

The Mt. Kenya Times

WEEKEND ePAPER

www.mountkenyatiimes.co.ke

KSh 60 (TSh 1,700 : USh 2,700 : RFr 900)

No. 0295    themtkenyatiimes

Inflation hits 28-month high

Fuel, food, and fares are squeezing Kenyan households — and the relief that economists hoped for is not coming fast enough.



P.9

Kenya's inflation hits a 28-month high



Climate: Dedan Kimathi Foundation donates 2,000 fruit trees to Ruai School in push for greener Nairobi P.11



Counties: Concern as Murang'a reports alarming cases of FGM and GBV P.12



Culture: Maara Cultural Festivals kick off as leaders praise Njuki's cultural agenda P.13

NEXT GENERATION CLASSIFY

"ONE-STOP NATIONAL BUSINESS DIRECTORY"

Contact Us:

+254 720 918 828 / +254 713 318 438
+254 706 237 040 / +254 724 613 401

business@exponentialinternational.com



SCAN TO REGISTER



"ALL BUSINESSES
ONE PLATFORM"

Eight arrested as DCI probes Utumishi Girls fire that killed 16 students

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyatimes



Worth Noting:

- The fire broke out at the Meline Waithera Dormitory, a two-storey building whose upper floor sustained extensive damage while the ground floor remained largely intact. The upper floor housed 12 cubicles accommodating 135 double-decker beds.
- Investigators recovered 16 bodies from the scene, all of which have been transferred to Naivasha Sub-County Referral Hospital Mortuary pending post-mortem examinations and formal identification. An unknown number of students remain under medical care.

The Directorate of Criminal Investigations has arrested eight students as persons of interest following a fire at Utumishi Girls Senior Secondary School in Gilgil, Nakuru County, that killed 16 students when flames tore through a dormitory in the early hours of Thursday, 28 May 2026.

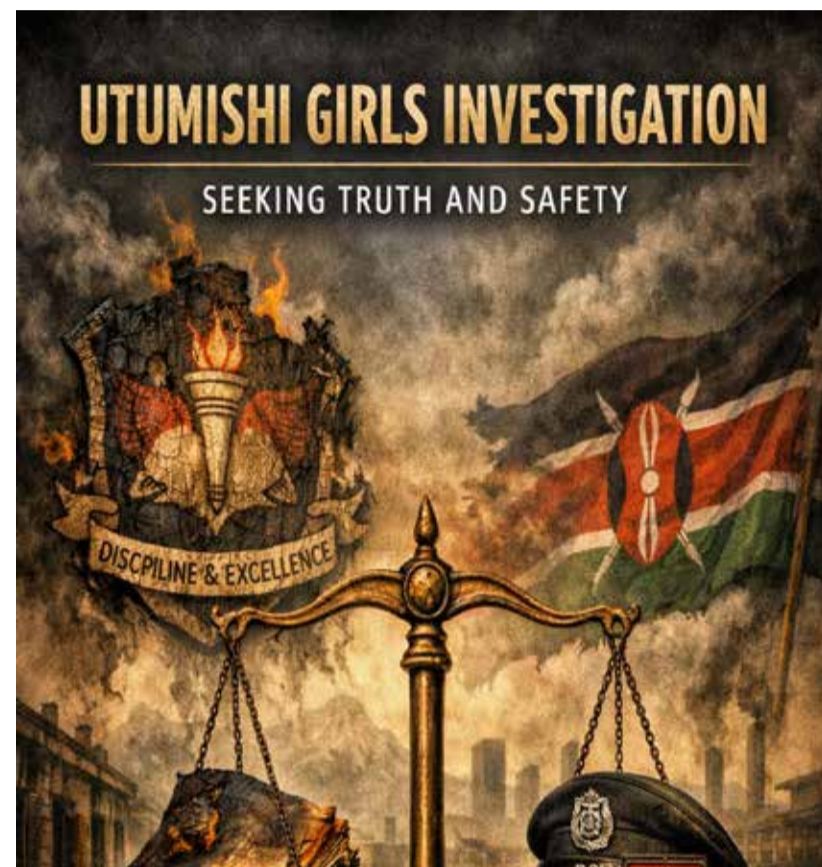
The DCI confirmed the arrests in a statement on Friday, disclosing that a dedicated investigation team led by the Director of Homicide had taken over the case following the conclusion of rescue and emergency response operations. "Preliminary investigations have identified eight students as persons of interest in connection with the planning and execution of the suspected arson attack," the statement read. "The eight girls have since been arrested and are currently in police custody." The word arson, contained plainly in an official government statement, transforms what might have been an accidental tragedy into something far more disturbing — a crime, allegedly planned and executed inside the walls of a school by the very students who lived there.

The fire broke out at the Meline Waithera Dormitory, a two-storey building whose upper floor sustained extensive damage while the ground floor remained largely intact. The upper floor housed 12 cubicles accommodating 135 double-decker beds — a detail that makes the loss of 16 lives all the more harrowing. Every one of those beds belonged to a daughter, a sister, a friend. Investi-

gators recovered all 16 bodies from the scene, and they have since been transferred to Naivasha Sub-County Referral Hospital Mortuary pending post-mortem examinations and formal identification. An unknown number of students remain under medical care.

The emergency response drew in an unusually wide coalition of agencies — the National Police Service, Kenya Defence Forces, National Youth Service, Kenya Red Cross Society, Nakuru County government, Kenya Forest Service, the National Disaster Management Unit, and the Ministry of Education. That such a mobilisation was necessary speaks to the scale of a disaster that overwhelmed ordinary emergency capacity and demanded a national response to what had begun as a local catastrophe.

The forensic response has been equally thorough. A multi-agency investigation team comprising crime scene investigators, forensic imaging and acoustics specialists from the Crime Research and Intelligence Bureau, and DNA experts has processed the dormitory in detail. Detectives are analysing burn patterns, reviewing electrical installations, and determining whether accelerants were used to start or spread the fire. CCTV footage recovered from the school is under active examination, and statements have been recorded from students, teachers, and other witnesses present on the night. "Detectives continue to record statements and analyse all available



Illustration

evidence to reconstruct the sequence of events, establish the full circumstances of the incident, and determine the motive," the DCI said.

The DCI appealed to parents, guardians, and the public to remain calm and allow investigations to proceed without interference — a request that acknowledges the raw grief and anger that has settled over

a country struggling to comprehend how a school dormitory became a crime scene.

