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Court upholds public's right to access SGR contracts
The Court of Appeal has dismissed an appeal by the Attorney General seeking to block disclosure of contracts and agreements relating to Kenya's multi-billion-shilling Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) project

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Protests "They are protesting because life has become unbearable," Muturi said after the CS addressed the press outside his Harambee house.

Kenya halts over fuel

Kenya yesterday faced widespread transport paralysis and growing political tension as opposition parties intensified attacks on President William Ruto's administration over soaring fuel prices, rising cost of living, and what they termed as government insensitivity to public suffering.

The nationwide disruption followed sharp increases in fuel prices announced by the Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority (EPRA) last week, with diesel rising by KSh46.29 per litre and super petrol by KSh16.65.

The increases triggered protests and transport shutdowns in several towns, leaving thousands of commuters stranded and businesses counting heavy losses.



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Transport grounded due to yesterday's protests

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Fuel price protests erupt as public anger over cost of living intensifies

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

Some of the moments as captured in pictures

Protests erupted in parts of the country yesterday as Kenyans took to the streets to express anger over rising fuel prices and the escalating cost of living, triggering traffic disruptions, heightened security deployments, and renewed political debate over energy pricing policies. Demonstrations were reported in many towns where groups of youths, transport operators, and civil society activists blocked major roads, lit bonfires, and chanted slogans demanding immediate reduction of fuel prices. Commuters were left stranded for hours as public transport was disrupted in key routes, with matatu operators suspending services in some areas over increased operating costs.

The protests come amid recent fuel price adjustments by the Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority (EPRA), which saw the cost of petrol and diesel rise significantly, sparking outrage among consumers already grappling with high food, electricity, and transport costs.

Law enforcement agencies were deployed in large numbers to contain the demonstrations, with police dispersing crowds in some areas using tear gas and bullets. In isolated incidents, confrontations were reported between protesters and police officers, leading to deaths, injuries and arrests.

Opposition leaders and human rights groups urged restraint from both protesters and security agencies, warning against the use of excessive force and destruction of property. They have also called for urgent government intervention to address the underlying economic grievances fueling public anger.

They weighed in on the protests, blaming government policies and fuel import arrangements for worsening economic pressure on households and businesses.

The government, on its part, has defended ongoing energy sector reforms, arguing they are necessary for fiscal stability, even as it pledged to monitor market dynamics and address unfair pricing concerns.



Editor's Desk

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NEWS IN BRIEF



President William Ruto on Sunday met United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) Executive Director Anacláudia Rossbach on the sidelines of the World Urban Forum in Baku, Azerbaijan. The meeting reaffirmed cooperation between Kenya and UN-Habitat in promoting sustainable urban development and expanding access to affordable housing globally. Ruto, in his role as Global Champion for Adequate Housing, pledged Kenya's continued partnership in advancing resilient, sustainable, and people-centred cities. He reiterated that Kenya will continue implementing its Affordable Housing Programme to ensure all citizens, regardless of background, can access decent and dignified shelter as part of broader efforts to improve urban living conditions and development.



The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) has assured Kenyans that their personal data will remain secure under proposed reforms introducing biometric data collection in national censuses and surveys. The changes are outlined in the Statistics Bill, 2026, which is currently undergoing public participation and seeks to transform KNBS into the Kenya Statistics Authority. The bill proposes the use of biometric data to improve accuracy, reduce duplication, and enhance data integrity in statistical exercises. KNBS says the reforms will strengthen, not weaken, data protection, citing compliance with the Data Protection Act, the Access to Information Act, and Article 35 of the Constitution. Acting Head of Legal Services Linda Olueny emphasized that all collected data will be treated confidentially and stored securely in accordance with legal safeguards.



The ACK Diocese of Nambale has launched an education foundation aimed at supporting bright but needy students to access quality education and achieve their goals. The initiative targets learners from vulnerable families, focusing on secondary and tertiary education without discrimination. Speaking at the launch in Nambale, Principal Secretary for Economic Planning Bonface Makokha praised the project, saying education is a key driver of community development and economic growth, and called for collective support to sustain the foundation. Bishop Isaiah Obuya said the initiative was prompted by increasing cases of learners unable to afford school fees despite existing government support. Busia Governor Paul Otuoma also backed the foundation, noting it would improve access to education for disadvantaged children.



The Media Council of Kenya's Director of Media Training and Development, Victor Bwire, has encouraged students to embrace journalism training and responsible content creation during the inaugural Journalism Clubs Expo held at Mukumu Girls High School in Kakamega County. The expo targeted journalism club students from secondary schools and TVET institutions, focusing on news production, dissemination, and balancing online and offline media content. It brought together over 800 students from at least 38 institutions across the region. Bwire said the initiative aims to identify and nurture young media talent early, enabling mentorship and coaching in specialised areas. He added that students could pursue journalism careers or become self-employed through digital platforms like YouTube, contributing to job creation and supporting government efforts to reduce unemployment.

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Protests In several areas, businesses closed early amid fears of looting and vandalism.

Government blames criminals, politicians for fuel protests

BY Suleiman Mbatiah
@themtkenyatomes

The government said yesterday's anti-fuel price protests were part of a coordinated campaign by criminal gangs and opposition-linked politicians to spread fear, vandalize property and disrupt transport across the country, as demonstrations over rising fuel costs escalated into violent confrontations, looting and widespread transport paralysis in several towns.

Interior Cabinet Secretary Kipchumba Murkomen said four people were killed and more than 30 injured during the unrest, which disrupted businesses, forced matatu operators off major routes and left thousands of commuters stranded nationwide.

Demonstrations were reported in Nairobi, Nakuru, Kisumu, Mombasa, Nyeri, Kiambu, Murang'a, Meru, and Eldoret, where protesters lit bonfires on highways, barricaded roads with stones and debris, and clashed with anti-riot police deployed to clear transport corridors.

In several areas, businesses closed early amid fears of looting and vandalism.

"What we witnessed today was not peaceful protest but a coordinated campaign of lawlessness designed to intimidate citizens, destroy livelihoods and paralyze transport networks across the country," Murkomen said.

The CS said security agen-

cies had gathered intelligence indicating that organized groups infiltrated demonstrations in multiple towns with instructions to block roads, attack property and provoke confrontations with police. Officials alleged that unnamed political actors financed the unrest and mobilized youths to disrupt commercial activity and intimidate government supporters.

According to Murkomen, incidents of arson, looting and vandalism targeted both public and private property, including businesses associated with pro-government politicians. The government cited the looting of supermarkets in Nyeri and Naivasha, the burning of a ruling party office in Wote, Makueni County, and the torching of two trucks linked to the Rironi-Mau Summit road project as evidence of what it described as a coordinated campaign of sabotage.

The protests were triggered by a sharp increase in fuel prices that has pushed up transport fares and intensified pressure on households already struggling with high food prices and inflation. Analysts have linked the latest fuel hikes to volatility in global oil markets and supply concerns tied to ongoing tensions in the Middle East.

Across major towns, commuters walked long distances after many public transport operators suspended services over safety concerns.



The body of a protester hit and killed by a police land cruiser is seen on Kenyatta Avenue in Nakuru yesterday. | Photo: Suleiman Mbatiah

In Nakuru and parts of Nairobi and Thika highways remained partially blocked for hours as police used tear gas to disperse protesters and re-open roads.

Murkomen said the government recognized the economic hardship caused by rising fuel prices and confirmed that the National Treasury, the Energy Ministry and transport officials were engaging stakeholders to explore possible interventions. However, he maintained that violence and destruction would not solve the crisis.

Civil society groups and some opposition leaders criticized the government's response, accusing police of using excessive force in parts of the country and calling for accountability over casualties reported during the demonstrations. Rights advocates also urged authorities to distinguish between peaceful

protesters and criminal elements during security operations.

"The government will not allow criminal gangs hiding behind political slogans to destabilize the country or threaten the safety of innocent Kenyans," Murkomen said.

Murkomen warned that organizers of violent demonstrations would face prosecution, adding that security agencies had been instructed to intensify operations against what it described as organized criminal networks behind the unrest. Officials also accused some politicians of making inflammatory statements that heightened political tensions and ethnic hostility.

Adan Mohamed named KRA boss



Adan Abdulla Mohammed

BY MKT REPORTER
@themtkenyatomes

Treasury Cabinet Secretary John Mbadi has appointed Adan Abdulla Mohammed as Commissioner General of the Kenya Revenue Authority, replacing Humphrey Wattanga with immediate effect.

The appointment was gazetted in a Special Issue of the Kenya Gazette dated May 18, 2026, under Section 11(1) of the Kenya Revenue Authority Act, for a three-year term.

Mohammed brings a rare combination of private sector gravitas and public service experience to the role. He previously served as Chief Executive Officer of Barclays Kenya and Managing Director for Barclays East and West Africa, where he oversaw operations across ten countries. His corporate career culminated in the role of Chief Administrative Officer for Barclays Africa before he transitioned into government.

In public service, Mohammed served as Cabinet Secretary for Industrialisation and Trade and later led the East African Community and Regional Development docket. Most recently, he has served as Chief of Strategy Execution at State House under President William Ruto's administration — a posting that placed him at the centre of the government's economic agenda.

His appointment arrives at a critical moment for KRA, which faces mounting pressure to broaden the tax base and meet ambitious revenue targets as the government navigates a tight fiscal environment. Analysts will be watching closely to see whether his blend of financial expertise and political proximity translates into measurable gains for the authority.

Mohammed steps into one of the most consequential roles in Kenya's public finance architecture.

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Politics We stand in solidarity with the rest of Kenyans during the ongoing shutdown

Matiang'i blasts government over rising cost, insecurity and economic crisis

BY Felix Njenga
@themkenyaintimes

Jubilee Party Deputy Leader and presidential hopeful Fred Matiang'i has strongly criticized the Kenya Kwanza administration over what he described as rising cost of living, worsening insecurity, and widespread mismanagement of the country, warning that Kenya risks deeper crisis if urgent corrective action is not taken.

Speaking during a Jubilee Party delegates' meeting in Kiambu Town, which was later postponed in solidarity with nationwide protests over fuel prices and economic hardship, Matiang'i said the party had resolved to suspend its political activities for a week to stand with suffering Kenyans.

He said the decision followed consultations by the Jubilee National Executive Committee (NEC), in discussion with party leader and former President Uhuru Kenyatta.

The meeting had brought together party officials, aspirants, church leaders, and supporters to deliberate on the country's political and economic direction ahead of the 2027 General Election.

"We stand in solidarity with the rest of Kenyans during the ongoing shutdown. We have decided to postpone today's meeting until next week so that we can join fellow citizens in reflecting on the crisis facing our country," Matiang'i said.

The former Interior Cabinet Secretary accused the government of steering the country into economic and social turmoil, citing corruption, poor governance, and incompetence as key drivers of the current challenges.

"The country is at a standstill. Everywhere you go there is pain. Fuel prices have doubled our campaign expendi-



Fred Matiang'i and Ole Kenta during yesterday's meeting.

ture and ordinary wananchi are suffering even more," he said, arguing that mismanagement of public resources had worsened living conditions.

Matiang'i warned that Kenya was sliding into a deeper crisis, pointing to what he termed historic levels of insecurity, including rising cases of robberies, harassment, and lawlessness across the country.

