transient.

"It moves from person to person and changes in shape and form. We are advising our members to stay put, trust the process, and be ready to accommodate any issues that may arise as we address industry challenges," said Ngala.

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NAIROBI

Cartels, Kenya and the president who keeps fighting them



President William Ruto

BY MKT REPORTER

[@themtkenyatimes](#)

President William Ruto has once again invoked the language of cartels to explain Kenya's latest fuel importation scandal, vowing to defeat shadowy networks he says have long manipulated the country's essential commodity supply chains.

The word is not new to his vocabulary. Since taking office in September 2022, Ruto has deployed it with remarkable frequency — against the sugar industry, the tea and coffee sectors, fertiliser supply chains, and now the energy sector, where five senior officials face criminal charges over the irregular procurement of fuel outside the established Government-to-Government framework. "These cartels in the energy sector will not be allowed to operate freely. They will not escape accountability," he declared, in language that has become something of a presidential signature.

The cartel narrative, however, carries historical baggage. In 2023, then Trade Cabinet Secretary Moses Kuria faced intense public

and parliamentary scrutiny over a controversial edible oil importation deal that drew allegations of single-sourcing and potential tax revenue losses of up to Sh10 billion. Officials at the Kenya National Trading Corporation were removed, and Kuria was eventually dropped from Cabinet — yet no cartel was conclusively named, prosecuted, or dismantled.

The pattern is familiar to Kenyans who have watched successive administrations diagnose the same disease without administering a lasting cure. Whether the cartels Ruto describes are a precise description of organised criminal networks or a convenient political shorthand for institutional failure and elite capture remains a matter of genuine public debate.

What is not debatable is the cost. Inflated fuel prices, substandard consignments, and falsified stock data impose a very real burden on ordinary Kenyans.

Naming cartels has never been Kenya's problem. Defeating them is another matter entirely.



President Ruto with his officers and the French delegation after yesterday's meeting.

Ruto highlights deepening Kenya–France ties ahead of key global summits

BY MKT REPORTER

[@themtkenyatimes](#)

President William Ruto has reaffirmed Kenya's strong and growing partnership with France, citing expanded cooperation across multiple sectors and increased investment as key pillars of the bilateral relationship.

Speaking after a meeting with French ambassador Arnaud Suquet at State House, Nairobi, the President said Kenya and France continue to enjoy cordial relations anchored on shared values and mutual interests, with France ranking among Kenya's leading investors.

Ruto noted that the two countries are scaling up collaboration in strategic areas including green industrialisation, the blue economy, agriculture, health, digital technology, infrastructure, and education to unlock greater economic opportunities.

"We are expanding cooperation across key sectors to create more opportunities for our people and strengthen our economic partner-

ship," he said.

The meeting also reviewed preparations for the upcoming Africa Forward Summit, scheduled to take place in Nairobi on May 11–12. The summit will mark a historic first, as it will be hosted in a non-Francophone country, signaling its expanding continental reach and influence.

According to the President, Kenya will use the forum to push for critical global reforms, particularly in the international financial system, while also advocating for stronger, secure, and sustainable economic partnerships.



Ruto noted that the two countries are scaling up collaboration in strategic areas including green industrialisation, the blue economy, agriculture, health, digital technology, infrastructure, and education to unlock greater economic opportunities.

"At the summit, we will actively engage on key issues, including reforming the international financial architecture and strengthening sustainable partnerships," Ruto said.

The Head of State further revealed that Kenya has been invited to participate in the upcoming G7 Summit by French President Emmanuel Macron.

Ruto described the G7 meeting as a crucial platform to advance Africa's agenda on the global stage, especially coming immediately after the Africa Forward Summit.

"The G7 Summit presents an important opportunity to carry forward Africa's priorities into global deliberations and reinforce the link between regional perspectives and global decision-making," he noted.

Kenya's growing engagement with global partners underscores its increasing diplomatic and economic influence, as the country positions itself as a key player in shaping both regional and international policy discussions.

Diplomacy In a pointed response, Iran's embassy in Nairobi argued that the source of aggression in the region lay not with Iran but with the United States

'Stand on the right side of history': Iran faults Kenya's position on Gulf crisis

Tehran's embassy in Nairobi hits back at Principal Secretary Korir Sing'Oei after Kenya expresses solidarity with the UAE amid escalating US-Iran hostilities

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyaintimes

The Iranian Embassy in Kenya has publicly rebuked Foreign Affairs Principal Secretary Korir Sing'Oei, accusing Nairobi of ignoring critical context surrounding the rapidly deteriorating crisis in the Gulf region.

The rebuke, posted on X, came days after Sing'Oei disclosed on April 1, 2026, that he had held a phone conversation with Abdulla Balalaa, the United Arab Emirates' Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Energy and Sustainability, during which he was briefed on the impact of attacks attributed to Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps on critical infrastructure across Gulf Cooperation Council member states. In that call, Sing'Oei conveyed Kenya's solidarity with the UAE, anchoring Nairobi's position squarely behind diplomatic de-escalation efforts.

"I conveyed to him Kenya's solidarity — in line with President Ruto's well stated position on this matter — and assured him of our readiness to work with the UAE to respond through diplomatic means to this escalating situation," Sing'Oei wrote on X, signalling a careful but unmistakably clear alignment with Gulf partners.

Tehran was not prepared to let that statement go unchallenged. In a pointed response, Iran's embassy in Nairobi argued that the source of aggression in the region lay not with Iran but with the United States and what it described as the "Israeli regime," drawing on United Nations General Assembly Resolution 3314, which defines acts of aggression under international law. The embassy contended that the use of regional territories by foreign powers to launch strikes against Iranian soil constituted a direct violation of that framework, and accused both Washington and Tel Aviv of breaching Article 2(4) of the UN Charter — the foundational prohibition against the use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any sovereign state.

Iran's defence of its own military actions was equally categorical. Tehran maintained that its operations



Foreign Affairs Principal Secretary Korir Sing'Oei

were conducted in lawful self-defence, insisting they targeted only military installations and remained within the bounds of proportionality and necessity as recognised under international law — the twin pillars that states traditionally invoke to legitimise retaliatory force.

The Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most strategically vital shipping lanes through which roughly a fifth of global oil supply passes, has emerged as a flashpoint in the standoff. Iran's embassy addressed the matter directly, framing any disruptions to maritime traffic as a consequence of what it described as American and Israeli aggression rather than Iranian belligerence.

"As the coastal state, Iran has introduced necessary restrictions to ensure safe passage. Vessels belonging to non-belligerent countries may conduct innocent passage in coordination with Iran," the embassy posted on X, before drawing a hard line. "Clearly, vessels of belligerent parties — especially the U.S. and the terrorist Israeli regime, as well as those serving their interests — cannot use this waterway." The language was unambiguous

and the implications profound. A prolonged closure or restriction of the strait would send shockwaves through global energy markets, threatening supply chains from Asia to Europe and placing enormous economic pressure on nations far removed from the conflict — Kenya and the broader African continent among them.

The embassy concluded its statement with a direct appeal to third-party nations, urging them to condemn what it called the aggressors and, in language carrying a distinct moral charge, to "stand on the right side of history" by aligning with Iran's position. It simultaneously reaffirmed Tehran's resolve to defend its sovereignty and national security — a signal that Iran has no intention of standing down regardless of international pressure.

That pressure, it must be said, is mounting from a formidable quarter. US President Donald Trump recently issued one of his most incendiary warnings yet, threatening to "wipe out a whole civilisation" if Tehran failed to reopen the Strait of Hormuz within hours. The threat, extraordinary even by the standards

of the current administration's combative foreign policy posture, underscored just how close the situation has edged toward an open and potentially catastrophic military confrontation between Washington and Tehran.

For Kenya, a country that has worked deliberately in recent years to cultivate economic and diplomatic relationships across the Gulf — with the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and other GCC members representing significant trade partners and sources of foreign direct investment — the crisis presents a delicate balancing act. Nairobi's alignment with Abu Dhabi is consistent with its broader strategic interests, yet Iran's public challenge forces Kenyan diplomats to navigate a moment where even silence carries political cost.