Kenya has buried too many children in school fires. This time, the investigators believe someone is responsible. The country is watching — and waiting for justice.

The Mt. Kenya Times



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

Group Executive Chairman

M. Danson

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/dan-mwangi-1b47446b/>

Our Contacts

P. O. Box 101 675 - 00101 Nairobi, Cell: 0700 161 866, 0705 215 262

Editorial Desk: editorial@mtkenyatimes.co.ke, Adverts: ads@mtkenyatimes.co.ke,

News Desk: news@mtkenyatimes.co.ke, Web: www.mtkenyatimes.co.ke

Facebook: Mt. Kenya Times, Instagram: Mt. Kenya Times, Twitter: @themtkenyatimes

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/mt-kenya-times-a07999115/>

NEXT GENERATION CLASSIFY

"ONE-STOP NATIONAL BUSINESS DIRECTORY"



"ALL BUSINESSES
ONE PLATFORM"



SCAN TO REGISTER

Contact Us:

+254 720 918 828 / +254 713 318 438



+254 706 237 040 / +254 721 274 369

+254 724 613 401 / +254 100 423 971

+254 724 613 401



business@exponentialinternational.com



www.businessavaibale.com

Finance Bill 2026 KPMG Associate Director Kiema Onesmus said the Bill reflects the constraints of a tax-dependent fiscal model.

Finance Bill 2026: Tax pressure mounts as Kenyans face cost of living strain

BY Irene Mwangi

@themkenyatimes

The Finance Bill 2026 has reignited a familiar but increasingly uneasy national debate: how much more can the state extract from taxpayers before revenue mobilisation collides with economic reality.

Presented as part of Treasury's broader plan to fund government spending and narrow the fiscal deficit, the Bill seeks to raise about Sh120 billion in additional revenue.

It comes at a time when households are grappling with persistent living costs, businesses are contending with weak consumer demand, and doubts persist over whether the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) will meet its current collection targets.

The proposed changes—covering digital transactions, mobile phones, tax administration, data access, excise duties and VAT treatment of key goods—have triggered widespread criticism from economists, tax experts, business groups and consumers, many of whom argue the measures lean heavily toward revenue generation with limited short-term relief for households.

KPMG Associate Director Kiema Onesmus said the Bill reflects the constraints of a tax-dependent fiscal model.

"You cannot tax yourself to prosperity. The sad reality is that, as a country, that is where we seem to be heading because taxes remain our main source of revenue," he said.

"The challenge is that we appear to be left with two options: either taxing ourselves or borrowing, and we are reaching a point where we are milking the cow dry."

His remarks come as scrutiny intensifies over KRA's revenue ambitions. The authority is targeting about Sh2.7 trillion in the 2025/26 financial year, rising to approximately Sh2.9 trillion in 2026/27—an increase of nearly Sh200 billion.

Analysts say the jump raises questions about feasibility in an economy still weighed down by subdued private sector growth, declining purchasing power and elevated operating costs.

"The bigger question is how achievable this is because we are not even certain KRA will meet the current



target. Moving from Sh2.7 trillion to Sh2.9 trillion is a significant leap," Onesmus said.

"Unless policy shifts prioritise economic growth, the country could end up facing a deficit that forces familiar choices: more borrowing or spending cuts."

Among the most contested proposals is a 25 per cent excise duty on mobile phones. The government argues it would streamline existing taxes embedded in imported devices, potentially simplifying the tax regime.

Treasury Cabinet Secretary John Mbadi has previously suggested the impact on prices may not be as severe as critics fear.

However, analysts and technology sector observers warn the measure could increase the cost of devices central to Kenya's digital economy.

"Regardless of assurances about removing other taxes, some adjustments would require regional co-ordination under the East African framework," Onesmus said. "As it stands, there is little in these proposals that cushions the ordinary Kenyan."

The Bill also proposes changes af-

fecting electric vehicles and VAT classification. Products currently zero-rated would be reclassified as VAT-exempt—a shift tax experts say could have unintended consequences.

"When a product becomes exempt from VAT, producers cannot reclaim input VAT," Onesmus explained. "Businesses are unlikely to absorb those costs, meaning they will be passed on to consumers. Prices may therefore rise despite the perception of relief."

Digital payments—long regarded as one of Kenya's economic success stories—are also under scrutiny, with proposed changes to transaction charges reigniting concerns about the future of cashless systems.

Kenya has been globally recognised for mobile money adoption, but tax experts warn that additional levies could undermine financial inclusion. "People pay bus fares, shop, tip workers and settle bills digitally," Onesmus said. "Taxing transaction charges risks reversing gains by discouraging digital payments and pushing users back into cash-based activity."

Another contentious proposal

would expand the tax commissioner's access to taxpayer financial data. Supporters say it would improve compliance and curb evasion, but critics warn it risks overreach.

"While taxpayers already operate under a self-assessment system, extending access raises questions about boundaries," Onesmus said. "Not every transaction reflects taxable income."

The Bill also revives debate around the Kenya Revenue Authority's Electronic Tax Invoice Management System (eTIMS), a key pillar of tax digitisation. While intended to improve transparency, practitioners cite persistent concerns over data mismatches and administrative strain.

"Taxpayers are increasingly seeing discrepancies between their records and KRA's pre-populated figures," Onesmus said. "Resolving those gaps takes time and increases compliance pressure."

Informal sector operators and small-scale farmers may be particularly affected, analysts warn, given challenges in documenting cash-based transactions and input costs.

"A farmer may incur genuine expenses but lack formal records,"

Onesmus said. "Without documentation, there is a risk that gross income is treated as taxable profit."

Beyond technical provisions, the Bill has reopened a broader question of public trust. Economists argue that willingness to pay taxes is closely tied to visible public service delivery and economic conditions.

"Kenyans would feel less burdened if they could clearly see value for money—better roads, improved services and a stable cost of living," Onesmus said.

"But when disposable incomes are shrinking and living costs remain high, taxpayers begin questioning whether revenues are being used as intended."

As Parliament prepares to debate the Bill, lawmakers face competing pressures: Treasury's urgent need for revenue, demands for fiscal discipline, calls for growth stimulus, and growing taxpayer fatigue.

The central question remains whether the government's push for higher revenues will strengthen fiscal stability or deepen concerns that taxation is outpacing the economy's capacity to absorb it.