"The level of insecurity in this country is historic. Citizens are angry and frustrated, and the country is heading in the wrong direction," he said.

He also accused the government of ignoring repeated warnings from religious leaders, including the Catholic Bishops, the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCCK), and the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA), who have raised concerns over governance and economic hardship.

"Instead of listening, what we see is arrogance, insults

and complete disinterest in solving the country's problems," he said.

Matiang'i further claimed that the current administration had reversed economic gains made under the Jubilee government, saying key sectors such as education, healthcare, and security were now under strain.

He also criticized the government-to-government fuel import arrangement, claiming it had contributed to rising fuel prices and increased pressure on households.

"Our government will never enter into fictitious and criminal agreements that push fuel prices beyond the reach of ordinary citizens," he said.

Throughout the meeting, supporters chanted "one term" slogans in reference to President William Ruto, as Matiang'i declared that the

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Politics Prof Kindiki said the fuel crisis was a global challenge affecting economies

Kindiki: Economic sabotage, violent protests can't solve fuel crisis



DP Kithure Kindiki addressing Tharaka constituency grassroots leaders yesterday.

BY DPCS
@themkenyaintimes

Deputy President Kithure Kindiki has urged Kenyans to remain patient and avoid acts of violence as the government works with stakeholders to address the rising cost of fuel occasioned by the ongoing conflict involving Iran.

The DP was speaking yesterday during a consultative forum with grassroots leaders from Tharaka Constituency at his Irunduni rural home in Tharaka-Nithi County.

Prof Kindiki said the fuel crisis was a global challenge affecting economies across the world and should not be politicised.

"Through deliberate and innovative strategies, the Government, through the leadership of President William Ruto had lowered the cost of fuel from Sh218 per litre to Sh171 per litre before the war situation erupted in Iran a few weeks ago," the Deputy President said.

"I want to challenge the critics of this government to look Kenyans in the eye and

show us which country in the world has not had fuel prices increasing. This is a global challenge. It is not a Kenyan issue. We must all be truthful," he added.

Prof Kindiki defended the government's response to the fuel crisis, saying several interventions had already been undertaken to cushion wananchi from the effects of rising global oil prices.

"We are doing everything possible to cushion Kenyans from the effects of high fuel costs and will continue to do more," he said.

According to the Deputy President, government measures had prevented fuel prices from soaring to unprecedented levels.

"If the government had not made the interventions, the price of fuel per litre would have shot to between Sh300 and Sh400. So far, we have reduced VAT on petroleum products from 16 per cent to 8 per cent. We have also injected a lot of money into the stabilisation fund," he said.

While acknowledging that Kenyans have a constitutional

right to air their concerns over the cost of petroleum products, Prof Kindiki warned against destruction of property and economic sabotage.

"It is unpatriotic for anyone, in pursuit of political capital, to incite Kenyans to engage in acts of economic sabotage in the guise of pushing for lower fuel prices," he said.

"Demonstrations, violent protests, looting and anarchy cannot resolve the fuel cost challenge."

He added that the country could not afford instability at a time of economic strain.

"We cannot allow criminals to take our country hostage and sabotage the economy through violent protests, anarchy and looting. Our country is superior to all other interests," he said.

The Deputy President also announced that the National Infrastructure Fund currently holds Sh350 billion, which will finance water, energy and infrastructure projects, particularly in arid and semi-arid regions such as Tharaka beginning next year.

Matiang'i blasts government over rising cost, insecurity and economic crisis



Fred Matiang'i

Contd from page 7

current leadership had failed Kenyans.

He urged citizens to remain hopeful and prepare for political change, saying democracy allows voters to replace governments that fail to deliver.

"Let us stay united and elect a government that will move this country forward. Kenya deserves better leadership," he said.

Matiang'i also relayed a message from Uhuru Kenyatta, who reportedly declined to attend the meeting, saying it would be inappropriate to engage in political planning while citizens are suffering.

The party top leadership led by Secretary General Ole Kenta also attended the forum.

Other Jubilee leaders, including Deputy Party Leader Beatrice Gumbo and Youth Leader Angel Mbuthia, echoed Matiang'i's criticism and urged support for Jubilee ahead of the next elections, saying economic hardship was being felt across the country.

The party announced that the postponed Kiambu meeting will resume next week, where further political strategies and positions ahead of the 2027 General Election are expected to be unveiled.

LSK demands urgent review of fuel and power prices, warns of legal action

BY WMW

@themkenyentimes

The Law Society of Kenya (LSK) has called for an urgent review of recent fuel and electricity price increases, warning that it may move to court if the government fails to take corrective action over what it terms arbitrary and poorly justified energy pricing decisions.

In a statement signed by Charles Kanjama, LSK said the escalating cost of petroleum products and electricity was placing an "unsustainable burden" on households, businesses, manufacturers and the transport sector, and raised serious constitutional concerns over transparency and accountability in regulation.

Through its president, LSK singled out decisions by the Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority (EPRA), the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum, and the National Treasury, noting that recent adjustments had significantly increased the cost of living.

According to EPRA's revised pricing for the May-June 2026 cycle, diesel in Nairobi rose to KSh242.92 per litre after an increase of KSh46.29, while super petrol increased by KSh16.65 to KSh214.25 per litre. Electricity tariffs also went up following additional pass-through charges averaging about KSh4.72 per kWh, driven by fuel cost charges, foreign exchange adjustments, and statutory levies.

LSK further questioned the transparency of the Government-to-Government petroleum importation framework, as well as the use of the Petroleum Development Levy stabilization mechanism, saying key fiscal and policy decisions had not been sufficiently disclosed to the public.

"The State remains constitutionally bound to ensure openness, accountability, procedural fairness and meaningful public participation in decisions affecting taxation and consumer obligations," the statement read, citing Articles 10, 47 and 201 of the Constitution.

The lawyers' body also raised concern over what it termed inadequate public participation in the implementation of the new tariffs,



Charles Kanjama

arguing that key changes appeared to have been introduced through subsidiary legislation without sufficient consultation.

At the same time, LSK addressed ongoing nationwide protests linked to the rising cost of fuel and electricity. While affirming the constitutional right to peaceful demonstration under Article 37, the Society condemned acts of violence, looting and destruction of property witnessed in parts of the country.

It also criticized reported incidents of excessive use of force by police, including shootings during demonstrations in areas such as Thika, calling for independent and transparent investigations into alleged human rights violations.

LSK warned that the economic impact of the price increases was already being felt across critical sectors, including agriculture, manufacturing and transport, with rising fares and production costs affecting ordinary Kenyans.

Among its demands, the Society called for an immediate review of EPRA's pricing guidelines, an

independent audit of the G-to-G fuel import framework, and full disclosure on the use of the petroleum levy stabilization fund. It also sought updates on investigations into alleged adulterated fuel imports and accountability for officials implicated in procurement irregularities.

Additionally, LSK demanded investigations into police conduct during protests and full compliance with constitutional requirements on public participation and human rights protections in future energy and security decisions.

The LSK President said the Society is reviewing possible legal action and will move to court if necessary to challenge what it described as unconstitutional pricing and regulatory practices.



Protests Opposition leaders seized on the crisis to accuse the government of economic mismanagement and failure to cushion ordinary Kenyans

Kenya grinds to a halt as opposition rallies behind fuel protests

BY MKT Correspondents

@themkenyaintimes

Kenya yesterday faced widespread transport paralysis and growing political tension as opposition parties intensified attacks on President William Ruto's administration over soaring fuel prices, rising cost of living, and what they termed as government insensitivity to public suffering.

The nationwide disruption followed sharp increases in fuel prices announced by the Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority (EPRA) last week, with diesel rising by KSh46.29 per litre and super petrol by KSh16.65.

The increases triggered protests and transport shutdowns in several towns, leaving thousands of commuters stranded and businesses counting heavy losses.

Opposition leaders seized on the crisis to accuse the government of economic mismanagement and failure to cushion ordinary Kenyans from rising living costs.

The Democratic Party of Kenya warned that the transport paralysis was crippling industries, public services, agriculture, and trade, saying the country was staring at "economic armageddon."

"Businesses are suffering immense losses daily. Our ports and airports are directly affected, while produce destined for foreign markets is delayed, damaged, or destroyed," the party said in a statement, adding that Kenya's credibility as a reliable trading partner was under threat.

The party demanded urgent government intervention to restore normalcy and protect livelihoods, warning that the casual handling of the crisis was alarming investors and development partners.

Democratic Party leader Justin Muturi sharply criticized Interior Cabinet Secretary Kipchumba Murkomen over remarks linking the protests to political incitement, accusing the government of intimidation and deflection instead of addressing citizens' grievances.

"Kenyans are not protesting because they have been influenced. They are protesting because life has become unbearable," Muturi said, after the CS addressed the press outside his Harambee house.

The former Attorney General argued that rising fuel prices had worsened food inflation, crippled businesses, and increased pressure on farmers, matatu operators, and households already struggling to survive.

Muturi also dismissed comparisons between the current protests and previous administrations, saying Kenyans were reacting to present economic hardships rather than political nostalgia.

"The solution is not intimidation or endless excuses. The government must urgently return to Parliament, remove punitive fuel levies and consider subsidies," he said.

Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka also joined the criticism, blaming the crisis directly on President Ruto's administration.

In a statement, Kalonzo described the fuel price hikes as "punishing" and accused the government of implementing them without consultation or compassion.

"This is not a natural disaster. It is the calculated and foreseeable consequence of a regime that has chosen its interests over the welfare of the people," he said.

Kalonzo defended the transport sector strike as a legitimate response to economic hardship and claimed the rising fuel prices were disrupting supply chains and commerce across the country.

He called on Energy Cabinet Secretary Opiyo Wandayi to reverse the fuel price increases and resign, while urging the government to open immediate dialogue with transport operators.

"The grievances are real, their members are suffering, and stonewalling them is not governance; it is negligence," Kalonzo said.

The Jubilee Party, led by former Interior Cabinet Secretary Fred Matiang'i, also declared solidarity with protesting Kenyans during a delegates' meeting in Kiambu Town.

Matiang'i accused the Kenya Kwanza administration of presiding over economic pain, insecurity, and governance failures, saying the country was at a standstill because of corruption and incompetence.

"At a time when citizens are crying out for relief, policies that further burden the common mwananchi must be reconsidered with urgency and compassion," Matiang'i said.

Jubilee leaders said they had post-



Protests

poned their political activities in solidarity with citizens affected by the protests and economic hardship.

The mounting political pressure came as businesses, manufacturers, and transport operators warned of worsening economic disruption if the fuel crisis is not urgently re-

solved. Industry players cautioned that prolonged protests and transport shutdowns could further increase food prices, interrupt supply chains, and deepen economic instability.

Despite growing criticism, the government has defended the fuel pricing adjustments as necessary under

ongoing energy sector reforms and broader fiscal stabilization measures. However, pressure continues to mount on the administration to introduce relief measures amid escalating public anger over the cost of living.



Politics In a message titled “Rainy Season, Our Season to Plant,” Choromai encouraged residents to treat the rains as an opportunity for renewal

Choromai urges Kieni farmers to embrace planting season

BY WMW

@themtkenyaintimes

Philanthropist and Kieni parliamentary aspirant John Kariuki, popularly known as Choromai, has urged farmers across the constituency to take full advantage of the ongoing rainy season, describing it as a critical period for boosting food production and household incomes.