President Ruto's administration has staked considerable diplomatic capital on positioning Kenya as a credible multilateral voice, particularly in African Union and UN forums. Being drawn into the orbit of one side in a conflict that has already seen accusations of international law violations traded between nuclear-armed and nuclear-aspiring states is pre-

cisely the kind of entanglement that smaller powers with large ambitions seek to avoid.

The broader crisis reflects what analysts have for years described as the inherent fragility of Gulf security architecture — a region laced with competing interests, armed to significant degrees by external powers, and governed by a web of bilateral relationships that frequently pull in contradictory directions. With no public breakthrough in sight and the rhetoric between Washington, Tel Aviv, and Tehran growing more extreme by the week, the diplomatic space for resolution is narrowing at an alarming rate.

Kenya finds itself, perhaps unexpectedly, with a walk-on role in one of the world's most consequential dramas — and how Nairobi manages the competing demands of principle, pragmatism, and partnership in the weeks ahead may say more about the maturity of its foreign policy than any speech delivered in a conference hall.

The world is watching. So, it seems, is Tehran.

Ruto-Sakaja President Ruto is expected to deliver a comprehensive progress report on the Sh80 billion cooperation agreement signed in February

Sakaja convenes security meeting ahead of Ruto's historic Nairobi assembly address

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

Nairobi Governor Johnson Sakaja has convened a high-level security and logistics meeting to prepare for President William Ruto's address to the Nairobi County Assembly this Thursday — an occasion that will mark the first time a sitting president has formally addressed the assembly.

The meeting drew together

a broad cross-section of stakeholders, including the County Assembly Speaker and its leadership, the County Commissioner and National Government Administrative Officers, regional police commanders, government reception officials, and State House protocol teams. Deliberations centred on harmonising security arrangements, logistics, and ceremonial protocol to ensure the visit proceeds without incident.

President Ruto is expected to

deliver a comprehensive progress report on the Sh80 billion cooperation agreement signed in February between the national government and Nairobi City County. The landmark pact, negotiated under Governor Sakaja's stewardship, sets out an ambitious blueprint to transform the capital across several fronts — drainage upgrades to address chronic flooding, an integrated waste management and recycling framework, expanded street lighting across residential es-



Nairobi Governor Johnson Sakaja has convened a high-level security and logistics meeting to prepare for President William Ruto's address to the Nairobi County Assembly

tates, the recarpeting of major roads, and the continuing regeneration of the Nairobi River, all within a 24-month delivery window.

Last week, Sakaja, who chairs the agreement's implementation committee, led a delegation to State House to present an early progress

report on the programme — a signal that both levels of government are invested in demonstrating tangible results ahead of the presidential appearance.

Thursday's address carries weight beyond logistics. For a city long caught between national neglect and county

ambition, a sitting president appearing before its assembly to account for a transformative development compact is, at minimum, a statement of intent.

Whether the projects match that intent is a question Nairobi's residents will be watching closely.

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Politics Gachagua said he had accepted an invitation from leaders affiliated with the DCP to address a public rally in Kikuyu township on Saturday

Gachagua plans Kikuyu rally, unveils by-election candidate and leads in mourning MP



Rigathi Gachagua with DCP officials from Kikuyu constituency.

that the constituency, like all parts of Kenya, is governed by the Constitution, which guarantees freedom of assembly.

"I have been advised not to be intimidated. Kikuyu is part of the Republic of Kenya and the rule of law must prevail," he said, adding that local leaders had assured him of adequate security for the event.

Gachagua further claimed that attempts to disrupt the meeting would not derail

what he described as a broader movement for national transformation.

In a separate development, he endorsed Vincent Kibet Rotich as the DCP party flag bearer in the upcoming Emurua Dikirr parliamentary by-election.

Addressing supporters at the party headquarters, Gachagua described Rotich as a young and visionary leader capable of representing the people effectively.

"You have a historic opportunity to make your voice heard and shape your future," he said, urging voters to rally behind the candidate.

He linked the by-election to the legacy of the late Johanna Ng'eno, saying the choice of Rotich reflected the aspirations of the constituency.

Meanwhile, Gachagua joined residents of OI Kalou in Nyan-

darua County in mourning the death of area MP David Kiaraho.

He described the late legislator as a humble and dedicated leader, recalling their time together in Parliament where they served in the same departmental committee.

"Hon. Kiaraho was a peaceful and amiable man. His contribution to leadership and service will be remembered," he said.

Gachagua extended his condolences to the family and constituents, praying for strength and comfort during the grieving period.

In all the events, he was accompanied by dozens of former, current and aspiring political leaders from different parts of the country as well top party leadership.

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyatimes

Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua has announced plans to hold a public rally in Kikuyu Constituency while also endorsing

a candidate for the upcoming Emurua Dikirr by-election and joining mourners in Nyandarua County.

Gachagua said he had accepted an invitation from leaders affiliated with the DCP to address a public rally in Kikuyu township on Saturday, adding

that he would invite principals of the United Alternative Government to attend the event.



The former Deputy President dismissed threats allegedly issued by Kikuyu MP Kimani Ichung'wa warning against the planned meeting, insisting



DCP leader Rigathi Gachagua at the OI-Kalou home of the David Kiaraho.





The unveiling of Emurua Dikirr constituency DCP candidate | Photo: Courtesy.

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SCAN FOR MAJISAFI

Politics The MP further alleged that operators of digital advertising screens across the county had also been warned against airing an animated version of the same message

Billboards pulled down in Mombasa spark row over voter awareness campaign

BY WMW

@themkenyaintimes

A political storm is brewing in Mombasa after three billboards promoting voter registration were allegedly torn down under controversial circumstances, raising concerns over freedom of expression and political interference ahead of anticipated electoral

activities.

Nyali Member of Parliament, Mohamed Ali accused individuals linked to the Mombasa County Government of orchestrating the removal of the billboards, which he says carried a non-partisan civic message encouraging residents to register as voters.

According to a media statement he released yesterday, the billboards; strategically

placed in Buxton, Ferry, and Kibarani were dismantled on Monday night after what he described as “intimidation and threats” directed at advertising firms contracted to display the message.

The MP further alleged that operators of digital advertising screens across the county had also been warned against airing an animated version of the same message, with pres-



One of the billboard that was pulled down. | Photo: Courtesy

sure reportedly emanating from officials within the county administration led by Governor Abdulswamad Sharrif Nassir.

At the center of the dispute is a Swahili message that reads: “Utawala Bora sio zawadi. Ni haki yako. Chukua kura tujikomboe,” loosely translated as

a call for citizens to embrace their democratic right by registering to vote.

Ali maintains that the message is purely civic in nature and does not promote any political candidate or party.

“This is not inflammatory, not partisan, and not unlawful,” he said.

“It is a simple reminder that good governance is a right, not a privilege.”

The incident has triggered a wider debate about constitutional freedoms, particularly the right to free expression as guaranteed under Article 33 of the Constitution. Ali argues that the removal of the billboards represents a direct attempt to suppress civic education and maintain historically low voter registration levels in the coastal region.

He also raised concerns about the impact on private businesses, noting that advertising firms were being unfairly targeted despite operating within the law.

“This is an abuse of power that undermines both democratic space and legitimate commerce,” he added.

In his statement, the legislator painted a broader picture of what he termed entrenched political control in the county, accusing unnamed leaders of concentrating power within a small elite circle and sidelining ordinary citizens.

“For too long, Mombasa has been treated like a personal enterprise by a few individuals,” he said. “Citizens are

seen as beneficiaries rather than rightful owners of their county.”

Efforts to reach officials from the county government for comment were unsuccessful by the time of publication.

Ali has formally called on the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) to investigate the matter, terming it a case of interference with lawful voter awareness initiatives.

Political analysts warn that such incidents, if left unaddressed, could erode public confidence in democratic processes, particularly in regions where voter turnout has historically lagged behind national averages.

Residents in Mombasa have expressed mixed reactions, with some viewing the move as a political tactic while others see it as an unnecessary escalation over a message many consider harmless.