The Africa Largest eCOMMERCE



www.gotyou.co.ke

NOW
OPEN

Call/Text/WhatsApp: +254 714 090 155

Ebola The financial pledge, announced on Friday by State Department spokesperson Tommy Pigott

Court blocks Laikipia Ebola facility as US pledges KSh1.75bn to Kenya

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

The United States has committed \$13.5 million toward Kenya's Ebola preparedness following talks between Secretary of State Marco Rubio and President William Ruto, even as Kenya's High Court moved to temporarily block plans to establish a US-backed Ebola quarantine facility at Laikipia Air Base in Nanyuki.

The financial pledge, announced on Friday by State Department spokesperson Tommy Pigott, is part of a broader American commitment that already includes \$112 million in bilateral assistance to the wider regional Ebola response across East Africa. "The two leaders agreed to maintain close coordination as the situation evolves and to continue leveraging the strong US-Kenya health partnership that has proven essential in addressing public health challenges in Kenya and across East Africa," Mr. Pigott said.

But the announcement landed into a storm of domestic opposition that neither government had fully anticipated. As part of its response to the ongoing Bundibugyo Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the US government had deployed more than 30 specially trained public health officers to Kenya and backed plans for a quarantine facility at Laikipia Air Base to isolate Americans exposed to the vi-

rus — with symptomatic patients later to be transferred to treatment facilities in Europe. The arrangement, negotiated without public disclosure, triggered immediate legal and professional pushback.

The High Court temporarily stopped the government from establishing or facilitating any Ebola quarantine, isolation or treatment facility under the arrangement, and also halted the admission, transfer or receipt into Kenya of persons exposed to or infected with Ebola under the disputed diplomatic deal. The orders came after civil rights organisation Katiba Institute filed an urgent petition arguing the arrangement had been negotiated without public participation, parliamentary oversight, or transparency on its terms.

The Kenya Medical Practitioners, Pharmacists and Dentists Union added its voice forcefully, issuing the government a 48-hour ultimatum to publicly disclose the details of negotiations, warning of nationwide industrial action if the deal proceeded without accountability. "KMPDU is calling out the hypocrisy of the ongoing backdoor negotiations between the Government of Kenya and the United States administration regarding the establishment of an Ebola quarantine and treatment facility at Laikipia Air Base," said Secretary General Dr. Davji Atellah. "We are utterly disgusted by the government's apparent willingness to trade national biosecurity



President William Ruto with U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio after a past press address. PHOTO | COURTESY

and the lives of its citizens for foreign aid."

Health Cabinet Secretary Aden Duale acknowledged the ongoing discussions while seeking to reassure the public. "Protection of Kenyan citizens, frontline health workers and communities remains paramount," he said, stressing that any international health cooperation would be guided by Kenyan law and biosafety standards. Medical Services Principal Secretary Dr. Ouma Oluga defended Kenya's capacity, pointing to investments made during the Covid-19 pandemic and noting that more than 55,000 travellers had been screened at entry points, with all ten suspected Ebola cases tested in Kenya returning negative results.

The controversy has dominated Kenya's leading newspapers and television and radio debate, with critics

expressing disbelief that the Ruto government had agreed to a facility widely seen as designed to protect Americans while leaving Kenyans to absorb the risk. One doctor put it plainly: "This is quite paradoxical — keeping America safe while leaving Kenyans at risk of infection."

The United States has been equally direct about its own priorities. "The United States' highest priority remains protecting the health and security of the American people by working to prevent the Ebola outbreak from reaching our shores," the State Department said.

Both statements can be true. What they cannot both be, in the same breath, is a partnership of equals.

Two police officers arrested for allegedly demanding KSh.100K bribe



A side-by-side image of Kitutu Central Sub-County DCIO, Chief Inspector Nicholas Waringa and Corporal Lovy Ochieng Ouya of Nyanchwa Police Station. PHOTO | COURTESY

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

The Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) has arrested two police officers in Kisii County over allegations of soliciting and receiving a bribe from a member of the public.

The two include a senior officer, Kitutu Central Sub-County DCIO Chief Inspector Nicholas Waringa and Corporal Lovy Ochieng Ouya attached to Nyanchwa Police Station.

According to EACC, the arrests followed a complaint that the officers had demanded Ksh.100,000 to facilitate the arrest of a person accused of illegally taking possession of

a parcel of land in Nyanchwa Estate and putting up structures on it.

EACC Head of Corporate Communication Stephen Karuga confirmed the arrest, saying EACC's detectives nabbed the two officers after allegedly receiving part payment of Ksh.40,000 from the complainant.

The suspects were later escorted to the EACC Kisii Regional Office for processing.

EACC stated that the two officers were released on cash bail of Ksh.50,000 each pending completion of investigations.

The commission has since urged members of the public to report cases of bribery and abuse of office.

The **MT. KENYA TIMES** Where Investors Get Returns

To advertise in Mt. Kenya Times read by discerning Kenyan professionals and the business community contact our exclusive **UK & Europe Advertising and Marketing representatives.**



ADLINK INTERNATIONAL (1989) MEDIA GROUP
16 Upper Woburn Place, London WC1H 0AF
Phone: 0330 606 1438 (44 330 606 1438)
Email: media@adlinkinternational.com
www.adlinkinternational.com
Contact: Mr Shamlal Puri

NEWS PAPER

IN BUSINESS

The Mount Kenya Times

+254 724 439 949, +254 720 918 828, +254 721 103 040, +254 713 318 438

website: <https://mountkenyatimes.co.ke>

Food insecurity Dr. Ronoh said the government views modern biotechnology as one of several science-based tools that can contribute to agricultural transformation

Government pushes biotechnology as solution to food insecurity

BY Suleiman Mbatiah

@themkenyatimes

The government is positioning modern biotechnology as a key tool in transforming Kenya's agriculture sector, arguing that scientific innovations could help farmers overcome challenges ranging from climate change to pest outbreaks.

Speaking on Friday during the National Biosafety Awareness Forum in Mumias, Kakamega County, Principal Secretary for Agriculture Dr. Kipronoh Ronoh said Kenya's agricultural sector continues to face mounting pressures from erratic weather patterns, declining productivity, pests and diseases, rising production costs, and increasing pressure on land and natural resources.

The forum, organized by the National Biosafety Authority (NBA), brought together national and county government officials, scientists, regulators, farmers, traders, students and members of the public to discuss biotechnology, genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and biosafety regulation in Kenya.

Dr. Ronoh said the government views modern biotechnology as one of several science-based tools that can contribute to agricultural transformation while helping the country strengthen food security and build resilience against emerging agricultural threats.