In a message titled “Rainy Season, Our Season to Plant,” Choromai encouraged residents to treat the rains as an opportunity for renewal, call-

ing on farmers to embrace modern farming methods and prioritize food security.

“The rainy season is a season of hope, hard work, and new beginnings. Every seed planted today is an investment in tomorrow’s prosperity,” he said, adding that agriculture remains the backbone of Kieni’s economy.

He further appealed to households to intensify planting efforts as rainfall continues across the country, noting that increased production would strengthen both local food supply and market opportunities.

Choromai, who has been actively engaging residents across Kieni, also reiterated his broader development agenda centered on irrigation, value addition, market access, youth employment, and improved infrastructure.

Under his development blueprint, he has proposed the expansion of irrigation schemes using rivers and medium-sized dams across all eight wards, aimed at reducing dependence on rain-fed agriculture and mitigating drought-related losses.

He has also called for the establishment of value addition



John Kariuki alias Choromai addressing Ebenezer PCEA church faithful on Sunday | Photo: Courtesy.

industries to process farm produce locally, arguing that this would create jobs and increase earnings for farmers.

“Farmers must benefit more from their sweat. We must process what we produce so that we can retain more wealth within Kieni,” he said in earlier public engagements.

On market access, Choromai has pledged to strengthen linkages between farmers

and buyers to ensure stable and fair prices for agricultural products.

He also highlighted job creation for young people as a key pillar of his vision, promising skills development programs and support for entrepreneurship.

Beyond agriculture, Choromai has been touring various parts of Kieni Constituency, meeting residents and in-

specting ongoing community projects.

His recent engagements have included visits to local markets, schools, and water projects, where he has emphasized the need for improved roads, expanded electricity coverage, better health facilities, and strengthened social services.

He has positioned his message around unity and development, often repeating his slogan: “One people, one vision, one Kieni.”

“Improved development across Kieni is not a dream; it is achievable through collective effort and focused leadership,” he said.

As political activity gradually intensifies ahead of the 2027 election cycle, Choromai continues to frame his campaign around agricultural transformation and grassroots economic empowerment, urging residents to “plant today and harvest tomorrow.”

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Court “The burden of proving any exemption rests squarely upon the State or public authority withholding the information,” the court held.

Court upholds public’s right to access SGR contracts

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyatomes

The Court of Appeal has dismissed an appeal by the Attorney General seeking to block disclosure of contracts and agreements relating to Kenya’s multibillion-shilling Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) project, in a landmark ruling that strengthens the constitutional right to access information.

In a judgment delivered in Mombasa last Friday,

Justices Agnes Kalekye Murgor, Imaana Laibuta and Grace Wangui Ngenye upheld an earlier High Court decision ordering the government to release documents related to the financing, procurement, construction and management of the SGR.

The appellate court ruled that the State had unlawfully refused to disclose the information sought by activists Khelef Khalifa and Wanjiru Gikonyo, who had petitioned the court after repeated requests for the documents were denied.

The judges affirmed that access to information held by the State is a constitutional right guaranteed under Article 35 of the Constitution and can only be limited under narrowly defined circumstances.

“The burden of proving any exemption rests squarely upon the State or public authority withholding the information,” the court held.

The dispute revolved around contracts and agreements linked to the SGR project, including financing arrangements with China, procurement contracts, feasibility studies, environmental impact assessments and operational agreements.

The petitioners argued that despite the project costing more than USD 4.5 billion in public funds and loans backed by Kenyan taxpayers, critical information about the railway



Justice Agnes Murgor



Justice Grace Ngenye

had remained inaccessible.

Their requests, made in 2019 and 2021, were rejected by Kenya Railways Corporation and the Office of the Attorney General, which cited confidentiality clauses, national security concerns, foreign relations and provisions of the Official Secrets Act and the Access to Information Act.

The matter later reached the

High Court, where Justice Chacha Mativo ruled on May 13, 2022 that the refusal to disclose the documents violated Articles 10, 35 and 47 of the Constitution.

The Attorney General appealed the decision, arguing that releasing the agreements would undermine national security, damage diplomatic relations between Kenya and

China and expose the government to legal and financial risks arising from breach of confidentiality obligations.

But the Court of Appeal rejected those arguments, saying the State had failed to provide specific evidence showing how disclosure would cause actual harm.

The judges criticised what they described as “blanket denials” and unsupported claims by government agencies.

“Restrictions based on national security cannot be used to shield the Government from embarrassment, conceal wrongdoing, or avoid public scrutiny,” the court said.

The judges further noted inconsistencies in the positions taken by Kenya Railways and the Attorney General regarding custody of the documents.

While Kenya Railways claimed the Attorney General held the agreements, the Attorney General denied being their custodian despite the Office of the Attorney General Act designating the office as the repository of treaties and international agreements entered into on behalf of the government.

The court found the explanations unconvincing and unsupported by evidence.

The Commission on Administrative Justice (CAJ), also known as the Ombudsman, played a key role in the case by arguing that the Official Secrets Act could not override constitutional provisions on access to information.

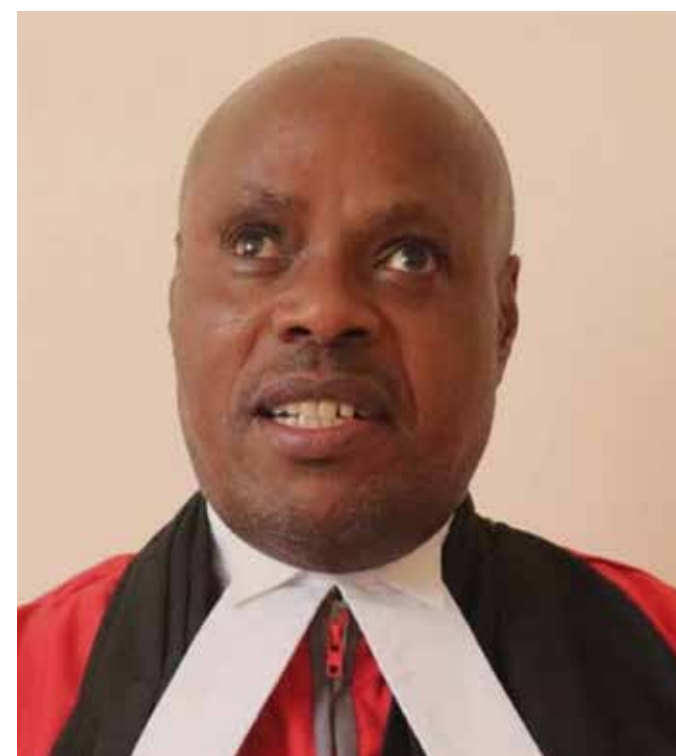
The Commission told the court that the Access to Information Act ushered in a constitutional shift from secrecy to openness and accountability in governance.

The judges agreed, ruling that there are not “two systems of law” governing access to information but one constitutional framework anchored in Article 35.

The court also dismissed the argument that confidentiality clauses in the SGR contracts automatically shielded them from disclosure.

It held that contractual secrecy cannot override constitutional obligations of transparency, especially where public debt and taxpayer obligations are involved.

Citing the immense public interest surrounding the SGR project, the court found that disclosure outweighed any



Justice Imaana Laibuta



Justice Chacha Mativo

protected commercial interests.

The judges further affirmed that citizens seeking information from the State are not required to explain why they want it.

Under Section 4(2) of the Access to Information Act, the court said, access to information is “motive-blind.”

“The State holds information as a constitutional custodian rather than a private proprietor,” the court observed.

The appeal was dismissed in its entirety, with the court directing each party to bear its own costs because of the public interest nature of the case.

The ruling is expected to have far-reaching implications for government transparency and accountability, particularly in relation to major public infrastructure projects financed through public debt.

Justice The Chief Justice pointed to recent efforts to strengthen staffing, including the swearing-in of 98 Resident Magistrates and Adjudicators

CJ Koome urges stronger court management to boost efficiency and public trust

BY MKT Correspondent

@themkenyatimes

Chief Justice Martha Koome has called for stronger court station management across the country, saying it is central to improving judicial efficiency, enhancing service delivery, and strengthening public confidence in the Judiciary.

Speaking at the opening of the 2026 Annual Heads of Station Forum in Meru, Koome said court stations remain the main entry point for justice for most Kenyans, particularly through Magistrates' Courts and Small Claims

Courts, which handle about 85 percent of all cases filed in the Judiciary.

She noted that effective leadership at station level is critical to ensuring timely delivery of justice, as envisioned under Article 48 of the Constitution and the Judiciary's Social Transformation Through Access to Justice (STAJ) programme.

"The effectiveness of the Judiciary is directly linked to the efficiency of court management systems," she said, adding that well-run stations enhance accountability, while weak administration contributes to delays and erodes public trust.

The Chief Justice pointed to recent efforts to strengthen staffing, including the swearing-in of 98 Resident Magistrates and Adjudicators following recruitment by the Judicial Service Commission.

She said the move is expected to help reduce workload pressures and address case backlogs across various courts.

However, Koome cautioned that increased staffing alone would not improve performance unless accompanied by strong management, supervision, and accountability mechanisms.

She urged Heads of Station to adopt performance-based management, including reg-



Chief Justice Martha Koome addressing the forum yesterday. | Photo: Courtesy.

ular monitoring of pending cases, clearance rates, adjournment patterns, and other bottlenecks affecting case progression. According to her, data-driven decision-making is essential for improving efficiency and addressing emerging challenges.

On the persistent problem of case backlog, Koome called for practical interventions such as regular case audits, prioritisation of older matters, strict adherence to timelines,

and targeted backlog reduction initiatives.

She also directed courts to minimise unnecessary adjournments, which she said remain a major cause of delays in justice delivery.

The Chief Justice further encouraged increased use of technology and case management systems to improve tracking and enhance transparency.

Koome emphasised that integrity and ethical leadership remain the foundation of public confidence in the Judiciary. She urged court leaders to ensure professionalism and accountability in all court stations, with particular focus on improving registry operations, which she described as the "heart" of court administration and the public's first point of contact with the justice system.

She also called for stronger Court Integrity Committees and improved oversight mechanisms to address ethical concerns and reinforce accountability within the Judiciary.

Under the theme "Enhancing Judicial Excellence Through Effective Court Station Management," Koome challenged

participants to use the forum to share ideas and develop practical solutions to improve service delivery.

Chief Registrar of the Judiciary Winfridah Mokaya also addressed the forum, urging court leaders to actively supervise staff, set clear performance expectations, and strengthen accountability in resource use.

Registrar of Magistrates' Courts Caroline Kabucho encouraged judicial officers to embrace technology, saying systems such as e-filing, case tracking platforms, SMS feedback tools, and JMPS are essential for faster, more transparent, and more accountable service delivery.

Meru Governor Isaac Mutuma M'Ethgingia, who attended the event, praised the Judiciary as a key pillar of democracy, noting that respect for institutions and the rule of law is central to national development.

The forum brought together Heads of Station from across the country to deliberate on improving court performance and strengthening leadership within Kenya's judicial system.