As the situation unfolds, attention now shifts to the electoral commission and whether it will intervene to safeguard civic engagement efforts in the region.

For now, the torn-down billboards have become more than just advertising structures; they are the latest flashpoint in an intensifying struggle over political messaging, public space, and the right of citizens to be informed and engaged in shaping their leadership.

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Drug traffickers “The vessel was not engaged in legitimate activity but in an organised trafficking operation,” Kimanathi stated.

DPP lines up 12 witnesses against Iranian suspects in KSh8.2B narcotics case

BY MKT REPORTER
 @themtkenyatimes

The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) has begun prosecuting a high-profile drug trafficking case involving narcotics worth Ksh.8.2 billion.

Appearing before Shanzu Chief Magistrate Anthony Mwicigi, the prosecution stated it plans to call 12 witnesses against six Iranian nationals comprising Jasem Darzadeh Nia, Rahim Baksh Goharam, Hassan Baloch, Imran Baloch Mustafa, Nadeem Jadgal Abdulgani and Emtiyaz Daryayi.

Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions Joseph Kimanathi told the court that Kenya has the legal authority to handle the case under both the Constitution and international law.

“The vessel was not engaged in legitimate activity but in an organised

trafficking operation,” Kimanathi stated.

The first witness, Kenya Navy Lieutenant Colonel Joab Gitonga, explained how the suspects were arrested during a coordinated international operation.

Gitonga told the court that the mission was carried out through the Regional Coordination Operations Centre, which works to fight crime in the Indian Ocean.

He said that on October 17, 2025, the Kenya Navy received intelligence about two suspicious vessels, MV Igor and MV Chevy. Authorities tracked MV Igor, which was believed to be heading towards the East African coast.

With support from the Seychelles Coast Guard, the vessel was intercepted on October 20, 2025, about 350 nautical miles off the Kenyan coast.

The court heard that the dhow, lat-



Six Iranian nationals accused of trafficking narcotics on the high seas appear before Shanzu Chief Magistrate Anthony Mwicigi yesterday | Photo: ODPP

er identified as Mashallah, had no flag, did not respond to radio calls, and appeared to be drifting, raising suspicion.

A search by marine commandos found six crew members with Irani-

an identification but no ship registration documents.

Officers also recovered 769 packets of a white crystalline substance, later confirmed to be methamphetamine, weighing over one tonne.

The vessel was escorted to Mombasa, where it was handed over to a multi-agency team for further investigations.

The trial continues.

The Mt. Kenya Times



In Myn Heart! O' blush floriferous!



Voice that abates, the name, swings in debates
Ineffably stitched to myn mynness, rampant
springs to thy fate
Myn jouissance—closer to diligence, wholesome
thou are,
Elate the dimension of myn heart, lit the luster
to my countenance so far
Twinkles in myn ears—blow blossom, blink and
blush
Yes! Thou, the first whisper that vociferous till
ages under a flash
Thou, myn deliberation when I whisper, myn
stability when I discern, myn attire when I recall
In fact, Myn whole presence thou are, I title thou
a glare around myn heart's wall
My Love, Thou, in myn heart, since ages to ages
ahead rigorously
dampening myn heart to a next level of
radication—desperately.

Tajalla Qureshi

Thou, myn Lyrics—
the subtle, stunning, and the sensorous
wavy presence, fluctuates senses, sights, and
eyes
Chosen melody, heaven's daffodil, moon entire
strikes
Brighten the trick and trip, clicked in and ever
thy tenderness, thy poeticality intertwines flower
In myn heart,
since the birth into a lush scholarly stream—
thou, myn divine art

Enola



Divine spirit in yourself, a shining soul you are,
Who helps every human like a whole guiding star,
You're a sweet cool breeze that adds life into life,
You're prettier than tulip these rumors are rife,
Being a small and humble platy; I have felt as well,
For me you're the water; no life out of this shell,
Tewksbury is a name-less song that is carrying
no worth,
Only your smooch can make it immortal on earth.

—Taimoor Ehsan

In a crowded world, you'll hear a single voice,
Who in the world of aches is trying to be nice,

The palace built by Amir Temur



A caravan follows another onward,
As time itself walked in Temur's way.
Like the great Sahibqiran, a builder and leader,
He raised a school for Temurbeks to stay.

Amir Temur returns again to his palace,
The great ruler asks about his land.
Envoys and nations bring their greetings,
Pride and honor in descendants stand.

In sorrow and joy, forever with the people,
You are time's crown, O Ak-Saray grand.
You make hearts mountains, souls like the
heavens—
This this people, this sacred land!

Still foretelling the strength of a nation,
You rise in pride, O Ak-Saray high.
A palace that stands for justice eternal—
No greater palace beneath the sky.

Rustam Musurmon

Foretelling the greatness of a mighty nation,
You stand in pride, O Ak-Saray high.
A palace built by my forefather Amir Temur,
No grander court exists beneath the sky.

They say a beauty's rival is her beauty,
Both good and bad behold in deep surprise.
Your charm, your grace, your wondrous splendor
Have left your enemies in shattered cries.

Your domes are blue, your cupolas golden,
A beacon shining like a torch of light.
Your tiles of gold, lapis, and jewels—
Each corner glows, a city in its might.

Half-Written Love



And blurred the ink between the signs.

Your name still lingers on my page,
A quiet echo, a softened rage,
Of "what ifs" that never grew,
Of dreams that never made it through.

We were a story left midway,
A sunset fading into grey,
No proper end, no last goodbye,
Just unsaid words that learned to lie.

I still revisit where we paused,
Not for closure, not for cause,
But just to feel that fleeting art—
Of an incomplete, yet perfect heart.

@Dr. Daksha Udhani
Ahmedabad

We met like verses lost in time,
Two souls that almost chose to rhyme,
Your eyes held words I couldn't read,
Yet felt like everything I'd need.

The silence spoke, the pauses stayed,
In every glance, a promise laid,
But fate, it wrote in broken lines,

Even monkeys fall from trees



The strongest grip may come undone,
The wisest miss what can't be seen.
For skill is shaped by what we learn,
Not by never failing in between.
So when you fall, don't lose your way,
Nor doubt the strength you've grown—
For even those who climb the best
Still stumble on their own.

Even monkeys fall from trees,
In careless moments, in the breeze.
Hands that knew each branch by heart,
Still can slip and lose their start.

Sr Amala
Vallioor

Hard work never fails



Today's child is tomorrow's man.
Early humans became modern man.
Everyone works daily to achieve their goals.
You can never give up your hard work. Remember
that hard work never fails.
You have it; it is your strong thought.
You will never fail in all your efforts.

Hardwork never fails.
You do your work with confidence.
It makes success permanent.
Don't worry about small failures.
Failure is the stepping stone of victory.
Without failure, we cannot make history.
Small, consistent steps give big success.

—written by
G. Yasmin Sirajudheen
Secondary grade teacher
Melmalayanurblock
Villupuram Dt.

No one can take care of your health more than yourself



You are always an important person.

Fresh fruits and vegetables
Improve your metabolism.
Being a kind hearted person
Always helps you away from stress.

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.

You are responsible for your health
Having a good environment is
the main source of a healthy life.
Ensure that you are doing well.

Fill up your body with
Fresh air and healthy food.
By means of your family,

Politics “Every public officer found culpable — regardless of rank, office, or political persuasion — must be held fully accountable,” Oburu said.