"This forum provides a valuable opportunity for the National and County Governments, scientists, regulators, farmers, traders, and the public to engage openly on matters of biotechnology, genetically modified organisms (GMOs), and biosafety regulation in Kenya," he said.

The Principal Secretary noted that the government has approved a national public awareness programme that will see biosafety education activities rolled out across all 47 counties. The initiative is intended to improve public understanding of biotechnology and provide factual information on biosafety matters at the grassroots level.

The National Biosafety Authority, established under the Biosafety Act of 2009, is responsible for regulating activities involving genetically modified organisms in Kenya. The authority oversees the approval,



Scientists showcase cassava resistant to brown streak disease at KALRO Mtwapa in Kilifi County.

transfer, handling and use of GMOs to ensure they do not pose risks to human health, animal health or the environment.

Kenya lifted its decade-long ban on the cultivation and importation of GMO crops in 2022, paving the way for the adoption of genetically modified crops such as Bt cotton and genetically modified maize varieties developed to resist pests and improve yields. Government officials have argued that biotechnology can complement conventional farming methods in addressing food insecurity and climate-related production challenges.

"I wish to assure the people of Mumias, Kakamega County, and Kenya at large that the Government treats issues of biosafety seriously," Dr. Ronoh said, emphasizing that GMO products and related technologies are subjected to internationally recognized safety protocols, scientific evaluation and consultations with relevant government agencies before approvals are granted.

According to the ministry, the adoption of biotechnology in Kenya remains subject to strict regulatory

oversight, with all GMO-related products and technologies undergoing scientific risk assessments, safety evaluations, inter-agency consultations and compliance reviews before approval for commercial use.

Dr. Ronoh said many biotechnology innovations under consideration are being developed by Kenyan scientists through institutions such as the Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO), Masinde Muliro University of Sci-

ence and Technology and Kenyatta University. He noted that local research capacity continues to play an important role in developing solutions tailored to Kenya's agricultural needs.

The Principal Secretary also described the Mumias forum as a milestone for public engagement, noting that it was the first major mass public awareness event undertaken by the National Biosafety Authority since its establishment. He said the initia-

tive would help create direct channels for citizens to seek clarification from experts while enabling regulators to listen to public concerns and expectations.

He urged participants to rely on evidence-based information when discussing biotechnology and encouraged stakeholders to distinguish scientific facts from misinformation. Public awareness and participation, he said, remain critical components of good governance and informed decision-making.

The government further reaffirmed its commitment to supporting programmes that enhance agricultural productivity, improve food security and increase farmers' incomes while ensuring innovation is guided by safety, accountability and public interest.

Dr. Ronoh said farmers remain at the center of the government's agricultural agenda, stressing that any new technology must ultimately help producers increase yields, reduce losses and strengthen livelihoods. He also called for closer collaboration among national and county governments, researchers, regulators, private sector players and farming communities in advancing agricultural transformation.

Participants called for continued public engagement on biotechnology, saying open dialogue between scientists, regulators, farmers and communities will be essential as Kenya works to harness innovation, strengthen food security and maintain robust biosafety safeguards amid evolving agricultural challenges.



Cost of living The rise was largely driven by increases in the prices of food and non-alcoholic beverages, transport, and housing-related costs

The cost of living bites: Kenya's inflation hits a 28-month high

Fuel, food, and fares are squeezing Kenyan households — and the relief that economists hoped for is not coming fast enough.

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyaintimes

Kenya's annual inflation rate surged to 6.7 percent in May 2026, its highest level in more than two years, driven by record fuel prices, soaring transport costs, and persistent pressure on food prices, the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics reported on Friday.

The number alone tells a story. But the story behind the number is being lived by millions of Kenyans every single day — at the fuel pump, at the market, on the morning commute, and at the dinner table where the portions have quietly grown smaller. Inflation surged to 6.7 percent in May from 5.6 percent in April, making it the highest rate recorded since January 2024, when it stood at 6.9 percent. It was the second consecutive monthly increase, a trend that has alarmed economists and households in equal measure.

The rise was largely driven by increases in the prices of food and non-alcoholic beverages, transport, and housing-related costs — three categories that collectively account for more than 57 percent of household spending. The figures make for uncomfortable reading. Transport costs surged by 16.5 percent during the period, reflecting the impact of higher fuel prices across the economy. Food and non-alcoholic beverage prices increased by 9.4 percent, while housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuel costs rose by 3.4 percent.

These are not abstractions. Transport inflation of 16.5 percent means the matatu fare that cost a worker 50 shillings in May last year now costs significantly more. Food inflation of 9.4 percent means that the household shopping basket — already stretched by years of economic pressure — has become even harder to fill. For the millions of Kenyans who spend the majority of their income on these three categories alone, the data confirms what they have known for months: surviving in Kenya right now is expensive, and it is getting more expensive.

The primary culprit is fuel. Con-

flict-driven disruptions pushed the price of petrol to a record Sh214.25 per litre in Nairobi, while diesel and kerosene rose to Sh242.92 and Sh152.78 respectively. Kenya imports nearly all its petroleum products from the Middle East, making it acutely vulnerable to global supply shocks. According to EPRA data, diesel prices in Nairobi have risen more than 18 percent year-on-year while petrol prices are up over 10 percent. The government did intervene — cutting VAT on petroleum products from 16 percent to 13 percent and deploying approximately Ksh 6.2 billion from the Petroleum Development Levy Fund to stabilise pump prices — but the relief was partial at best. Without those measures, analysts warned, prices could have been far higher.

The fuel shock does not stay at the pump. It travels. It moves into the price of tomatoes at Toi Market and the cost of a bag of maize at a rural kiosk. It inflates the transport bill that a small business owner pays to move goods from Mombasa to Nairobi. It shows up in the electricity bill and the cost of running a generator. At Nairobi's open-air markets, traders have watched customers grow increasingly frustrated at price rises that are not of the traders' making. "Last week someone could come and buy one kilo of onions for one hundred shillings. Then this week, when you tell them the price has gone up to one hundred and twenty shillings, they get angry and think you are the one overcharging them," said Nicholas Onyango, a fruit trader at Toi Market. His frustration captures a dynamic playing out across Kenya — ordinary people caught between global forces they cannot control and daily pressures they cannot escape.

The strain on businesses is equally visible. A recent Stanbic Bank Kenya Purchasing Managers' Index showed Kenya's private sector activity contracted for a second consecutive month in April as businesses struggled with rising fuel-related operational costs. Christopher Legilisho, an economist at Stanbic Bank Kenya, noted that concerns over higher transport costs and difficulty



Kenya's inflation hits a 28-month high

securing supplies from Asia and the Middle East were weighing heavily on businesses.