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Some of the stakeholders in a group photo.

Societies Authorities warned that failure to meet the deadline will trigger enforcement measures, including show-cause notices and possible deregistration.

Government issues 60-day ultimatum to societies over missed annual returns

BY MKT Correspondent
@themtkenyetimes

The Office of the Attorney General has issued a public notice directing all registered societies in Kenya to urgently file their annual returns, warning that non-compliant groups risk suspension or cancellation of their registration.

In a statement released last Friday, the Registrar of Societies reminded organisations that compliance is a legal requirement under the Societies Act (Cap 108) and its accompanying regulations.

According to the notice, Section 30(1) of the Act requires every registered society to submit annual returns, accounts, and other prescribed documents to the Registrar within the stipulated timeline.

The Societies Rules, 1968 further require that these returns be filed on or before March 31 each year, covering activities of the previous calendar year.

The government has now granted a 60-day grace period for societies that have not complied, starting from the date of publication of the notice, May 15, 2026.

Authorities warned that failure to meet the deadline will trigger enforcement measures, including show-cause notices and possible deregistration.

“Societies that fail to submit the required annual returns within the stated period shall be liable to enforcement action in accordance with Section 12(1)(e) of the Societies Act,” the notice read in part.

The Registrar of Societies, operating under the Office of the Attorney General, emphasized that the filing requirement is essential for accountability, transparency, and proper regulation of civic, religious, welfare, and professional organisations across the country.

Legal experts note that annual returns help the government verify that societies remain active, comply with their constitutions, and properly manage funds and membership records. The requirement also assists in preventing misuse of organisational structures for unlawful activities, including fraud and money laundering.

The announcement is expected to affect thousands of registered groups nationwide, including community-based organisations, faith-based groups, welfare associations, and professional societies.

Over the years, the government has periodically intensified compliance enforcement, citing concerns over dormant societies and incomplete filings in the registry. In previous crackdowns, some organisations that failed to comply with statutory requirements were either suspended or struck off the register.

The Attorney General’s office has urged all affected societies to act immediately to avoid penalties, noting that compliance is both a legal obligation and a safeguard for organisational legitimacy.

“Societies are urged to take immediate steps to comply with the law within the stipulated period,” the notice stated.



Citizens seeking services at Sheria House, Nairobi.

The latest directive comes as part of broader government efforts to strengthen regulatory oversight and improve governance standards within civil society organisations in Kenya.

The Registrar of Societies has further encouraged organisations seeking clarification to contact its offices for guidance on filing procedures and required documentation.



Poetess of the heart – Zulfiya



Zulfiya’s poetry brings a sense of calm and peace to the human heart. In every line of her verses, love, loyalty, and a deep affection for life are embodied. Her poems reveal the delicate emotions of a woman’s soul and reflect the simple yet profoundly important truths of life. The most common themes in Zulfiya’s works are love, devotion, love for the Motherland, and peace. While reading her poems, a person finds an opportunity to listen to their inner feelings and to better understand life and human emotions. Zulfiya wrote many well-known poems. For

example, the poem “My Son, There Must Be No War” expresses a mother’s inner pain, her fear for her child, and her longing for a peaceful life. Poems such as “Devotion” and “Spring in the Heart” call people toward kindness, patriotism, and faithfulness. Zulfiya Isroilova is a poetess who brought light into the human soul through her poetry. Her works have not lost their significance even today. The poetess’s writings encourage young people to grow up kind, patriotic, and humane. Isroilova is a unique poetess who illuminated hearts and awakened emotions with her words. While reading her lines, the reader not only gains information but also deeply feels the subtle aspects of life, human experiences, and valuable lessons. In my opinion, Zulfiya’s creativity encourages us to better understand ourselves and the world around us.

Author: Zubayda Tursunboyeva

Spring



At the end of winter’s reign,
On a March dawn bright again,
Morning light with gentle power,
Brought to us the blooming spring flower.

Day and night became the same,
Rich and poor joined just the same.
Fields and meadows turned so green,
Livestock thrived in joyful scene.

Horses leaped and loudly neighed,
Birds kept singing unafraid.
Navruz came to all the land,
Girls prepared with cheerful hands.

Elders too, with strength and care,
Cooked sweet halim everywhere.
Calling people to the feast,
Starting joy that never ceased.

On Navruz’s festive day,
Young men dressed in robes so gay.
Girls in atlas, adras bright,
Sang folk songs with pure delight.

Toward the evening bakovul cried:
“Long live our village far and wide!”
Gathering everyone around,
Traditional games then would abound.

I could speak of this much more,
Stories countless by the score.
Therefore we invite you all,
Every daughter, every son.

Come and join this happy day,
Taste delicious food we lay.
With respect and warm embrace,
Welcome here to this joyful place.

I am Nozima Abdivali qizi Alikulova, born on February 14, 2006. After graduating from school, I enrolled at Shahrissabz State Pedagogical Institute.

Writing poetry has been my passion since childhood, and the poem I am sharing with you today is one of my original works.

When life is easy, thank God



When Life Is Stuck, Trust in God

When life is easy, thank the Lord,
For every smile and sweet reward.
For peaceful days and skies so bright,
For strength to walk in morning light.

When life is stuck, then trust in Him,
Even when hope and faith grow dim.
For storms may rise and winds may roar,
Yet God still stands beside your shore.

Life is a sail on changing seas,
With gentle waves and restless breeze.

Not every path is soft and mild,
Some roads will test the strongest child.

Start every act with God in mind,
And leave your fear and doubt behind.
If things go well, bow down in grace,
If doors stay closed, trust His embrace.

For life is never loss alone,
Nor always crowned with victory’s throne.
Both joy and pain have roles to play,
To shape our hearts along the way.

So thank God when blessings flow,
Trust God when life moves painfully slow.
In every season, rise or fall,
Keep faith in Him who guides it all.

Nandini AnandKumar
Educator Writer and Freelancer
No 18, Kamarajar Street
Neravy, Karaikal

The Rise at the pump



The fuel has risen, the prices climb,
Each day feels heavier with passing time.
Petroleum rises, the burden grows,
A silent struggle everybody knows.
The matatu fares begin to rise,
Worry and stress fill people’s eyes.

Food in the market costs much more,
As hardship knocks on every door.
Workers travel with pockets thin,
Fighting battles they rarely win.
Dreams feel distant, hope turns slow,
As living costs continue to grow.
Yet people rise through storm and pain,
Holding on through sun and rain.
For even in hardship, one truth remains—
Strong hearts endure economic

Eddy Achieng
Rongo university

Childhood memories



Childhood is an awesome time in our life.
It has no worries, no pain, no loss, no depression...

Even during the hardest times in life, we laugh.
We didn’t know what was right or wrong,
But we did all silly things happily.

In our childhood, we played with Barbie toys,
And drew simple natural scenery.
We all watched Motu Patlu, Shinchan, and cartoons.

We played in the rain,
And made boats and ships to float.

Ice creams, cotton candies, and chocolates,
Happy days and peaceful nights.

School bells, holidays at grandma’s house, lunch boxes,
And fears about maths class and homework.

No tension about tomorrow’s plans,
We enjoyed every single day.

Everyone loved us so much.
They are truly beautiful memories.

But the truth is —
They never come back at any cost.

V. S. NITHIYASRI
VIII
JOHN DEWEY MATRIC MATRIC SECONDARY
SCHOOL, PANRUTI, TAMILNADU.



Beneath the gentle, smiling grace,
A darker shadow hides its face.
Kindness flows like morning streams,
Yet once was fire that split through seams.

A heart so soft, with warmth so wide,
Has weathered tempests fierce inside.
The hand that heals, with touch so light,
Once clenched through battles in the night.

Like rivers calm, with whispered ease,
Can carve through mountains, bend the trees.
The peace you see, so finely drawn,
Is birthed from wars the soul has won.

A beast lies still, in chains of will,
Its roaring tempered, heart now still.

But speak in slight, provoke the bound,
And from the depths, it shakes the ground.

Yet strength in silence holds the key,
Not frailty, but mastery.
For those who walked through fire and pain
Now wield their love like tempered flame.

Do not mistake the soft for weak,
Or think the calm does not run deep.
Each tender word, like blossoms rare,
Was nourished by the fiercest air.

For lions sleep, but lions dream,
Their roar contained within a seam.
And should you wake their hidden past,
The storm returns, released at last.

Oh, but the kind are not naive,
Their peace hard-earned, their scars unseen.
Each smile, a mark of what they’ve faced,
A war inside, now firmly laced.

Keith Onyango
Journalism and communication
Rongo university

Finance Ruto criticized the global lending system, arguing that African countries often pay significantly higher interest rates than developed nations

Ruto pushes for global financial reform and housing funding overhaul



President William Ruto addressing the World Urban Forum yesterday.

BY PCS
@themkenyaintimes

President William Ruto has called for sweeping reforms of the global financial system and stronger African multilateral financing to address the continent's deepening housing crisis driven by rapid urbanisation.

Speaking at the 13th Session of the World Urban Forum in Baku, Azerbaijan, Ruto said the current international financial architecture is unfair and continues to limit developing countries' ability to access affordable housing finance.

He noted that Africa's housing challenge is becoming more urgent as the continent's population is projected to reach 25 per cent of the world's total by 2050, with about 70 per cent expected to live in urban areas.

"There is, therefore, an urgent need to reform the international financial architecture so that it aligns with the realities, needs, and development aspirations of the modern world," the President said

yesterday.

Ruto criticized the global lending system, arguing that African countries often pay significantly higher interest rates than developed nations despite having vast economic potential and natural resources.

"The paradox is that the countries that need concessional funding the most pay more than the countries that don't need it when they go to the market. That has to be corrected," he said.

The forum brought together about 45,000 participants from 182 countries, including several heads of state and government, among them Presidents Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan, Aleksandar Vučić of Serbia, and Dharambeer Gokhool of Mauritius, as well as Prime Ministers Olzhas Bektenov of Kazakhstan and Irakli Kobakhidze of Georgia. King Mswati III of Eswatini and UN-Habitat Executive Director Anacláudia Rossbach were also present.

Ruto used the platform to showcase Kenya's Affordable Housing Programme, describing it as a leading African

model for inclusive urban development and social transformation.

He said nearly three billion people globally suffer from inadequate housing, with over one billion living in slums and more than 300 million homeless. In Kenya, he noted, there are about 1,100 informal settlements housing seven million people.

To address this, he said the government has made affordable housing a central pillar of national development, including the allocation of public land at no cost, which has reduced construction costs by about 30 per cent.

The President also highlighted reductions in professional fees from 10 per cent to 2.5 per cent of project costs, alongside incentives for builders to scale up construction and standardise materials for mass production.

He said Kenya established the Affordable Housing Fund, financed locally, which has supported projects worth \$5 billion (KSh650 billion) over the past 35 months.

"In the past three years, we have built 273,000 hous-

ing units, handed over 8,000 keys, while 55,000 more will be handed over by the end of this year," Ruto said, adding that 700,000 units are in the pipeline.

He further noted that the programme has created about 640,000 jobs, with plans to

reach one million workers by 2027, while also boosting manufacturing and reducing slum expansion.