ODM expresses ‘profound outrage’ over fuel scandal, demands impartial graft fight

Party applauds Ruto’s swift probe but warns against political lynching of uninvolved officials as five energy sector suspects are charged

BY MKT REPORTER
@themkenyatimes

The Orange Democratic Movement has expressed “profound outrage” over Kenya’s unfolding fuel procurement scandal, calling for a comprehensive and impartial anti-corruption drive while commending the government for the speed of its response. Speaking on behalf of the party, ODM leader Senator Oburu Oginga praised investigative authorities and President William Ruto for ensuring that inquiries proceed professionally, expeditiously,

and without interference. His tone was unambiguous. “The era of complacency in the face of corruption must come to an end,” Oburu said. “Every public officer found culpable — regardless of rank, office, or political persuasion — must be held fully accountable.” The statement arrives as five senior energy officials face criminal charges linked to the alleged manipulation of petroleum stock data and irregular fuel procurement. Former Petroleum Principal Secretary Mohamed Liban, ex-Kenya Pipeline Company Managing Director Joe Sang, former Energy and Petroleum


Regulatory Authority Director General Daniel Kiptoo Bargarora, Deputy Director of Petroleum Joseph Wafula, and KPC Supply and Logistics Manager Joel Mburu were each released on Sh100,000 police cash bail pending court appearances. Investigators allege the five falsified fuel stock data to manufacture a false impression of a shortage, thereby triggering emergency procurement of a consignment outside the established Government-to-Government framework. The consequences of that alleged manipulation are stark. Preliminary findings reveal a pricing gulf be-

tween shipments delivered in March: fuel supplied by One Petroleum aboard MT Paloma landed in Mombasa at Sh198,855 per metric ton, against Sh140,111 per metric ton under the G2G consignment by Gulf Energy via MT FOS Mercury — a difference of Sh58,744 per metric ton, or approximately Sh43.40 per litre. Reports further indicate the emergency consignment was substandard, compounding financial loss with public safety risk. President Ruto has pledged an unrelenting crackdown. “These cartels in the energy sector will not be allowed to operate freely. They will not escape accountability,” he declared. ODM, however, was careful to draw a boundary. The party cautioned against the public vilification of Cabinet Secre-



ODM leader Senator Oburu Oginga

taries Lee Kinyanjui and Opiyo Wandayi, who it said bore no direct responsibility for the scandal. “Attempts at public lynching will only derail investigations and politicise the scam,” the party warned, urging that the fight remain anchored in evidence rather than political theatre. With the fuel scandal now a central test of the ODM-UDA coalition’s ten-point governance agenda, Kenya’s patience for half-measures is running thin.




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Traffic Rules The requiem mass, held at Kabiru-ini Showground near Nyeri Town, brought together national and county leaders, clergy, and grieving families

Kindiki pushes for speed cameras as Nyeri mourns road crash victims

Seven of the victims were scheduled to be laid to rest yesterday, with four more burials set for today. The remaining victims will be buried later in the week according to family arrangements. Three others had already been laid to rest in Kitui, Machakos, and Kirinyaga counties.

Leaders present included Members of Parliament Njoroge Wainaina (Kieni), Wambugu Wainaina (Othaya), Eric Wamumbi (Mathira), Duncan Mathenge (Nyeri Town), Geoffrey Wandeto (Tetu), and County MP Rahab Mukami, as well as Principal Secretaries; Caroline Karugu, Ann Wang'ombe and Alex Wachira and county officials.

As the country grapples with increasing road fatalities, leaders reiterated the need for stricter enforcement of traffic laws and collective responsibility among road users to prevent further loss of life.

After the service, Kindiki and his team visited the accident survivors in hospital.



Leaders in solemn mood during the requiem service yesterday |

Photo: Courtesy.

Leaders when they visited the road accident survivors.

BY DPCS and William Muchiri

@themkenyatimes

Deputy President Kithure Kindiki has called for the urgent lifting of court orders that halted the installation of speed cameras and the implementation of instant fines, saying the measures are critical in curbing the rising number of fatal road accidents in the country.

Speaking yesterday during an interdenominational funeral service for 16 victims of a grisly road accident along the Nyeri-Nyahururu highway, Kindiki emphasized that technology-driven enforcement would promote discipline among motorists and save lives.

The requiem mass, held at Kabiru-ini Showground near Nyeri Town, brought together national and county leaders, clergy, and grieving families in a solemn farewell to the victims.

“We appeal to the Judiciary to support efforts to save lives by lifting orders that have

halted the use of speed cameras and instant fines. We must operationalize these road safety measures because we are losing too many people,” said Kindiki.

He noted that the government had already rolled out speed cameras on major highways, which automatically detect traffic violations and issue fines directly to offenders’ mobile phones.

According to the Deputy President, failure to pay the fines would result in restrictions on vehicle operations, while repeat offenders risk losing their driving licenses.

Kindiki urged drivers to exercise caution, attributing the surge in road accidents to speeding and poorly maintained vehicles.

“We continue to lose many lives on our roads, mainly due to speeding and mechanical issues. Slowing down gives drivers better control in unexpected situations,” he said.

At the same time, the Deputy President conveyed condolences from President William Ruto, assuring bereaved fam-

ilies of government support during and after the mourning period.

Nyeri Governor Mutahi Kahiga described the tragedy as devastating, noting it had shaken both the county and the nation at large.

“With profound sorrow, we gather here united in grief and compassion following this heartbreaking tragedy that has claimed 16 lives and left several others injured,” said Kahiga.

He assured the affected families of the county’s unwavering support, emphasizing solidarity during the difficult period of mourning.

“As Nyeri County, we stand shoulder to shoulder with the families who have lost their loved ones, offering prayers, comfort, and support,” he added.

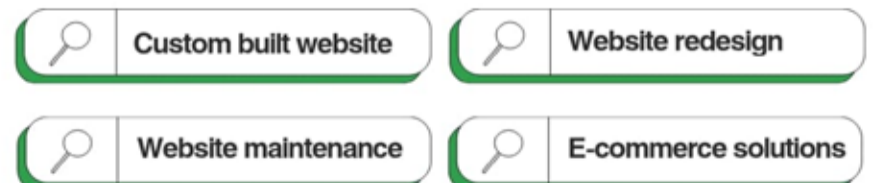
The governor also thanked the national government, led by President Ruto and Deputy President Kindiki, for standing with the victims’ families, as well as clergy and community members who organized the funeral service.



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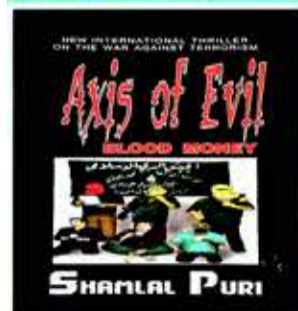
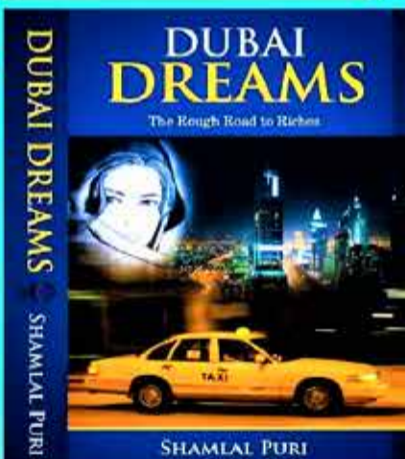
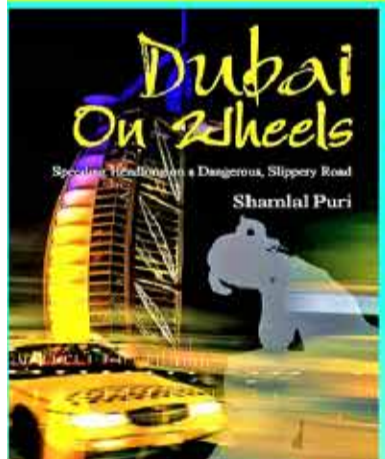
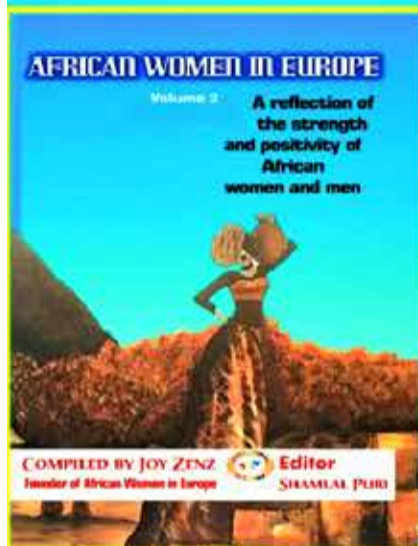
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Water

The strategic role of URWASCO in safeguarding Eldoret water Ecosystem

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyaintimes

The transformation of Eldoret City into one of Kenya's newest and most promising urban centres represents far more than a change in administrative status presents both an opportunity and responsibility. As the city expands economically and demographically, the integrity of its water systems, ranging from up streams catchments to downstream discharge zones must be managed with foresight, technical precision and dedicated institutional coordination. It signals the emergence of a city whose economic, educational, agricultural, and sporting influences continue to grow well beyond the business boundaries of Uasin Gishu County. Vibrant agricultural markets, Universities, training colleges, international sporting and recreational facilities, and steadily expanding commercial sector have positioned Eldoret as a dynamic regional hub with international repute. Beneath these visible growth indicators lies a more fundamental question that will determine the long-term sustainability of the city: how effective its water systems are governed.