All eyes are now on the Central Bank of Kenya, whose Monetary Policy Committee is scheduled to announce its next interest rate decision on 9 June. The spike in energy costs is expected to reduce the Central Bank's room for further cuts on the benchmark interest rate, potentially freezing the recent decline in lending rates. That would be a painful reversal. The CBK held its benchmark rate steady at 8.75 percent at its April meeting, noting that overall inflation remained below the midpoint of the target range, supported by stable core inflation, favourable weather conditions, and a broadly stable exchange rate. That assessment now looks considerably less comfortable in the light of May's figures.

Kenya's headline inflation is now

pushing close to the upper limit of the government's preferred range of 2.5 percent to 7.5 percent. Should it breach that ceiling, the central bank would face a difficult choice between protecting growth — which has held relatively firm, with the economy projected to expand by 5.5 percent this year — and bringing prices back under control through tighter monetary policy that would make borrowing more expensive for businesses and households already under strain.

The KNBS data is collected monthly through retail price surveys across 50 data collection zones in urban areas nationwide, conducted during the second and third weeks of each month. It is as rigorous a measure of the cost of living as Kenya produces. And what it measured in May 2026 was a country under pressure.

The question facing policymakers, businesses, and households is not

whether inflation has risen — the numbers are unambiguous. It is whether the forces driving it are temporary or entrenched. If the conflict in the Middle East that has pushed fuel prices to record highs eases, some relief may follow. If it does not, Kenya faces the prospect of inflation remaining uncomfortably high through the second half of the year, eroding real wages, squeezing household budgets, and testing the resilience of an economy that has worked hard to stabilise itself after years of turbulence.

For now, the matatu still runs. The market still opens. The household still finds a way. But the margin for error is shrinking — and the cost of getting the policy response wrong has rarely been higher.

Health The KUTRRH Director of Clinical Services Dr Anthony Kamau said Kenya needs to hire more nurses in the specialized field in order to meet the shortfall

Medics call for training and hiring of more nurses handling cancer related wounds

BY John Kamau
@themtkenyatimes

Medics have emphasized the need to train and hire more nurses who take care of patients with chronic wounds, particularly from cancer surgeries and burns.

This comes as statistics show that Kenya faces a serious shortage of nurses in that field with each handling between 15 to 20 patients daily, compared to World Health Organization (WHO) recommendations of one to six patients per day.

The call was made during the second national and regional conference of nurses who handle patients suffering from

chronic wounds held at the Kenyatta University Teaching Referral and Research Hospital (KUTRRH).

Dubbed Wound Continence and Enterostomal Therapy Nurses (WCETN) conference, it brought together experts in the specialized field of chronic wound treatment from across the country and beyond.

The KUTRRH Director of Clinical Services Dr Anthony Kamau said Kenya needs to hire more nurses in the specialized field in order to meet the shortfall and offer effective treatment of patients.

Noting that the facility is primarily an oncology center that deals mainly with cancer related surgeries, Dr Kamau

said the role of nurses in helping patients in their recovery journey cannot be overlooked.

“As an oncology center, we have a lot of wounds generated as a result of cancer related operations besides receiving patients with serious burns. Because of that, wound care is a very critical service and as such we have specialized wound treatment nurses on a daily basis,” stated Dr Kamau.

He added that after the establishment of the hospital, it was realized that there was need to have specialized nurses to deal mainly with wounds, a crucial service that wasn't there initially.

Dr Kamau who also read a speech by the KUTRRH



A section of Medics who had converged at KUTRRH during the second national and regional conference of nurses who handle patients suffering from chronic wounds.

Chief Executive Dr Zeinab Gura pointed out that there is need for government to allocate more resources towards the training of specialized nurses and the local manufacture of work materials that are largely imported.

“We are asking the government to dedicate resources towards the training of more specialized nurses and encourage local production of the materials used in this service because many of them are imported and come with higher prices,” he said.

Dr Gura on her part noted that the hospital has more than 800 nurses, most of whom

deal with patients suffering from wounds incurred as a result of operations to remove cancerous tumours.

The CEO further stressed the need for collaboration between various health institutions and relevant government agencies in ensuring growth of professionals in that area.

According to the Chairperson of the WCETN conference Margaret Mungai who is also the Deputy Director Nursing Services at Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital there is urgent need to train and hire more nurses in these specialized fields.

She noted that WHO recom-

mends that each nurse should take care of 1 to 6 patients daily, but in the Kenyan situation it is between 15 and 20, presenting a serious shortfall.

“The WHO reports shows there is a serious shortage of nurses, particularly specialized ones. Hence the need to hire and train more,” Ms Mungai added.

Justin Kinoti, a senior nurse at the hospital asked patients not to shy away from seeking treatment for chronic wounds, no matter the stage or time they have been living in that condition.

Where Moments Become Memories

Use Promo Code **TOURISM26**

Sales valid until 15th March 2026
Travel valid until 30th June 2026

ENJOY **6% OFF** DOMESTIC ROUTES

Book on: www.kenya-airways.com, or via KQ Mobile App

www.kenya-airways.com

Kenya Airways The Pride of Africa

Vehicle Branding

If your vehicle isn't branded, it's not working hard enough.

Turn your Vehicle into a moving Billboard.

From as low as Kshs. 17000/-

Request a Quote

We deliver countrywide at a fee!

Call: 0791359251
Website: rockandroll.co.ke

Trees The exercise was carried out in collaboration with the Climate Worx Initiative – Ruai Branch and Kasarani Technical Training Institute

Dedan Kimathi Foundation donates 2,000 fruit trees to Ruai School in push for greener Nairobi

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyatimes

The Dedan Kimathi Foundation has intensified its environmental conservation campaign after donating more than 2,000 assorted fruit tree seedlings to Manyatta Secondary School in Ruai Division, Nairobi, as part of efforts to support Kenya's ambitious national tree-growing agenda.

The initiative, conducted under the Foundation's "Green Friday" programme, saw students, teachers, local environmental groups, and community leaders participate in a large-scale tree-planting exercise aimed at promoting environmental sustainability and food security.

The donated seedlings in-



The team during the planting session.



Dedan Kimathi Foundation team and other stakeholders at the school.

gramme spearheaded by the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, which targets the planting of 15 billion trees by 2032 to increase Kenya's tree cover to 30 percent.