Ruto also renewed his call for reform of the United Nations Security Council, arguing that Africa remains underrepresented despite accounting for

most of the Council's agenda. "For the survival of the UN, there must be reform that corrects this anomaly so that the UN becomes representative and democratic," he said.

Other leaders, including President Aliyev, emphasized the need for balanced urban planning that protects cultural heritage. UN-Habitat's Anacláudia Rossbach said the forum would culminate in the "Baku Call to Action," a shared global framework for sustainable and inclusive cities.



President William Ruto with other leaders attending the World Urban Forum.




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SCAN FOR MAJISAFI

Jurisprudence The critique of gendered law is ancient, though it has not always been framed in the language of rights.

Blind, not blinkered: Why the law must never wear a gendered face



By: Jerameel Kevins Owuor Odhiambo
@themkenyatimes

One of jurisprudence's most arresting paradoxes; a paradox that has animated centuries of legal philosophy and that persists with startling vitality into the contemporary moment is that law, that most human of inventions, has so frequently been deployed to diminish humanity itself. The goddess Justitia, that Roman personification of legal order, was depicted wearing a blindfold not as a symbol of ignorance but of transcendence: she could not be swayed by the face before her, neither its beauty nor its gender, neither its race nor its station. Nonetheless, from the moment human hands began inscribing law onto clay tablets in Mesopotamia, those very hands almost exclusively male stitched gender into the marrow of legal systems with the confidence of those who mistake power for principle. Aristotle, in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, declared justice to be "a complete virtue in relation to our neighbour" a formulation at once beautiful and, given his simultaneous insistence on the natural inferiority of women, breathtakingly inconsistent. It is precisely this contradiction between law's avowed universalism and its practiced particularity that demands examination, because a gendered law is not merely an unjust law it is, in the deepest philosophical sense, no law at all.

To understand why law must be gender-neutral at every point in its anatomy from its drafting to its interpretation, from its enforcement to its remedies one must first appreciate what law claims to be. H.L.A. Hart, writing in *The Concept of Law* (1961), distinguished between primary rules that impose duties and secondary rules that confer powers, arguing that a legal system worthy of that name must possess an internal point of view it must be accepted, not merely obeyed. But acceptance, in any morally coherent sense, requires that the law speak to all subjects with equal moral seriousness. John Raw-



Law

ls, in *A Theory of Justice* (1971), provided the modern philosophical architecture for this proposition with his famous veil of ignorance: rational persons designing a society's foundational rules, deprived of knowledge of their own gender, race, or social position, would never construct a legal order that privileged one gender over another. They could not afford to, because they might be on the losing side. The veil of ignorance is not merely a thought experiment it is a diagnostic tool. Applied to any legal rule, it asks a simple question: would you accept this rule if you did not know which gender you would be born into? A gendered law fails this test every time.

The critique of gendered law is ancient, though it has not always been framed in the language of rights. In ancient Greece, Plato who was Aristotle's teacher and in this regard his superior thus argued in *The Republic* that women capable of performing the functions of guardians should be trained as guardians, regardless of sex. "The only difference between them," Socrates tells Glaucon, "is that the female bears and the male begets." For Plato, functional capacity, not biological category, should determine legal and civic standing. Centuries later, Mary Wollstonecraft would make this argument with far greater urgency in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), insisting that if women appeared irration-

al, it was because they had been systematically denied the education that produces reason; a legal and institutional deprivation masquerading as natural order. John Stuart Mill, in *The Subjection of Women* (1869), extended this analysis to law itself, arguing that "the legal subordination of one sex to the other is wrong in itself, and now one of the chief hindrances to human improvement." These were not merely academic observations. They were indictments of legal systems in Roman law, English common law, colonial law that had dressed prejudice in the respectable garments of legal doctrine.

Kenya's own legal history offers a particularly instructive case study, because it is a history in which gendered law arrived not organically but by imposition carried in the colonial luggage of the British Empire and deposited into a society whose pre-colonial normative frameworks were themselves varied, often complex, and frequently more attentive to women's economic agency than colonial administrators cared to acknowledge. The Crown Lands Ordinance of 1915 vested control of land in the colonial state and, through its administrative practices, effectively reduced African women who under many customary systems had substantial cultivation rights to legal ciphers in the one domain that mattered most to agrarian life. This was gendered law not because it ex-

plicitly said "women shall not own land" but because its structures and assumptions systematically produced that outcome. The lesson Kenya drew from this history, codified in the Constitution of Kenya 2010, was unambiguous: Article 27 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, while Article 60 demands land reform on the basis of "elimination of gender discrimination in law, customs and practices related to land and property." The Constitution did not merely acknowledge the problem of gendered law; it diagnosed its historical roots and mandated its excision.

The Marriage Act, a statute that emerged from decades of legal advocacy and parliamentary negotiation illustrates both the progress and the persistent tensions that characterize Kenya's journey away from gendered law. On one hand, the Act formally abolished the common law presumption of implied consent to marital sex, a presumption that had long operated as a legal shield for domestic violence. On the other, the Act has been criticized for provisions that, in practice, continue to privilege male testimony and male definitions of matrimonial property. In one of the Petitions before the High Court, several provisions of the Act were challenged on the grounds that they replicate, in subtler form, the gendered hierarchies of the repealed Matrimonial Causes Act.

This litigation embodies the central argument of this essay: gendered law does not always announce itself loudly. Often, it hides in procedural assumptions, in interpretive conventions, in the allocation of the burden of proof in all those places where doctrine meets discretion and where gender, if not actively excluded, will inevitably enter.

The Law of Succession Act, Cap. presents perhaps the most glaring example of statutory gender bias in the Kenyan legal corpus. Its provisions, particularly those governing intestate succession in communities where customary law is incorporated, have produced a body of case law that is, when viewed through the lens of constitutional equality is profoundly troubling. In *Rono v Rono & Another* [2005] eKLR, the Court of Appeal confronted provisions of the Act that effectively excluded daughters from inheriting under customary law, holding that such exclusion violated the constitutional guarantee of equality. The Justice on record, writing for the court, stated with commendable directness that "daughters are as much children of their parents as sons," and that a law which treated them otherwise was constitutionally indefensible. The philosophical import of this holding is significant: the court was not merely resolving a property dispute; it was making a jurisprudential declaration that gender cannot function as a criterion for the allocation of legal entitlements. Customary law, however historically embedded, cannot claim immunity from this principle. No source of law can.

Criminal law has historically been among the most aggressively gendered domains of the legal order, and Kenya's experience is no exception. The Sexual Offences Act, No. 3 of 2006 enacted after decades of feminist legal activism and triggered in part by the horrifying gang rape and assault cases that marked the 1990s represented a transformative rupture with a common law tradition that had, for centuries, defined rape exclusively as a crime against women perpetrated by men, a definition that both excluded male survivors and obscured the true nature of sexual violence as a crime of power rather than passion. However, the Act itself has been critiqued for retaining gender-specific language in several provisions, and its implementation has revealed a criminal justice system from police stations to courtrooms that continues to apply gendered assumptions in assessing complainant

Jurisprudence The critique of gendered law is ancient, though it has not always been framed in the language of rights.

Blind, not blinkered: Why the law must never wear a gendered face

Contd from page 17

credibility.

The employment sphere reveals a further dimension of this problem: the gendered law that does not explicitly discriminate but structures conditions of work in ways that systematically disadvantage women. Simone de Beauvoir, in *The Second Sex* (1949), argued that woman is not born but made that her social position is the product of historical structures, not biological destiny. This insight, translated into labour law analysis, demands that we examine not merely whether a law treats men and women differently on its face, but whether it treats differently situated persons as if they were identically situated, or identically situated persons as if their situations were different. The Employment Act, No. 11 of 2007, is instructive here. While it provides for maternity leave and prohibits dismissal on grounds of pregnancy, its provisions for paternity leave are comparatively thin; a disparity that encodes the assumption that childcare is primarily a female responsibility and, by extension, that career disruption is a female problem.

Constitutional litigation has served as the primary mechanism through which Kenyan courts have confronted gendered law, and the doctrine that has emerged while imperfect represents an increasingly sophisticated engagement with the philosophical foundations of legal equality. In *Centre for Rights Education and Awareness (CREAW) & 7 Others v Attorney General* [2011] eKLR, the High Court considered the constitutionality of provisions in the National Assembly and Presidential Elections Act and the Local Authorities Act that failed to implement the two-thirds gender rule enshrined in Article 81(b) of the Constitution. Justice Musinga (as he then was) held that the failure to enact legislation implementing this principle was itself unconstitutional, a ruling that moved beyond the merely formal equality of law (treating everyone the same) toward the substantive equality of outcomes (ensuring that law's effects do not perpetuate structural disadvantage). This distinction between formal and substantive



Law

equality is philosophically fundamental. It is the distinction that Catharine MacKinnon drew in *Toward a Feminist Theory of the State* (1989), arguing that formal equality under male-defined law simply guaranteed women the equal right to be treated as men a hollow guarantee when the very standards of treatment were constructed around male experience.

The philosophy of Ubuntu, which permeates much of Eastern and Southern African legal and ethical thought, offers an indigenous theoretical resource for the case against gendered law that is too rarely mobilized in formal legal argument. Ubuntu often rendered as “I am because we are” posits a conception of personhood that is fundamentally relational and communal rather than atomistic. If my humanity is constituted through my relationship with others, then any law that diminishes the full humanity of any member of the community diminishes the community as a whole. Gendered law, on this account, is not merely unjust to women it is corrosive of the communal fabric that makes legal order meaningful.

This philosophical tradition finds partial legal expression in the Constitution of Kenya 2010's Preamble, which commits the nation to “nurturing and protecting the well-being of the individual, the family, commu-

nities and the nation,” and in Article 10, which lists “human dignity, equity, social justice, inclusiveness” among the national values binding all State organs in the exercise of public power. A legal system that encodes gender hierarchy cannot claim fidelity to these values without a level of cognitive dissonance that would embarrass even the most agile constitutional interpreter.

The intersection of customary law and statutory law in Kenya's pluralistic legal system creates zones of particular vulnerability for gender equality, and it is in these zones that the argument for an ungendered law becomes most urgent and most contested. Article 159(3) of the Constitution provides that “in applying traditional dispute resolution mechanisms” courts shall not violate the Bill of Rights — a provision whose simple formulation conceals extraordinary interpretive difficulty. In *Dina Management Limited v County Government of Mombasa & 3 Others* [2021] eKLR, the Supreme Court grappled with questions of institutional authority and constitutional supremacy in a dispute touching on competing normative frameworks, and while that case did not directly concern gender, its reasoning reinforced the hierarchical primacy of the Constitution over all other normative sources. Applied to gen-

dered customary law, this principle is clear: no appeal to tradition, cultural continuity, or community cohesion can sustain a legal rule that allocates rights on the basis of sex. This is not cultural imperialism; it is constitutional logic. As Makau Mutua, has argued, human rights are not a Western imposition but a universal aspiration whose content can and should be informed by African philosophical traditions. The task is not to choose between constitutionalism and culture but to insist that culture, like all other normative systems, must answer to the standard of human dignity.