Water is a silent architecture upon which every thriving city stands on. The supply that sustains homes, hospitals, industries, universities, and agricultural enterprises does not originate within the city alone. It flows from rural catchments, springs, rivers and aquifers that lie far beyond urban boundaries. Likewise, the wastewater and storm water generated within the city eventually leave the urban landscape and return to rural ecosystems, farms and settlements downstream. The hydrological cycle therefore binds the rural, peri-urban and urban environments into a single ecological system.

In these interconnected realities, the responsibilities placed upon the Uasin Gishu Rural Water and Sanitation Company (URWASCO) require significance that goes well beyond rural water supply. The institution stands at a critical intersection between the ecological source that feed the Eldoret's water systems and the downstream environments that must absorb and sustain the flows leaving the city. Its role is therefore central to ensuring that the water entering and exiting Eldoret is managed re-

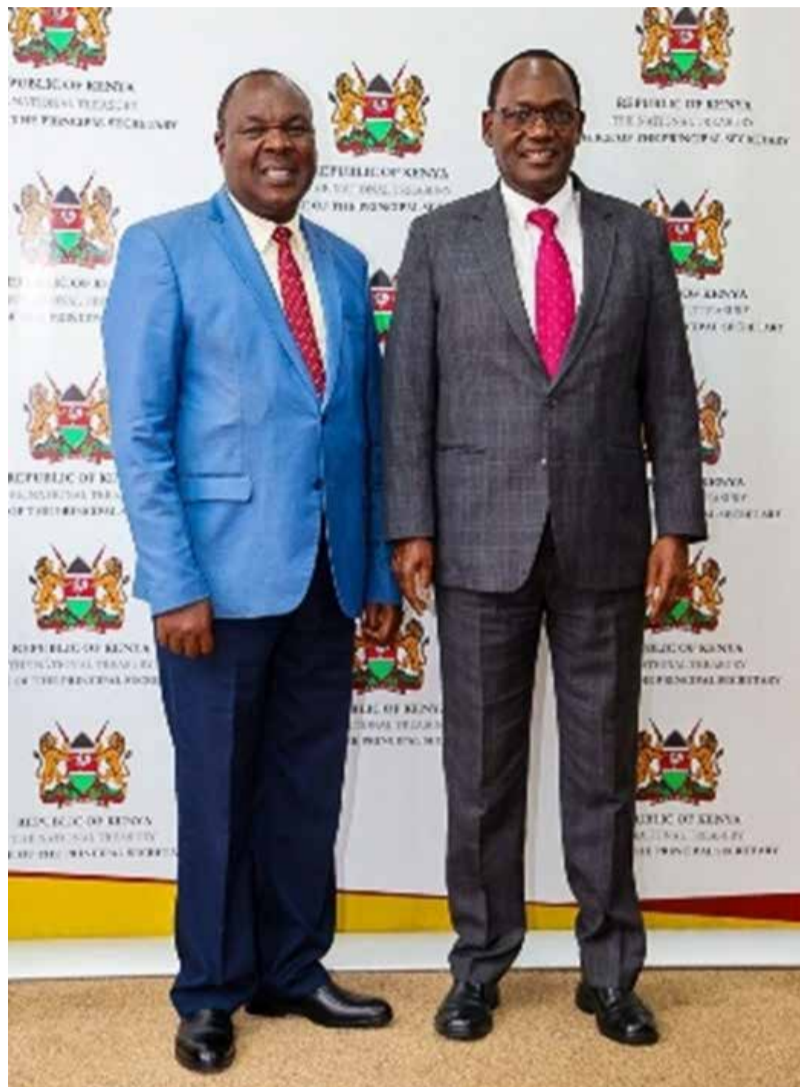
sponsibly in terms of quality, quantity and regulated flow.

Water quality protection begins before water reaches treatment plants or distribution networks. Rivers and streams entering Eldoret pass through agricultural landscapes, rural homesteads, trading centers and peri-urban settlements. These environments are often exposed to pressures such as agricultural runoff, poorly managed waste disposal, and regulated development. Without vigilant oversight, such activities can gradually degrade water sources, increasing the burden on treatment systems and threatening public health and affordability of urban water services.

Equally important is the management of water quality. Sustainable urban development depends upon reliable water flows from rural catchments. Over-abstraction of groundwater, degradation of forest catchments and poorly regulated borehole development can steadily erode the capacity of natural systems to replenish water supplies. When such pressure accumulates, cities inevitably face shortages, rising treatment costs and competition for scarce resources. The tasks of monitoring and managing these resources require coordinated oversight across rural and peri-urban landscapes, an area in which URWASCO must play an increasingly proactive role.

Yet the most underappreciated dimension of water governance lies in the management of water flows leaving the city. Urban development inevitably alters the natural movement of water across the landscape. Roads, buildings and paved surfaces reduce the soils natural capacity to absorb rainfall. Stormwater that normally soaks gently into the ground is instead channeled rapidly through the drainage systems into nearby rivers and streams. When these flows are not properly regulated, they can overwhelm natural waterways, causing flooding, erosion and environmental degradation in downstream communities.

The rivers and drainage channels that carry water away from Eldoret ultimately pass through rural areas and agricultural lands. These landscapes, which fall largely within the operational environment of URWASCO, become the recipients of the city's discharge, whether in the form of treated water, stormwater



Mr. Pius Kigen with Treasury Ps Dr. Chris Kiptoo

runoff or flood surges during heavy rains. Managing these flows responsibly therefore requires close coordination between urban water utilities, rural water institutions, and environmental regulators. Without such coordination, the consequences may be felt far beyond the city limits, affecting the livelihoods, ecosystems, and infrastructure across the wider region.

It is within this complex and evolving landscape that the leadership of Mr. Pius Kigen, the newly appointed Board Chair of URWASCO, assumes particular importance. Recognizing the magnitude of the challenge and opportunities it presents, Mr. Kigen has embarked on a deliberate and determined effort to engage both County and National institutions, including critical stakeholders for water governance and resource support. The outreach reflects a clear understanding that the future of Eldoret water ecosystem cannot be secured by any single institution acting in isolation. It requires the

alignment of legal frameworks, regulatory oversight, technical expertise and institutional collaboration

These engagements seek to build precisely such systems. They aim to strengthen cooperation between URWASCO, urban utilities such as Eldoret Water and Sanitation Company (ELDOWAS) and national regulatory bodies including Water Services Regulatory Boards (WASREB) and Water Resource Authority (WRA), alongside environmental oversight institutions such as National Management Environmental Authority (NEMA). Together these organisations operate within the framework of the water act 2016, which provides the legal foundation for water governance in Kenya.

The efforts to create an integrated water management ecosystem is both timely and necessary. Cities that neglect the coordination of rural catchments, peri-urban infrastructure and urban sanitation systems often find themselves confronting severe environmental and economic

crises. Polluted rivers demand costly treatment technologies before water can be supplied safely to residents. Flood-damaged infrastructure requires expensive reconstruction. Degraded catchments reduce water availability precisely when demand is rapidly rising

For cities such as Eldoret, whose identity is tied to its role as a center for education, agriculture, sports, industry and commerce these risks carry profound implications. The vitality of universities, the productivity of surrounding farms, the health of communities, and the attractiveness of the city to industrialists and investors all depend on the availability, sustainability and reliability of the water ecosystem.