Beyond environmental conservation, the Foundation said the project is designed to create long-term socio-economic benefits for the school and surrounding community.

According to the Foundation, the fruit trees are expected to supplement the school feeding programme once they mature, while proceeds from surplus harvests will help support welfare programmes for needy students.

School administrators welcomed the initiative, describing it as a transformative investment that will benefit future generations while instilling environmental responsibility among learners.

"This project goes beyond tree planting. It teaches our students the importance of sustainability, food production, and environmental stewardship," a school representative said.

Founded to advance social empowerment and community development, the Dedan Kimathi Foundation has in recent years expanded its activities in environmental conservation, youth empowerment, education support, and community welfare programmes across different parts of the country.

Environmental experts have increasingly advocated for urban fruit tree planting as a practical solution to food insecurity, climate resilience, and urban greening, particularly in densely populated cities such as Nairobi.

The Foundation expressed confidence that partnerships between schools, communities, and environmental organizations will accelerate Kenya's journey toward a greener and more sustainable future.

cluded grafted avocado, mango, orange, and loquat trees, all selected for their economic, nutritional, and environmental value.

Speaking during the event, officials from the Foundation emphasized the critical role fruit trees can play in urban areas such as Nairobi, where rapid population growth and shrinking conservation spaces continue to threaten the environment.

"Fruit trees stand in a league of their own because they offer economic returns, improve nutrition, and contribute significantly to environmental restoration through carbon sequestration," the Foundation said in a statement.

The exercise was carried out in collaboration with the Climate Worx Initiative – Ruai Branch and Kasarani Technical Training Institute, reflecting growing partnerships between community organizations and educational institutions in addressing climate change.

The Foundation noted that the initiative aligns with the government's national pro-

FGM and GBV Bule noted that the figure is significantly high compared to other counties in the Central region, terming the trend worrying.

Concern as Murang'a reports alarming cases of FGM and GBV

BY Bernard Munyao
@themkenyatimes

Concern has been raised over the increasing cases of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Murang'a County with government officials and stakeholders calling for urgent action to curb the vices.

Speaking during a stakeholders' consultative meeting in Murang'a town, County Commissioner Hassan Ali Bule said recent findings from the Kenya Demographic and Health Survey (KDHS) showed that the county's FGM prevalence rate stands

at 17.5 percent.

Bule noted that the figure is significantly high compared to other counties in the Central region, terming the trend worrying.

"We cannot ignore these statistics. The rate is still high and we must work together as a community to end these harmful practices," he said.

The consultative meeting brought together security officers, education officials, religious leaders, gender officers and other stakeholders to discuss measures aimed at fighting GBV and FGM in the county.

The county commissioner revealed that the government has launched a Rapid Results

Initiative (RRI) that will run for 100 days in an effort to tackle the rising cases.

According to Bule, a multi-sectoral team has already been formed and will conduct sensitization forums across different parts of the county to educate residents on the dangers and effects of GBV and FGM.

He observed that some retrogressive cultural practices could be fueling the persistence of FGM in the county.

"There are some cultural beliefs and practices that still encourage FGM. We have also noted that certain cult-like groups could be perpetuating the vice," he remarked.



A section stakeholders and security officers in Murang'a met to strategize ways of curbing increasing FGM and GBV in the county.

Bule said security agencies working together with other stakeholders will intensify community engagement forums and come up with effective measures to eliminate the practices.

To strengthen security at the grassroots, the commissioner proposed the revival of the Nyumba Kumi initiative and strengthening community policing structures to help identify and report cases of abuse and harmful cultural practices.

He further announced that senior female security officers serving in the county will begin mentorship programmes targeting schoolgirls who are vulnerable to defilement and abuse.

At the same time, Bule urged managements of day schools to release learners early enough to allow them to get home before dark.

"Allowing students to leave school at 7pm or 8pm exposes them to risks of kidnapping and defilement. Let us protect our children," He warned.

The county commissioner also called on all stakeholders, including political leaders, religious leaders and members of the community, to join hands in fighting the vices.

On his part, Murang'a County Gender Officer Peter Muhia described the level of gender-based violence in the county as alarming.

Muhia noted that while wom-

en remain the most affected, men are also increasingly becoming victims of GBV.

He said the Rapid Results Initiative, which began on May 21, seeks to identify the major causes behind GBV and FGM cases and develop long-term strategies to address them.

Muhia challenged key stakeholders, especially the church, to take an active role in discouraging retrogressive cultural practices that continue to fuel FGM in some communities.

"We must all work together to protect our families and ensure harmful cultural practices are completely eradicated," he added.

Make Mom's Day Extra Special

BUY 1 GET 1 FREE!

Happy Mother's Day!

PERFECT GIFT FOR MOTHER'S DAY

20PCS COMPLETE BEDROOM SET

NAVY BLUE

MAROON

AVAILABLE SIZES:

QUEEN SIZE
KES. 14,500

KING SIZE
KES. 16,500

🎁

BUY 1 SET AND GET ANOTHER SET FREE!

ELEGANT DESIGN

PREMIUM QUALITY

COMPLETE MAKEOVER

PERFECT FOR YOUR HOME OR GIFTING

COUNTRYWIDE DELIVERY AT A SMALL FEE

VISIT US: Westlands Arcade, Ground Floor, Waiyaki Way

Applewood Adams, Ground Floor, Shop 006, Ngong Road

0799 422 559

Sleep well, live well



A section stakeholders and security officers in Murang'a met to strategize ways of curbing increasing FGM and GBV in the county.

Culture He said each ward in Maara Constituency produced five groups, while Chuka and Tharaka constituencies each presented two groups.

Maara Cultural Festivals kick off as leaders praise Njuki's cultural agenda

BY Alex Njeru
@themkenyatimes

Tharaka Nithi County Government has reaffirmed its commitment to preserving and promoting culture through ward-based cultural festivals ahead of the annual Ura Gate Cultural Festival.

Speaking during the official opening of the Maara Constituency Cultural Festivals at YMCA Mugona, Deputy Governor said 30 cultural groups had presented various cultural items including traditional dances, tales, foods and drinks.

He said each ward in Maara Constituency produced five groups, while Chuka and Tharaka constituencies each presented two groups.

Muisrael noted that auditions had already been conducted and participating groups facilitated by the county government, lauding Gov-

ernor for his dedication to cultural promotion.