International law has increasingly reinforced this position, and Kenya's legal system as a monist state in which ratified international instruments form part of domestic law by virtue of Article 2(5) and (6) of the Constitution cannot insulate gendered rules from international scrutiny. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), ratified by Kenya in 1984, defines discrimination against women as any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex that impairs the enjoyment of human rights a definition deliberately broad enough to capture indirect discrimination and systemic disadvantage, not merely overt exclusion. The African Charter

on Human and Peoples' Rights, incorporated into Kenyan law, and its Maputo Protocol (ratified by Kenya in 2010) go further still, requiring State Parties to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all spheres of life, including in legislative enactments, judicial decisions, and customary practices. When viewed alongside the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women's General Recommendation No. 33 on Women's Access to Justice (2015) which identifies gendered assumptions in judicial systems as a structural barrier to substantive equality the international legal framework presents a comprehensive and coherent mandate: law, at every level and in every form, must be stripped of gender as an operative criterion for the allocation of rights and the distribution of burdens.

Justitia's blindfold, then, is not a cosmetic accessory it is the emblem of a jurisprudential commitment that law's most fundamental concepts, rights and duties, must not be filtered through the lens of gender. From Plato's guardian-women to Wollstonecraft's vindicated daughters, from Mill's subjection critique to MacKinnon's feminist jurisprudence, from Rawls's veil of ignorance to the Ubuntu philosophy of communal personhood, the intellectual tradition across centuries and continents has converged on a single proposition: that a law which sees gender sees something it has no business seeing. Kenya's constitutional and judicial trajectory from the egalitarian promises of the 2010 Constitution to the landmark holdings in *Rono*, *CREAW*, and *EG* reflects a society in the process of stripping its legal order of the gendered scaffolding that colonialism and patriarchy erected together. That process is incomplete. The Marriage Act and the Law of Succession Act still carry provisions that bear the fingerprints of a gendered imagination. Customary law still arrives in courtrooms wearing gender as a credential. The criminal justice system still measures female credibility by standards shaped by male experience. But the direction of travel is clear, and the intellectual, constitutional, and philosophical foundations for the journey are secure. The law must be blind not in the sense of willful ignorance, but in the deeper Justiciar sense: that it sees only the human being before it, with all that human being's dignity intact, and nothing else.

The writer is a legal researcher and writer.

Zimbabwe As Parliament pushes constitutional changes to 2030, Zimbabwe is split over reform, power, and public trust.

Extending Terms, Testing Trust: Zimbabwe’s Bill 3 Debate



President Emmerson Mnangagwa

BY Norman Mwale
@themtkenyatimes

Constitutions are meant to be the guardrails of democracy. In Zimbabwe, however, they have too often become the battleground where power is contested.

The country is once again debating the shape of its constitutional order, as Parliament advances the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment Bill No. 3. The Bill has moved through a series of provincial public hearings since early 2026, with the committee reporting significant contributions from communities in Manicaland, Midlands, and other provinces.

Yet the process has been contested from the outset. Opposition groups withdrew from the hearings, arguing that consultation was compressed to fewer than seven days in some areas and that reports of intimidation and violence made meaningful participation impossible. The National Constitutional Assembly, the Defend the Constitution Platform, and the Constitution Defence Forum have since announced a coordinated framework to oppose the amendments, stating that

the process is fundamentally flawed and inconsistent with the spirit of the 2013 Constitution.

At the heart of the proposals are changes to the length and manner of electing the presidency and Parliament. The Bill seeks to extend both presidential and parliamentary terms from five to seven years and to shift the election of the President from a direct popular vote to a parliamentary vote. It also provides for the creation of a new Zimbabwe Electoral Delimitation Commission, whose members would be appointed by the President, with the chairperson chosen after consultation with the Judicial Service Commission.

President Emmerson Mnangagwa has personally endorsed the changes, declaring that “reform is not betrayal. Reform is fidelity to the principle that governance must evolve to meet the needs of the nation.” Government officials and ZANU-PF argue the Bill will reduce election-related toxicity and allow more time for development projects such as clinics, roads, and dams.

In Midlands, provincial chair Edson Chakanyuka

Chiherenge said the province had “unanimously endorsed” the proposal to ensure continuity and stability, with the stated goal of letting the President “lead until 2030.” In Bulawayo, provincial chair Jabulani Sibanda framed the amendments as an assertion of sovereignty, noting that a written constitution must evolve according to the country’s own vision — not that of outsiders.

The opposition sees the same proposals in a very different light. Leaders from the Citizens Coalition for Change and the MDC Alliance — including Tendai Biti and Jameson Timba — have described the amendments as an attempt to centralise power in the executive and diminish the role of the electorate.

Kwekwe Central MP Hon. Corban Madzivanyika has been equally direct, stating that “Bill 3 weakens the people’s Constitution by concentrating power in the executive. It seeks to extend tenure through amendment rather than electoral mandate, and that sets a dangerous precedent for constitutional governance in Zimbabwe.”

In Parliament, he also cautioned against the distribu-

tion of handouts during the amendment process, calling it “vote buying and a dangerous inducement that corrodes electoral integrity and undermines the peace and freedoms enshrined in our Constitution.”

Critics further argue that the new Delimitation Commission — whose members would hold office at the President’s pleasure — cannot be truly independent, and that the compressed hearing process does not meet the 90-day requirement set out in Section 328 of the Constitution. Civil society organisations such as Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights and the Zimbabwe Peace Project have echoed these concerns, warning that the amendments erode the democratic gains of 2013 and

weaken the country’s checks and balances.

The regional and international response has so far been muted. No formal statements have yet been issued by SADC or the African Union. Domestically, ZANU-PF officials have framed the Bill as a shield against foreign interference, urging those with grievances to engage within the “revolutionary garage” rather than seek external alternatives. International human rights bodies have flagged procedural concerns — particularly around the shortened consultation period and allegations of intimidation — though no diplomatic positions have been announced.

If the Bill succeeds, Zimbabwe would enter a longer political cycle extending to

2030, with a President elected by Parliament and a reconstituted delimitation process. Proponents argue this would provide the policy continuity needed to complete major infrastructure and economic programmes without the constant disruption of electoral cycles.

Critics counter that it would entrench incumbency and reduce electoral accountability — and that public trust in constitutional processes may decline further as a result. As COPAC participant Paul Mangwana has observed, no constitution is perfect at birth, and amendment is part of ensuring that democracy remains functional and aligned with developmental aspirations.

Whether Amendment No. 3 achieves that kind of refinement — or undermines it — will depend on how Parliament handles the remaining legislative stages, and whether the process can restore the confidence of those who have already walked away from it.

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Ebola Congolese health authorities declared the new Ebola outbreak in Ituri on Friday, the country's 17th since 1976.

Congolese virologist urges stronger surveillance as Ebola outbreak spreads



Exterior view of a hospital that has been designated as an Ebola treatment center in Goma, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). | Photo: Str/Xinhua.

BY Xinhua News Agency
@themtkenyatimes

The Democratic Republic of the Congo must quickly strengthen active surveillance, trace transmission chains and prevent the Ebola virus from spreading after the latest outbreak in the country, a leading Congolese virologist has warned. Jean-Jacques Muyembe, director general of the National Institute of Biomedical Research, told Xinhua on Sunday that the immediate response should rely on core public health measures like isolating patients, carrying out active surveillance, tracing contacts, protecting health workers and disinfecting health facilities. The outbreak in the eastern province of Ituri is caused by the Bundibugyo strain, a rare variant of the Ebola disease that has no approved therapeutics or vaccines.

Congolese health authorities declared the new Ebola outbreak in Ituri on Friday,

the country's 17th since 1976. According to data released Saturday by the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC), 336 cases and 87 deaths have been reported.

Muyembe said the current outbreak was not caused by the more familiar Ebola Zaire strain, but by the Bundibugyo strain, which was first identified in Uganda in 2007 and later caused an Ebola outbreak in 2012. Of the 17 Ebola outbreaks recorded in the country, 15 were caused by the Zaire strain and two by the Bundibugyo strain, he said. The main difference, Muyembe said, is pathogenicity. The Zaire strain is among the most virulent forms of Ebola and can have a fatality rate of around 80 percent or higher, while the Bundibugyo strain has a fatality rate below 50 percent.

Heightened risks

Muyembe said the current outbreak spread to multi-

ple areas in Ituri. The risk of further transmission is especially high in eastern Congo because of population density, frequent movement and the challenges of managing an epidemic in a conflict zone, he said. "The risk that the virus escapes these health zones and spreads to other health zones, or even to other provinces, is very great," he said.

A confirmed case has also been reported in Goma, the capital of North Kivu province. The city, currently under the control of the March 23 Movement rebel group, lies on the border with Rwanda and is a major urban and cross-border hub. After the case was confirmed in Goma, Rwanda temporarily closed border posts with the city. Muyembe said that under the International Health Regulations, the response to Ebola should be strengthening cross-border health coordination, screening and contact tracing, instead of closing borders.

Public health response matters

The Africa CDC has said there is currently no specific vaccine or treatment for the Bundibugyo strain. Muyembe said research is continuing to assess possible vaccine candidates and medical options that could be used against it. He noted that the 2012 Ebola outbreak, also caused by the strain, was controlled through public health measures. "For those who are hospitalized and sick, we have standard care techniques. By applying them, we stop the outbreak," he said. Depicting health as a matter of sovereignty, Muyembe said that while partners could provide support, it was ultimately up to the government to take charge and establish mechanisms to detect outbreaks as quickly as possible and mount an effective response.

Philippine Senate convenes as impeachment court to try VP Sara Duterte

The Philippine Senate convened as an impeachment court yesterday to try the case against Vice President Sara Duterte, said Senate President Alan Peter Cayetano.

Senator and former chief of the Philippine National Police Ronald Dela Rosa was absent from the Senate plenary session, with 23 senators in attendance.

Under the impeachment proceedings, Cayetano took his oath as the presiding officer over the court, while the remaining senators served as judges tasked with hearing the case and rendering a verdict. Cayetano ordered that a summons be issued to Sara, directing her to file her answer within a non-extendible 10-day period from receipt of the summons, and to appear before the Senate upon notice.

He added that the House prosecution panel will have five days to respond after the final filing by Sara's camp.

The House of Representatives of the Philippines on Monday last week secured the required number of votes to impeach the Vice President.

Articles of impeachment were transmitted to the Senate on Wednesday last week.

The articles of impeachment accused Sara of corruption, assassination plots, inciting sedition, and patterns of abuse, among others.

Sara, the daughter of former President Rodrigo Duterte, announced her candidacy for the 2028 Philippine presidential election in February this year.

If more than two-thirds of senators vote in favor of the impeachment, she will be convicted, removed from office, and barred from holding public office for life.