The work being now undertaken by URWASCO's leadership offers an opportunity to address these challenges before they become crises. By advocating for stronger legal clarity, improved technical coordination, and sustained institutional and financial support Mr. Kigen is helping to place water governance to the centre of Uasin Gishu and specifically Eldoret urban planning agenda. Such leadership deserves not only recognition but active support from national and county government and development partners.

The path forward requires commitment from all parties. Legal and regulatory frameworks must be continually reviewed to ensure that responsibilities between rural and urban water continuum. Technical capacity must be strengthened to monitor water quality, drainage, manage sustainable extraction and regulate water flows that move through and beyond the city.

If these efforts are supported, sustained and strategically focused, Eldoret can emerge not merely as a growing city but as a model of responsible water governance worth emulating. It can demonstrate that rapid urban expansion need not come at the expenses of environmental integrity or rural livelihoods. Instead, growth can be guided by a deliberate commitment to protect the very ecosystem that sustain it.

Ultimately, the future of Eldoret will be written not only in its buildings, markets, stadiums, and universities, but in the rivers that flow through its landscape and the water systems that sustain its people. By strengthening institutions such as URWASCO and rallying stakeholders behind a shared vision of integrated water management, the city has an opportunity to secure a resilient and sus-

Politics The former Chief Justice said the contributions are not merely as financial support, but as a symbol of hope and shared responsibility

Maraga Raises KSh8mn in citizen-led drive for 2027 presidential bid

BY I. MWANGI
@themkenyatimes

Former Chief Justice and 2022 presidential candidate David Maraga has raised Sh8 million from ordinary Kenyans to finance his anticipated 2027 presidential campaign, barely eighteen months before the next general election. The funds, mobilised through a citizen-led drive spanning the country, represent what Maraga cast as something far greater than a campaign war chest. "Eight million shillings, given by ordinary, determined, faithful Kenyans who refuse to give up on this country. I am humbled and deeply grateful," he said, framing the contributions as a collective act of hope rather than mere political financing.



David Maraga

The former head of the Judiciary acknowledged that the figure, while encouraging,

marks only the beginning of a long road. "The work ahead is immense. To reset,

rebuild and restore Kenya will take every one of us — our prayers, our voices, and

yes, our continued giving," he said, urging those yet to contribute to act immediately and those who had already given to recruit others. "This is not my campaign. This is Kenya's moment. Let us not waste it," Maraga added.

The fundraising milestone arrives alongside a sharper political message. In recent days, Maraga has trained his sights on the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission, cautioning the electoral body against statements or conduct that could erode public confidence ahead of 2027. "I call on IEBC to desist from any statements or actions that undermine citizen confidence in their ability to conduct free, fair and credible elections in accordance with the law and the Constitution," he said.

Maraga disclosed that during

a meeting with commissioners on March 23, he pressed the importance of uncompromising ballot integrity and strict adherence to their constitutional oath. He further called for the urgent convening of a multi-stakeholder forum to address the audit of the voter register, diaspora voter registration, election technology reliability, and necessary legal reforms — matters he described as too critical to defer.

His remarks land amid confusion surrounding the ongoing Enhanced Continuous Voter Registration exercise, running until April 28, 2026, with the IEBC this week clarifying that Kenyans registered before 2012 need not re-register unless absent from the current biometric system.

With his war chest growing and his rhetoric sharpening, Maraga is signalling unmistakably that his 2027 ambitions are no longer a quiet possibility — they are an organised campaign in motion.

The strategic role of URWASCO in safeguarding Eldoret water Ecosystem

Contd from page 18

tainable foundation for generations to come. Mr. Kigen must determinately make the move, knock doors and bring stakeholders to the table and have a combined focus on this noble cause. It is worth the efforts now and in future of Uasin Gishu and specifically Eldoret City

By Mr. Fredrick Kipchumba Chelimo PWD
Chairperson, Jiamini Disability network Community Based organization
Email: jiamini.network@gmail.com



Water and Sanitation PS Mr. Julius Korir during his visit to their offices

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War Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei said the same day that a ceasefire would only give opponents time to regroup and commit further crimes.

Why is a U.S.-Iran peace deal so hard to reach?

BY Xinhua News Agency

@themtkenyatimes

Pakistan on Monday proposed a plan to ease hostilities between Iran and the United States, sharing the initiative with both capitals just as U.S. President Donald Trump's deadline for Iran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz approaches.

Describing the ceasefire negotiations with the Iranian side via intermediaries as "going well," Trump also threatened to destroy every bridge and power plant in Iran if no peace deal is reached with Tehran before yesterday. With tensions mounting across the region, there is little expectation that Iran will comply with Trump's demands. Why is a deal so hard to reach?

Unreliable promise

On Sunday, the United States, Iran, and regional intermediaries were reportedly holding talks centered on a 45-day pause in hostilities, the first stage of a broader two-phase agreement that may bring the conflict to a temporary close. However, Tehran has been pushing for a permanent ceasefire, with assurances that neither the United States nor Israel would carry out further attacks, according to Iranian officials, who also said that Iran has received messages from mediators including Pakistan, Türkiye and Egypt. "We only accept an end of the war with guarantees that we won't be attacked again," reported The Associated Press, quoting Mojtaba Ferdousi Pour, head of the Iranian diplomatic mission in Cairo.

In late March, U.S. media reported that Washington had conveyed a 15-point plan to Tehran through Pakistan in an effort to end the war. Iranian officials later dismissed the proposal, describing it as "excessive and disconnected from the realities on the battlefield." Despite ongoing negotiations, U.S. airstrikes inside Iran have continued, prompting Iranian officials to prepare for further attacks and casting doubt on whether talks will limit military action. "If attacks on civilian targets are repeated, the subsequent phases of our offensive and retaliatory operations will be carried out much more crushingly and extensively," Ebrahim Zolfaghari, an Iranian military



Uncle Sam: "Winning" on a sinking ship. (Produced by Xinhua Global Service)

spokesman, said on Monday.

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei said the same day that a ceasefire would only give opponents time to regroup and commit further crimes. As the deadline looms, analysts said that discussions are continuing, though they concede that the two sides remain far apart. They also questioned the reliability of the United States' assurances, noting that Washington has not stopped Israel from launching strikes on targets in Gaza, even after a ceasefire was reached last year. "We are deeply grateful to Pakistan for its efforts and have never refused to go to Islamabad. What we care about are the terms of a conclusive and lasting end to the illegal war that is imposed on us," Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Saturday.

Hormuz face-off

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been pressing Trump to withhold any ceasefire deal unless Iran offers concessions, including reopening the Strait of Hormuz, reported Axios, a U.S. digital news outlet. Shortly after the United States

“**In late March, U.S. media reported that Washington had conveyed a 15-point plan to Tehran through Pakistan in an effort to end the war. Iranian officials later dismissed the proposal, describing it as “excessive and disconnected from the realities on the battlefield. “Despite ongoing negotiations, U.S. airstrikes inside Iran have continued, prompting Iranian officials to prepare for further attacks and casting doubt on whether talks will limit military action.”**

and Israel launched massive attacks on Iran on Feb. 28, Iran effectively closed the critical waterway for global energy trade. Since then, the United States has long made the immediate reopening of the strait a precondition for any agreement. Trump claimed Monday at a press conference that the United States should impose tolls on vessels passing through the strait, stressing that reopening the global energy chokepoint must be part of a deal to end the war. "What about us charging tolls?" Trump said. "I'd rather do that than let them (Iranians) have them."

The Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most important maritime chokepoints, saw roughly 20 million barrels of oil and oil products pass through each day in 2025 alone, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. "Iran's power is the Hormuz Strait," Araghchi said on March 25. The Strait of Hormuz "will be reopened" when a portion of transit tolls is used to compensate for "all the damage caused" by the war, BBC reported, quoting Seyyed Mehdi Tabatabaei, a spokesman for the Iranian president's office. Trump could also extend the deadline, a

move he has done several times. On March 26, Trump issued a second ultimatum in the span of a week, demanding that Iran fully reopen the strait to international shipping. In a later statement, he said that at Iran's request, he was "pausing the period of Energy Plant destruction by 10 days.