"After the Maara, Chuka and Tharaka cultural festivals, we shall proceed to the main annual Ura Gate Cultural Festival at Ura Gate Grounds near the entrance of Meru National Park," said Muisrael.

The Deputy Governor said the cultural festivals would continue even after Governor Njuki exits office next year because they had already been anchored in law.

He said the 2010 Constitution of Kenya recognises the importance of culture in national identity and community cohesion.

Muisrael urged residents to embrace and uphold positive cultural practices while rejecting harmful traditions such as female genital mutilation.

"We must preserve good cultural values that unite communities and abandon practices that violate human rights," he said.

He reiterated the county government's commitment to supporting cultural activities and praised Governor Njuki for championing programmes aimed at preserving the heritage of local communities.

Muisrael also warned against politicising culture, saying politics could divide people instead of fostering peace and unity.

"Culture should bring people together and strengthen harmony in society," he said.

The Deputy Governor further called on young people to respect elders as demanded by African cultural values, saying such respect promotes unity and peaceful coexistence in the community.

Several Members of County Assembly including Libesth Gatiria, Nevert Kinuthia, Moris Mangu, Lucy Muthoni and Purity Wanja lauded the county government for supporting culture and called for



Maara Cultural Festival Season Four at Mugona YMCA Mitheru ward. | Photo: Alex Njeru.

increased funding towards cultural activities in future.

County Executive Committee Member for Culture, Chief Officer and Director said auditions for

the main Ura Gate Cultural Festival were ongoing in Chuka/Igambang'ombe Constituency before moving to Tharaka Constituency

The Mt. Kenya Times



The three bricklayers



One day, a traveler from a distant land came across the construction of a huge city. Under the scorching sun, men were laying bricks and building walls. The traveler approached the first bricklayer and asked:

— Brother, what are you doing?

The bricklayer wiped the sweat from his forehead and grumbled angrily and tiredly:

— Can't you see? From morning till night, I'm stacking these heavy, cursed bricks one on top of

another. My days pass in misery. The traveler walked a little farther and asked the second bricklayer the same question:

— Brother, what are you doing?

The second worker calmly shrugged his shoulders and replied:

— I am laying bricks to earn money to feed my family, my wife, and my children. This is my job. Finally, the traveler came to the third bricklayer. This man was carrying the same heavy bricks, but instead of exhaustion, there was a certain joy and pride shining on his face. The traveler asked him as well:

— Brother, what are you doing?

The third worker gently placed the brick in its place, looked up at the sky, and proudly said:

— I am building a magnificent and beautiful temple (city) for future generations!

Zebanda Davlatova, daughter of Sherali

The tears nobody hears



I hide my storms behind a tired smile, while pain keeps walking every mile.

My heart still waits where love once stayed, inside the dark where hopes all fade.

The tears I cry make no loud sound, yet break my soul deep underground.

I speak "I'm fine" with shaking breath,

while loneliness feels close to death.

The saddest wounds are never shown, they bloom in hearts that break alone.

And every night, I slowly fall, still praying someone hears it all.

Remember...

The loudest screams are never spoken aloud, they echo only inside lonely hearts.

And sometimes, the person who comforts everyone is the one secretly drowning in tears.

M. Ashwin Niranjan,
IInd PhD (Forestry),
Doctoral Research Fellow,
Forest College and Research Institute, TNAU
Mettupalayam

Loyalty is very expensive, not everyone can afford



apart

Faith that does not fade with time
Is precious than diamonds and gold
Such faithful souls are gifts divine
And indeed an honour to behold.

Nandini AnandKumar
(Dedicated to My Beautiful friend Jeyamala)

Loyalty is a precious gem
It is not everyone's emblem
Loyalty needs a heart of gold
Not everyone can behold

Loyalty is proven in trying times
Through life's tumultuous tides
Fair weather hearts may fake a smile and depart
The loyal stay rooted even when you are torn

Dear God



It's time to thank you with gratitude,
With Your blessings,
We reached the altitude.

Creative Award function has sparkled every one's
mind,

Everyone of creative writers adorns the victory stand.

It's a bliss to us for seeing the bundle of books,
So amazed by seeing the children authors.

Thank God for making our mind energized and refreshed,
Excited to see our friends' books with their own kind.

Long live creative writers group with the Eminent
Brinda mam,
Brinda mam deserves the original fame.

R. Rama Priya

The curious rabbit



sleepily in the breeze.
The rabbit sniffed around happily,
Like someone walking into a kitchen and smelling
fresh food waiting nearby.

When the sky slowly turned darker, the rabbit
began hopping home again.
Fireflies blinked softly beside the path like tiny
floating lanterns.

Its heart felt full after such a small adventure,
The way pockets feel after collecting stones,
leaves, and forgotten little treasures.

-K. A. Santhoshi,
8th std,
GMGHSS, Komarapalayam,
India.

A little rabbit hopped outside after the rain finally
stopped.

Its paws sank into soft mud, leaving tiny marks
behind.

It looked at everything with wide eyes,
Like the whole world had been placed there that
morning just for it.

Soon, the rabbit found a quiet garden behind an
old wooden fence.
Carrots peeked from the soil, and flowers leaned

I am truly delighted to share that today



I am truly delighted to share that today
marks one year since I joined the Creative Writers
Group.

This beautiful journey has inspired me immensely,
encouraged me to write more and helped me grow
as a writer.

One of the happiest milestones of this year is the
publication of my second book,
which became possible with the constant

motivation
and positive energy I received from this group.

More than anything, I am grateful for the genuine
friends I found here — wonderful souls who
continue to inspire, encourage, and uplift one
another every day. Whenever I open this group
and write, I feel fresh, energetic, motivated and
dynamic.

My heartfelt thanks to each and every one of
you for being a part of this meaningful journey.
I am forever grateful for the love, support, and
encouragement.

Thank you, thank you, thank you so much!

Kumareshwari
Creative writers
India

Security The new Munyu police station in Gatunyaga Ward was built by the area National Government Constituency Development Fund (NGCDF)

Security boost for Thika East as MP Ng'ang'a commissions new Police Station

BY John Kamau

@themtkenyatimes

Cases of insecurity that have been on a sharp rise in Thika East sub-county are set to decline following opening of a new police station in the area.

The new Munyu police station in Gatunyaga Ward was built by the area National Government Constituency Development Fund (NGCDF) and is set to enhance security in the region.

Speaking while commissioning the station, Thika MP Alice Ng'ang'a said that lack of proper police facilities in the area had seen insecurity cases skyrocket drastically.