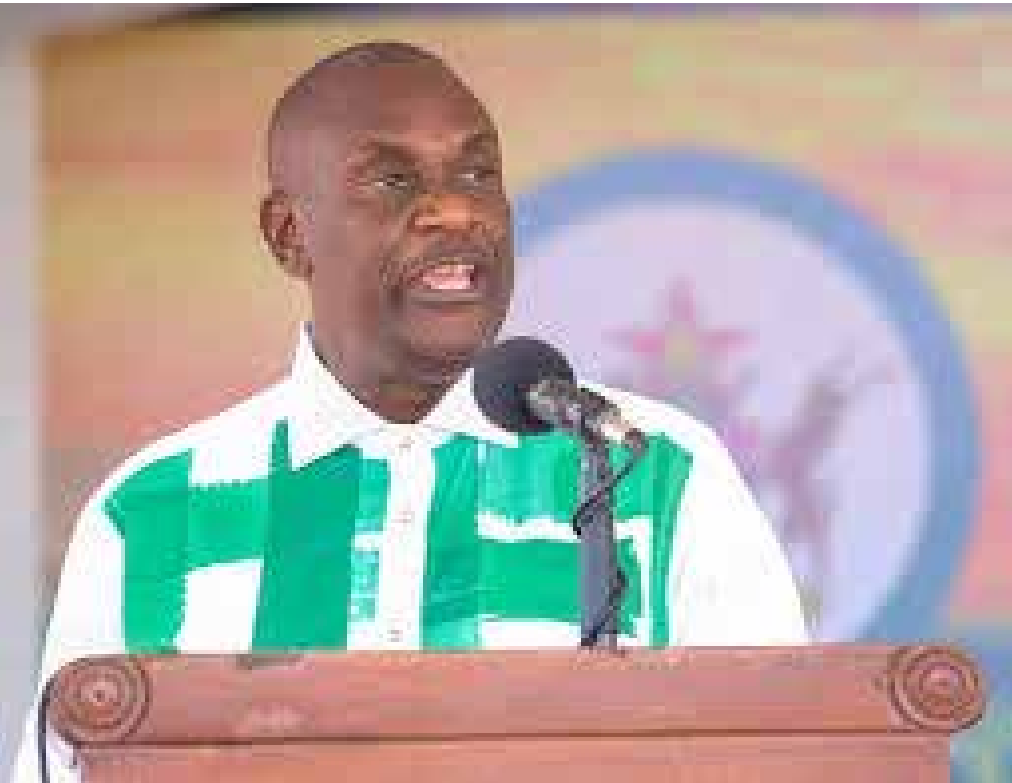
BY Xinhua News Agency
@themtkenyatimes



Philippines Vice President Sara Duterte

Zimbabwe Mercury, cyanide, and acid mine drainage have contaminated surface water and soil across several high-density suburbs.

Kwekwe at a Crossroads: Mining, Water and Social Strain in the Midlands



Midlands Provincial Affairs and Devolution Minister Owen Ncube

BY Norman Mwale
@themtkenyetimes

Kwekwe wakes to the sound of blasting and the frustration of dry taps. It is a city where parents weigh school fees against the immediate need to fetch water or earn a daily wage. This is not a city in collapse — but one balancing precariously between survival and risk.

The clearest sign of that strain lies underground. A 2024 study by the Zimbabwe National Geospatial and Space Agency mapped tunnels extending 1.5 kilometres beneath the central business district and residential suburbs. The removal of support pillars and nightly blasting have left parts of Kwekwe vulnerable to subsidence and structural cracking. For residents in Globe and Phoenix, the threat of sinkholes is no longer abstract — it is a lived anxiety.

Government has acknowledged the problem. Midlands Provincial Affairs and Devolution Minister Owen Ncube has repeatedly urged a shift towards responsible mining.

“Strict adherence to responsible mining must be enforced...

I therefore urge all miners in the Midlands province to protect public infrastructure such as schools, clinics, roads, dams, water and sewer reticulation systems. We say no to open pits that endanger livestock and people’s lives.” — Owen Ncube, Midlands Provincial Affairs and Devolution Minister

Ncube has also argued that artisanal miners need support to adopt safer, more sustainable methods. His call reflects a broader policy tension: how to formalise an industry that employs thousands while curbing the damage it leaves behind.

The environmental and health costs are already visible. Mercury, cyanide, and acid mine drainage have contaminated surface water and soil across several high-density suburbs. During municipal water cuts, some households are left with little choice but to rely on polluted streams and waterways contaminated with raw sewage for gardening and domestic use. Residents report respiratory problems, gastrointestinal illness, and skin conditions consistent with prolonged exposure to toxic effluent. Ncube has linked this to wider land

degradation along the Great Dyke, noting that “open pits left by miners are a constant threat to people and livestock.” His office has directed district officials to pursue land rec-

“

Government has acknowledged the problem. Midlands Provincial Affairs and Devolution Minister Owen Ncube has repeatedly urged a shift towards responsible mining. “Strict adherence to responsible mining must be enforced... I therefore urge all miners in the Midlands province to protect public infrastructure such as schools, clinics, roads, dams, water and sewer reticulation systems. We say no to open pits that endanger livestock and people’s lives.” — Owen Ncube, Midlands Provincial Affairs and Devolution Minister

lamation, tree planting, and improved health and safety measures.

Water shortages compound these pressures. Intermittent supply in Wards 2, 5, and 11 forces families to turn to unsafe sources. Council officials point to ageing pipes and heavy haulage traffic as culprits, but residents argue that investment has consistently lagged behind demand.

Social vulnerability is felt most acutely by young women and girls. Water scarcity and poverty contribute to school absenteeism — particularly for those without access to menstrual hygiene products. Data from 2024 recorded 351 cases of sexual abuse in the district, with most victims aged between 15 and 24. Many incidents are linked to interactions with artisanal miners in peri-urban areas. Community groups stress that shifting this pattern will require changing attitudes and meaningfully involving traditional leaders.

There are real signs of progress. The Presidential Borehole Drilling Scheme has delivered new boreholes in Zhombe and surrounding wards. Menstrual hygiene programmes have improved school attendance for girls in parts of the district. Men’s Indaba meetings have begun addressing mental health and financial planning, recognising that household stability depends on far more than income alone.

Kwekwe’s situation reflects a national dilemma. Mining sustains livelihoods in a

post-industrial town battered by deindustrialisation and climate variability. Yet without regulation, environmental safeguards, and targeted social protection, it risks undermining the very infrastructure and community health it depends on.

A balanced response is within reach: formalise small-scale mining, enforce environmental standards, and protect the most vulnerable households. Without these steps, Kwekwe will continue to live on unstable ground — both literally and socially.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The silent struggles of men

Nick Imudia built a company. Someone decided that made him a target. The NTV documentary on the death of the former d.light CEO is not merely a cautionary tale — it is a mirror held up to a quiet epidemic destroying men across Kenya.

Behind the composure in boardrooms and on busy streets, many men are being systematically hunted. The weapon of choice: pregnancy, real or strategically timed, wielded by predators who understand exactly how society will react.

The pattern is disturbingly consistent. Extramarital relationships proceed without incident — until conception. Then the demands begin. Blackmail. Extortion. Threats to expose the affair to a wife, an employer, the public. The men targeted are rarely young and struggling. They are established, married, successful — men with something to lose. That is the point.



When some men resist, society finishes the job the black-mailer started. Public shaming follows. Families are dragged in. The justice system, largely indifferent to male victimhood, offers no refuge. So men suffer in silence, alone in a crisis engineered to isolate them.

The statistics on male suicide do not lie. Depression does not announce itself — it accumulates, quietly, under the weight of threats no one believes and

pain no one validates.

Kenya must reckon with this. Weaponising pregnancy is abuse. Extortion is a crime regardless of the victim’s gender. And a society that only listens to men at their funerals is not a just one — it is a complicit one.

Daniel Maina, Laikipia University

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Sports >> *Visa uncertainty and Middle East conflict cast shadow over Team Melli's US-bound campaign

FIFA holds 'constructive' talks with Iran over World Cup preparations

By Martin Weche

FIFA and the Iranian Football Federation have held what both parties described as a productive meeting in Istanbul to resolve outstanding logistical hurdles ahead of Iran's participation in the 2026 FIFA World Cup, to be hosted jointly by the United States, Canada and Mexico.

The meeting, convened on Saturday at the headquarters of the Turkish Football Federation, came at a critical moment — days before Iran's squad was due to depart for a pre-tournament training camp in Turkey, and weeks before their opening group fixture on American soil. FIFA Secretary General Mattias Grafstrom offered an upbeat assessment of proceedings. "We've had an excellent meeting, a constructive meeting together with the Iran FA," he said. "I think we're working closely together and looking very much forward to welcoming them to the World Cup." Grafstrom added that the two parties had used the occasion to work through operational matters of the kind FIFA routinely addresses with every participating member association, describing the exchange as "positive" for both sides.

The meeting carries particular significance given the geopolitical backdrop against which it has been arranged. Iran is currently engaged in conflict across the broader Middle East, and the prospect of its national football team travelling to the United States — a country with which Tehran has maintained no formal diplomatic relations since 1980 — has raised practical and political questions that no amount of football diplomacy can entirely smooth over. Chief among them is the issue of visas. Mehdi Taj, president of the Iranian Football Federation, acknowledged on Thursday that travel documents for the squad had not yet been



Iraq's national team coach Australian Graham Arnold speaks during a press conference regarding the Iraqi national team's preparations for the upcoming 2026 FIFA World Cup football tournament, at the headquarters of the Iraqi Football Association, in Baghdad.

issued, a disclosure that heightened anxiety among Iranian football officials and supporters alike.

Despite that unresolved matter, Taj struck a measured tone following Saturday's talks. "We discussed our concerns and expressed our joint commitment to ensure the smooth participation of Team Melli," he said, without elaborating on specific guarantees obtained from FIFA or American authorities. The deliberate brevity of his remarks suggested that sensitive negotiations remain ongoing behind closed doors.

Iran, who have now qualified for their fourth consecutive World Cup finals, are scheduled to base their tournament operations in Tucson, Arizona — a logistical arrangement that itself reflects the complex choreography required to host a team whose government remains at odds with

the host nation. They open their Group G campaign against New Zealand in Los Angeles on 15 June, before facing Belgium in the same city and rounding off the group stage against Egypt in Seattle.

Meanwhile, preparations on the pitch continue at pace. The squad is expected to use their Turkey camp to sharpen fitness and cohesion ahead of the tournament, with two friendly matches planned in Antalya. One fixture, against The Gambia on 29 May, has already been confirmed. Sam Mehdizadeh, an Iranian-Canadian who brokers friendly matches for the national team, confirmed the arrangement, noting that a second opponent is still being finalised.

For Iranian football fans, the stakes extend well beyond tactics and tournament brackets. Team Melli — a name that translates simply as "the national

team" — carries a weight of national identity that few sporting institutions can match in a country where football is the dominant popular passion. The team's presence at successive World Cups has provided moments of rare collective pride in a society that has otherwise endured years of international isolation and domestic turbulence.

FIFA, for its part, appears determined to ensure that politics does not deny the Iranian public that moment. Whether the visa question is resolved swiftly, and whether the wider diplomatic machinery cooperates, will determine whether Saturday's warm words in Istanbul translate into reality in Los Angeles next month.

The world will be watching.

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *Amaan Ganatra, Michuki Hinga and Gurdeep Singh emerged as standout performers in the second round of the Shell Autocross Rally Championship held at Stoni Athi in Machakos County on Sunday

Ganatra, Hinga and Singh shine in Shell Autocross second round



Altaf Ganatra in action on his way to win the 2WD non Turbo car class race

By **Martin Weche,**

Amaan Ganatra, Michuki Hinga and Gurdeep Singh emerged as standout performers in the second round of the Shell Autocross Rally Championship held at Stoni Athi in Machakos County on Sunday.