Nuclear program

Trump and Tehran have long been at odds over Iran's nuclear program, and this is hardly the first confrontation. In June 2025, Trump suspended negotiations with Iran over its nuclear program and carried out strikes on three of its nuclear facilities.

In February this year, following a month marked by a significant U.S. military buildup in the region, Trump once again accused Tehran of dragging its feet in nuclear talks and launched with Israel attacks on Tehran. "Only President Trump knows what he will do, and the entire world will find out tomorrow night if bridges and electric plants are annihilated," said White House spokeswoman Anna Kelly on Monday. While United Nations spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said attacks on power plants and bridges would represent "a violation of international law," Trump dismissed the statement, saying, "You know what a war crime is? Having a nuclear weapon." Iran is believed to be in possession of a stockpile of 60-percent enriched uranium that is reportedly buried "under the rubble" of its bombed nuclear facilities.

While the United States and Israel justified their strikes on Iran as targeting nuclear facilities, subsequent attacks also hit schools, civilian infrastructure, and hospitals. "I would never allow Iran to have a nuclear weapon," Trump said on April 1 in his first formal address to the nation since launching a war on Iran, accusing Tehran of trying to carry out "campaigns of terror, coercion, conquest and mass murder from behind a nuclear shield." In early April, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian accused the United States of launching a sudden attack on Iran amid ongoing negotiations, calling it a "war crime" for targeting the country's energy and industrial facilities. Analysts suggested that U.S. strikes on Iran have gone far beyond nuclear facilities, inflicting economic damage that will be difficult to repair in the short term and creating a major obstacle to reaching any agreement.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Remarriage of threat

The sudden reunion of former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua and former President Uhuru Kenyatta has jolted the Mt. Kenya political scene. After years of rivalry, tension, and open hostility, the two men now appear intent on forging a common front. Their rapprochement is not a sentimental gesture but a calculated move to consolidate influence in a region that has long been decisive in national elections.

Signs of this realignment are already visible. Leaders allied to Gachagua's Democratic Conservative Party have begun warming to figures within the Jubilee Party, many of whom remain closely tied to Kenyatta. Joint public appearances and shared platforms have followed, unmistakable signals of a truce and a willingness to collaborate. The symbolism is deliberate: two former adversaries presenting themselves as partners in shaping the region's political destiny.

This alliance is more than tactical convenience. It is a strategic recalibration designed to reassert Mt. Kenya's centrality in national politics. By bridging old divisions, Gachagua and Kenyatta are positioning themselves as power brokers capable of unifying a fractured voting bloc. Their combined influence could reshape alliances, redraw strategies, and unsettle the balance of power ahead of the 2027 general elections.



The implications are profound. A united Mt. Kenya front poses a direct challenge to President William Ruto's re-election prospects, injecting uncertainty into the political calculus. For the region, it signals the possibility of renewed cohesion; for the nation, it raises the stakes of the next electoral contest.

This remarriage of threat is not just reconciliation—it is a warning shot. Mt. Kenya unity could once again decide Kenya's political future.

By: *Charity Mwangi, Laikipia University*

Mental health awareness among students

The silent crisis in Kenya's classrooms is not about grades—it is about mental health. Students are buckling under the weight of academic pressure, social expectations, and personal struggles, yet too many suffer in silence. Raising awareness is no longer a choice; it is a necessity if schools are to nurture not just educated minds but resilient, healthy individuals.

The stressors are relentless. Exams, deadlines, financial strain, and family demands pile up, while social media magnifies insecurities through constant comparison. The result is rising anxiety, depression, and burnout among young people who feel trapped between ambition and exhaustion.

Yet stigma remains the biggest barrier. Many students fear being labeled weak if they admit to struggling. Others lack access to counseling or simply do not know where to turn.



This silence is dangerous—it erodes academic performance, isolates students, and in severe cases, leads to self-destructive behavior.

Breaking this cycle requires deliberate action. Schools and universities must invest in counseling services, host workshops, and create safe spaces where students can speak openly. Teachers and parents must listen without judgment, offering guidance and support rather than criticism.

Equally vital is empowering students to care for themselves. Balanced diets, regular exer-

cise, adequate sleep, and honest conversations with trusted friends or mentors can make a profound difference. Seeking help should be reframed as strength, not weakness.

Mental health awareness is about building a culture of empathy and understanding. When students feel valued, they thrive. Ignoring this reality risks producing graduates who are academically polished but emotionally broken.

Kenya cannot afford educated minds at the expense of broken spirits.

By: *Adrine Njeri Wanjiku, Laikipia University*

Political manipulation of Kenya's devolved health sector

Kenya's devolved health sector, once hailed as a bold step toward accessible and accountable healthcare, is now being strangled by political manipulation. What was designed to bring services closer to citizens has instead become a playground for power struggles, patronage, and corruption. The result is a system that too often serves politicians rather than patients.

At the heart of the problem lies the tug of war between national and county governments. Health is a shared function, yet blurred responsibilities have created fertile ground for rivalry. County leaders frequently chase flashy projects that boost their popularity instead of investing in long term infrastructure or preventive care. Procurement contracts, staffing decisions, and resource allocations are routinely skewed by political loyalty rather than merit or need. Oversight bodies remain weak, while citizens are



sidelined from meaningful participation in planning.

The consequences are devastating. Resources are unevenly distributed, leaving some counties with modern facilities while others languish in neglect. Health workers endure delayed salaries, irregular contracts, and politically motivated transfers that sap morale. Patients face drug shortages, crumbling infrastructure, and declining quality of care. Vulnerable populations in rural and marginalized areas bear the brunt, deepening inequality and eroding trust in public institutions.

Reform is urgent. Clearer separation of roles between national and county governments, stronger oversight, transparent procurement, and digital budget tracking are essential. Public participation must be strengthened, and health leadership appointments depoliticized to restore professionalism.

Kenya's health system cannot remain hostage to political games. Unless governance is reclaimed from manipulation, devolution will continue to betray the very citizens it was meant to serve.

By: *Collins Kibet, Koitalel University*

Why do campus students cheat in exams?

Cheating in university exams has become a troubling norm, eroding academic integrity and raising urgent questions about the values shaping higher education. Despite strict rules and penalties, dishonesty persists. The real issue is not simply misconduct—it is the deeper pressures and systemic failures driving students toward shortcuts.

Academic pressure tops the list. For many, passing exams is tied to family pride, career prospects, and financial stability. The fear of failure, coupled with inadequate preparation, makes cheating appear as a lifeline. Poor time management compounds the problem. Campus freedom often overwhelms students juggling coursework, jobs, and social life. When deadlines collide, panic pushes some toward dishonest solutions.

Equally damaging is the lack of support in learning. Large classes, complex content, and limited lecturer interac-



tion leave students feeling lost. Peer influence normalizes malpractice, shifting the mindset from "Is it right?" to "Everyone is doing it." Technology has only widened the gap, offering discreet tools for cheating that bypass traditional safeguards.

Mental health challenges add another layer. Anxiety, stress, and depression impair judgment, leaving students vulnerable to desperate decisions. Institutions themselves share blame: overcrowded classrooms, weak academic support, and exam-centric systems reduce education to a numbers

game, prioritizing grades over genuine learning.

Addressing this crisis requires more than punishment. Universities must foster supportive environments, strengthen mentorship, and emphasize integrity as a core value. Students, too, must accept responsibility, recognizing that true success is built on effort, honesty, and resilience.

Cheating may win marks, but it robs education of meaning—and Kenya cannot afford graduates without integrity.

By: *Deborah Soi, Laikipia University*

SPORTS NEWS

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BREAKING NEWS



Sports >> *Africa Nazarene University (ANU) Wolfpacks suffered a painful 73-71 loss to Umoja in a tightly contested National Men's Basketball Premier League clash at Nyayo Gymnasium on Sunday.

ANU Wolfpacks rue missed chances in narrow defeat to Umoja



Africa Nazarene University (ANU) Wolfpacks suffered a painful 73-71 loss to Umoja in a tightly contested National Men's Basketball Premier League clash at Nyayo Gymnasium on Sunday.

Despite a strong start, ANU lost momentum in the second quarter, allowing Umoja to take control of the game.

Head coach Michael Oluoch admitted his side switched off at a crucial moment.

"It was a tough game. We start-

ed well, but in the second quarter we relaxed a bit, and that allowed our opponents to go on a run. We responded strongly and came back to play much better," he said.

Oluoch pointed to missed free throws and unnecessary fouls as the key factors behind the narrow defeat, noting the team must improve its conversion rate going forward.

"Our biggest challenge was missing free throws and committing fouls against a very

competitive opponent. We need to improve on our free-throw conversion going forward," he added.

The Wolfpacks mounted a spirited comeback and came within a single basket of victory, but ultimately fell short in a game decided by fine margins.

"The boys played really well, and it's just bad luck losing by one basket, it's painful. But we'll correct the issues with our free throws and keep going. The guys are ready to fight another

day."

Despite the loss, ANU showed resilience and promise, pushing Umoja all the way in an entertaining contest.

ANU currently sit bottom of the standings with five points from three matches, while Umoja climb to second place with 11 points after six games.

Citizen sport

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *Harry Kane has resumed training with Bayern Munich as the German champions prepare for their highly anticipated Champions League quarter final first leg against Real Madrid.

Kane Returns to training ahead of Real Madrid clash



Bayern Munich's English forward Harry Kane

Harry Kane has resumed training with Bayern Munich as the German champions prepare for their highly anticipated Champions League quarter final first leg against Real Madrid. The England striker joined his teammates on Monday, marking an important step in his recovery from a minor ankle issue sustained during international duty. Kane picked up the injury in late March while representing England, forcing him to withdraw from last Tuesday's friendly against Japan at Wembley. England manager Thomas Tuchel described the problem as a "minor complaint," but Bayern opted for caution, leaving the 32 year old out of Saturday's Bundesliga fixture against Freiburg. Bayern edged that match 3 2 without their star forward, highlighting

both the depth of the squad and the importance of Kane's return. On Monday morning, Kane appeared in good spirits during a brief 15 minute training session that was open to the media. His presence on the pitch was a welcome sight for Bayern supporters, who have been anxiously awaiting news of his fitness. While he did not participate fully, his involvement suggested steady progress and raised hopes that he could feature against Real Madrid. Bayern's new head coach, Vincent Kompany, has made it clear that he will wait until the last possible moment to decide whether Kane starts in Tuesday's tie. The Belgian tactician intends to assess Kane's condition carefully before committing to a lineup, emphasizing the need to

balance ambition with prudence. Kompany's decision will likely be announced only hours before kickoff, adding intrigue to an already high stakes encounter. Kane's impact this season has been nothing short of extraordinary. Since joining Bayern, he has scored 48 goals in 40 appearances across all competitions, underlining his status as one of Europe's most prolific forwards. His Champions League record is equally impressive, with 10 goals in nine outings. Such numbers illustrate why Bayern are eager to have him available against Real Madrid, a club renowned for its dominance in Europe's premier competition. The tie itself promises drama and intensity. Real Madrid, with their rich Champions League pedigree, will pose a formidable

challenge. Bayern, however, will be buoyed by Kane's potential inclusion and the momentum gained from their recent domestic victory. For Kane, the match represents not only a chance to continue his remarkable scoring run but also an opportunity to prove his resilience in the face of injury. As the countdown to kick-off continues, all eyes will be on Bayern's training ground and Kompany's final decision. Whether Kane starts or is used as an impact substitute, his presence could prove decisive in shaping the outcome of this heavyweight clash.

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SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



Interpretation of Symbols and Images in the Novel “Mehrobdan Chayon”



By: Durdona Abdurahmonova

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Worth Noting:

- In literary studies, a symbol is interpreted as an artistic device that expresses a broader and deeper meaning through a specific object, phenomenon, or image. It leads the reader beyond the surface of events to their hidden essence. Artistic images, in turn, embody the author's worldview, social stance, and aesthetic ideals, often representing generalized characteristics of a certain era or social group. In “Mehrobdan chayon,” symbols and images are used harmoniously to define the ideological direction of the work.
- The title itself carries a strong symbolic meaning. The word “mehrob” represents sacredness, purity, faith, and spirituality, while “chayon” symbolizes danger, betrayal, and hidden evil. The combination of these two opposing concepts in one title is intentional. It suggests that even within seemingly sacred and pure environments, there may exist concealed corruption and hypocrisy. This serves as a sharp critique of false piety and moral duplicity in society.

Introduction

In Uzbek literature, artistic symbols and images serve as important aesthetic tools that deepen the content of a work, indirectly express the author's ideas, and reveal the inner world of characters. This is especially evident in historical and socially oriented novels, where symbolic representations illuminate the problems of the era, the conflicts between the individual and society, and human values. In this regard, Abdulla Qodiriy's novel *Mehrobdan chayon* stands out for its rich and multi-layered use of symbols and images. In the novel, symbols are not merely decorative elements but function as key components that shape its ideological and artistic concept. Through the symbolic meanings embedded in the title and the main characters, the author exposes issues such as moral crisis, hypocrisy, injustice, and indifference to human destiny.

society.

The characters in the novel also function as symbols of various social and ethical flaws, such as selfishness, ambition, and the sacrifice of truth for personal gain. Additionally, the depiction of setting and environment carries symbolic significance. Certain places represent oppression and injustice, while others reflect the inner suffering and psychological state of individuals. Through these symbolic layers, the author intensifies the novel's critical perspective on social issues.

Moreover, the coexistence of the “mehrob” and “chayon” symbols highlights the distortion of spiritual and moral values. It indicates how religious and ethical concepts are sometimes manipulated for personal interests. The characters' actions, dialogues, and inner monologues further reinforce these symbolic meanings, encouraging readers to think deeply and search for hidden

Mehrobdan Chayon.

Main Part

In literary studies, a symbol is interpreted as an artistic device that expresses a broader and deeper meaning through a specific object, phenomenon, or image. It leads the reader beyond the surface of events to their hidden essence. Artistic images, in turn, embody the author's worldview, social stance, and aesthetic ideals, often representing generalized characteristics of a certain era or social group. In “Mehrobdan chayon,” symbols and images are used harmoniously to define the ideological direction of the work.

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interpretations.

Conclusion

In conclusion, symbols and images in “Mehrobdan chayon” are widely and effectively used as essential artistic and aesthetic devices. From the title to the characters and settings, the novel is enriched with symbolic meaning. Through the symbols of the “mehrob” and the “chayon,” the author reveals the presence of evil hidden behind the mask of sanctity and draws attention to moral issues within society. The symbolic images generalize the social problems of the time and remain relevant for modern readers. Therefore, studying this novel from the perspective of symbols and imagery holds significant importance in Uzbek literary studies.

Author Information

Durdona Abdurahmonova (Abdurahmon qizi) was born on February 11, 2002, in Chortoq district of Namangan region. She graduated from Secondary School No. 25 in her district and later completed her



ABDULLA QODIRIY

MEHROBDAN CHAYON

(Xudoyorxon va munshilari hayotidan tarixiy roman)

undergraduate studies in Uzbek language at Namangan State University. Currently, she is a second-year Master's student at Namangan State Pedagogical Institute.

From an early age, Durdona has been diligent and inquisitive. During her initial years as a student, she began teaching Uzbek language to university applicants at the “Mega Ziyoy” educational center, where she trained many students. In the following years, she worked in various private schools and, through her dedication and continuous self-improvement, she is currently working as an external expert at the Agency for Assessment of Knowledge and

Skills.

Her main goal is to become a highly qualified specialist in her field and to share her knowledge and experience with future generations.