The event, which drew seasoned veterans and rising stars, saw competitors battle across four heats with the best three runs determining the winners in each category. In the junior classes, Allan Bengi topped the Beta Junior Buggy in 14.18 minutes, while his younger brother Eann Bengi claimed the Cadet Junior Buggy crown in 12.44 minutes, underscoring the family’s growing presence in Kenyan motorsport.

In the senior categories, Ganatra dominated the 4WD with 35mm restrictors, clocking 11.45 minutes to edge Sahib Omar and Tinashe Gatimu. His father, Altaf Ganatra, finished second in the 2WD non-turbo class, which was won by Michuki Hinga in

12.46 minutes. “It was a fantastic day of racing at Stoni Athi. The competition was extremely strong across all categories. Winning the 2WD Non-Turbo class is a proud moment for the team, and it reflects the hard work and preparation that has gone in behind the scenes,” Hinga told reporters after his victory.

The 2WD Turbo Buggy produced one of the closest duels of the day, with Gurdeep Singh clocking 12.04 minutes to beat veteran Ian Duncan by just 11 seconds. Imran Dossajee placed third in 13.09 minutes. Singh’s performance was widely praised by fellow drivers, with Duncan noting that “the younger generation is pushing the limits and bringing fresh energy to the sport.”

The Open Class was equally competitive, with Javed Lota finishing in 12.03 minutes, seven seconds ahead of Junaid Shah and 26 seconds clear of Ahil Khan. The Gatimu family also made headlines, as mother and daughter duo Caroline and Ti-

nashe secured third place in the 4WD with 35mm restrictors, highlighting the growing diversity and inclusivity in Kenyan rallying.

The Stoni Athi meet reinforced the championship’s reputation as a proving ground for both established names and emerging talent. The presence of veterans such as Duncan alongside rising stars like Singh and the Bengi brothers illustrated the generational shift underway in Kenyan motorsport. Organisers hailed the event as a success, noting the strong turnout and competitive spirit.

Vivo Energy Kenya, through its Shell brand, is the title sponsor of the 2026 AutoX Rally Championship, which features seven legs running from February to November. This marks the second year of Shell’s sponsorship following a successful 2025 season. “Shell’s continued support is vital for the growth of motorsport in Kenya. It ensures that drivers at all levels have a platform to showcase their skills and

inspires the next generation,” said a statement from the Kenya Motor Sports Federation.

Selected results underscored the breadth of talent on display. In the Beta Junior Buggy, Allan Bengi led ahead of Sean Njumbi and Gibran Mohamed. The Cadet Junior Buggy saw Eann Bengi triumph over Karamveer Rooprai and Andrea Tundo. In the 2WD Turbo Buggy, Singh’s win was followed by Duncan and Dossajee. Hinga topped the 2WD Non-Turbo class, ahead of Altaf Ganatra and Muaaz Adil. Ganatra’s 4WD victory was followed by Omar and Gatimu.

The championship continues to build momentum as it heads into its third round later this year, with fans and drivers alike anticipating more fierce competition. For Kenya’s motorsport community, the Shell Autocross is proving to be more than just a race — it is a showcase of resilience, family legacies, and the relentless pursuit of speed.

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SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



Shoislom Shomuhamedov: A devoted figure in Uzbek Oriental studies



By: Sultonboyev Asadbek Ulug'jon
@themkenyatimes



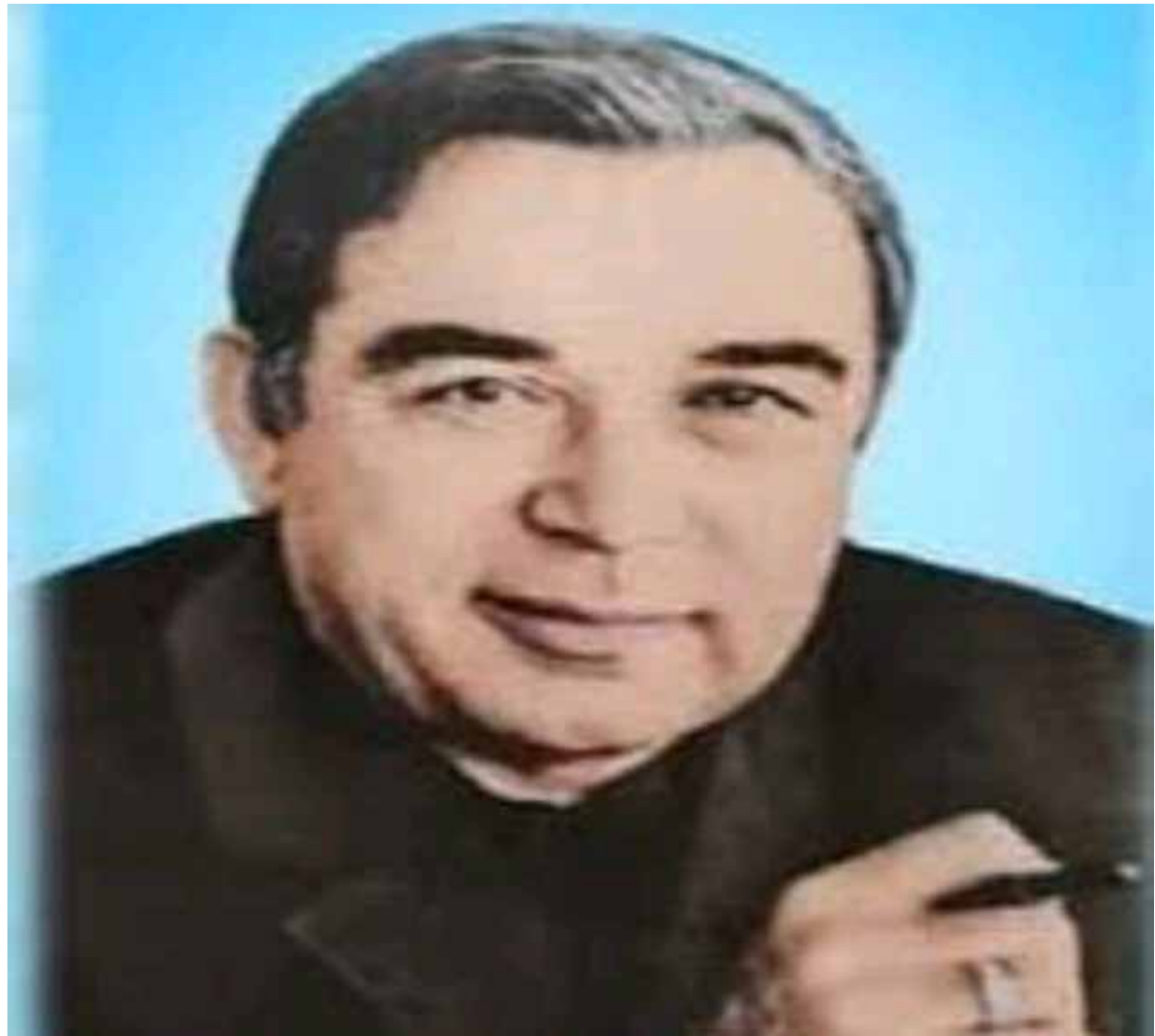
Worth Noting:

- Shoislom Shomuhamedov was born on April 16, 1921, in Tashkent. From an early age, he showed great interest in science, especially in Eastern languages and literature. Although he served on the фронт during World War II, after the war he devoted his entire life to scholarship and enlightenment.
- In 1947, he entered the Faculty of Oriental Studies at the Central Asian State University, which marked a new stage in his life. During his student years, he enthusiastically studied the Persian language, the history, culture, philosophy, and classical literature of Eastern peoples. This period played a decisive role in shaping him into a major Oriental scholar.

When it comes to the development of the science of Oriental studies in Uzbekistan, the name of the great orientalist scholar, skilled educator, talented translator, poet and public figure Shoislom Mahmudovich Shomukhamedov is mentioned first and foremost. He occupies a special place in the history of national science with his multifaceted activities, rich scientific heritage, and invaluable services in bringing the culture and literature of Eastern peoples closer to the Uzbek people.

Shoislom Shomuhamedov was born on April 16, 1921, in Tashkent. From an early age, he showed great interest in science, especially in Eastern languages and literature. Although he served on the фронт during World War II, after the war he devoted his entire life to scholarship and enlightenment. In 1947, he entered the Faculty of Oriental Studies at the Central Asian State University, which marked a new stage in his life. During his student years, he enthusiastically studied the Persian language, the history, culture, philosophy, and classical literature of Eastern peoples. This period played a decisive role in shaping him into a major Oriental scholar.

After successfully graduating from the university in 1952, Shoislom Shomuhamedov continued his academic and pedagogical career at the same institution. He worked as a lecturer, associate professor, dean of the faculty, and vice-rector for scientific affairs. His leadership at the Faculty of Oriental Studies made a significant contribution to the development of the Uzbek school of Oriental studies. He educated hundreds of young specialists and guided them toward academic research. His students and disciples remember him as a knowledgeable, demanding, and deeply humane teacher. Shoislom Shomuhamedov's scholarly work was mainly devoted to the study of Persian-Tajik classical literature, Iranian culture, and the literary heritage of the East. He authored more than 500 scientific articles, monographs, and research works, as well as nearly 90 books. His studies played an important role in deeply exploring the history of Eastern literature, revealing its humanistic essence, and



Shoislom Shomuhamedov

introducing it to Uzbek readers.

One of his greatest achievements was his devoted work in translating the famous Persian epic Shahnameh by the great poet Abulqosim Firdavsi into Uzbek. The new three-volume translation of this masterpiece was completed under Shoislom Shomuhamedov's leadership and direct participation. This translation received high recognition not only as a literary work but also as an important scholarly contribution. In addition, he translated the works of many renowned Eastern thinkers and poets into Uzbek, including Umar Khayyam, Saadi Shirazi, Hafez Shirazi, Abdurahman Jami, Nizami Ganjavi, Amir Khusraw Dehlavi, Ibn Sina, Bedil, and many others. Shoislom Shomuhamedov was not only a translator but also a gift-

ed writer and poet. His books such as Searching for Truth, Ocean of Pearls, The Sun of the Book, Flower Garden, Journey Through the Flower Garden, The Breeze of the Flower Garden, and There Are People were warmly welcomed by readers of his time. His prose and poetry embodied humanism, enlightenment, kindness, and Eastern philosophical thought. Among his scholarly works, books such as Umar Khayyam, Saadi Shirazi, Hafez Shirazi, Classics of Persian-Tajik Literature, Malikush-Shuaro Bahor, Amir Khusraw Dehlavi, and Persian-Tajik Prosody hold a special place. These works continue to serve as important sources for students and researchers studying Eastern literature. His contributions were highly appreciated both nationally and internationally.

He was awarded the honorary title "Honored Scientist of Uzbekistan," received the International Firdavsi Prize in 1973, and was decorated with the "El-Yurt Hurmati" Order. Shoislom Shomuhamedov devoted his entire life to science and enlightenment. As a great intellectual who left an indelible mark on the formation and development of the Uzbek school of Oriental studies, he remains forever in the hearts of the people. His scholarly heritage, translations, and efforts to promote spiritual and cultural values continue to be an invaluable treasure for future generations.

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