She noted that criminals had turned the area into their hunting grounds, wrecking havoc and making locals live in fear. The lawmaker noted that



The newly commissioned Munyu Police Station in Thika East Sub County

there have been rampant cases of livestock theft, house break-ins, farmgate theft of produce as well as muggings

and other petty crimes adding that the vices will not be a thing of the past.

“For years, our people have

been terrorised by criminals who steal their livestock, injure and maim them. This facility will bring a solution and

help flush out all criminals from this region,” she said.

Ng'ang'a noted that she will engage the Ministry of Interior to have more police officers deployed in the area as well as have more police vehicles purchased for the station to boost patrols and enhance security for locals.

“Once we get more officers and vehicles to ease their movement, Thika East will be more secure and this will create a conducive environment even for more settlers and investors. We are already improving this area’s road network through the tarmac king of the Gatunyaga-Munyu-Komo road to ease mobility across villages in this region,” the MP said.

Bishop David Ngari alias Gakuyo who joined the lawmaker in the event noted that besides enhancing security, the new police station will help rope more developments in the semi-arid region.

Gakuyo, who is set to contest for the Thika Parliamentary seat, quipped that Thika East has been lagging behind in terms of developments for a long time with insecurity being one of the factors undermining developments.

“Time is ripe for Thika East to enjoy the developments it

deserves. Our MP has been leading from the front and we can attest to this with projects such as the police station, roads, school infrastructure among others,” Gakuyo said.

Residents led by elder Ng'ang'a Wanjukira termed the project as a shot-in-the-arm that will make the region a safe haven for locals and investors. He averred that they have lived for long at the mercies of criminals who have been terrorizing them day and night.

A month ago, thugs broke into his home at night and stole his eight cows after killing one of his workers.

“The situation was getting out of hand. I am a victim of the insecurity after the criminals killed my worker and made way with eight of my cows. These criminal activities have impoverished many in this region. We are however grateful that security will be beefed up,” Wanjukira said.

The locals also petitioned their leaders to consider installing security lights in the villages as a way of enhancing security.

BUSINESS START UP & SOAP MAKING Masterclass

Discover the art of liquid soap making and learn how to start your own successful soap business!

18th April
9:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Venue: HH Towers 12th Floor

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN:

- Soap making from scratch
- Learn how to start a business, social media marketing and Public Relations
- Starting and marketing your soap business

ALL MATERIALS PROVIDED!

CONTACT / BOOK NOW:
0796052809
LIMITED SPACES AVAILABLE!

EXCEPTIONAL CAR HIRE SERVICES

- Auto/Manual
- Clean & Comfort Interior
- Cool Air Conditioning
- Discount for repeat customer

BEST CAR RENTAL DEAL

WE MEET ALL YOUR CAR NEEDS. BOOK AND DRIVE

2nd Parklands Avenue | **0723889371**

Info@exceptionalcarhire.co.ke | @exceptionalcarhireservices
https://www.eceptionalcarhire.co.ke | Exceptional Car Hire Services

E & F SOUNDS ENTERTAINMENT

OUR SERVICES

- Sound System Hire
- Audio-visual & Event Technology
- Events Support & Management
- Corporate & Social Events
- School events & Graduations
- Weddings & private parties
- Conferences & Seminars
- Religious functions & crusades
- Product launches & activations

CONTACT US:
+254 715 714219 | +254 704 562970
enfoundsentertainment@gmail.com

Tourism A landmark deal with Google signals Kenya's most ambitious shift in tourism marketing — from instinct to intelligence.

Kenya bets on AI to put Magical Kenya on the world's travel map

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

Kenya's Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife has signed a strategic artificial intelligence partnership with Google Kenya through the Magical Kenya platform, in a move designed to double international arrivals, create youth employment, and transform the country into Africa's leading digitally enabled tourism destination.

The announcement, made on Thursday in Nairobi, marks one of the most consequential shifts in how Kenya intends to market itself to the world. For decades, tourism promotion has relied on instinct, experience, and the enduring power of the Maasai Mara sunrise. That era is not ending — but it is being augmented. From now on, algorithms, real-time data, and the predictive power of artificial intelligence will sit alongside the lion and the flamingo as tools of the trade. Kenya's tourism sector generated approximately Sh500 billion in earnings in 2025, welcoming an estimated 2.7 million international visitors — growth of roughly nine percent, more than double the global average. Impressive as those numbers are, the government believes they are only a fraction of what is possible. Tourism Cabinet Secretary Rebecca Miano has set a target of attracting 5.5 million annual visitors by 2027, doubling domestic bed nights to 10 million, and pushing sector earnings to Sh1 trillion. The Google partnership is the engine intended to drive that ambition.

Ms Miano was direct about what the deal represents. "Adopting an AI-first approach allows us to move beyond traditional marketing and build a sophisticated digital infrastructure," she said at the signing. "This will position Kenya as Africa's leading digitally enabled tourism destination, helping us to double international arrivals and increase revenue for national



CS Rebecca Miano with members of the Kenya Tourism Rebranding and Repositioning Taskforce when she signed an AI-tourism powered strategic partnership with Google Kenya.

prosperity." The words carry weight. Kenya has said ambitious things about tourism before. What is different this time is the specificity of the tools being deployed to deliver on them.

At the heart of the partnership is a Tourism Pulse Data Hub, to be co-developed on Google Cloud. The platform will function as a real-time intelligence dashboard, drawing on global Google Search trends and brand sentiment data to give policymakers an accurate, up-to-the-minute picture of how the world perceives Kenya and where interest in the destination is rising or falling. The significance of this cannot be overstated. Currently, destination management decisions are often made weeks or months after the signals that should inform them have already passed. A real-time dashboard changes that fundamentally, allowing rapid responses to market shifts and evidence-based policy in place of educated guesswork.

Travellers planning a trip to Kenya will encounter the partnership's effects through an AI-curated trip planner powered by Google's Gemini models. The tool will generate bespoke itineraries tailored to each visitor's individual preferences — moving decisively beyond the standard safari and beach packages that have

anchored Kenyan tourism for generations. The vision is to use digital platforms to shine a light on Kenya's hidden gems, diverting tourism traffic to less-trodden paths, preventing over-tourism in sensitive ecosystems, and ensuring that tourism revenue reaches remote communities in Western Kenya, the Rift Valley, and the North. A personalised itinerary is not simply a better experience for the traveller — it is a more equitable distribution of the economic benefits of tourism across the country. Precision marketing will form another pillar. Google Analytics and Google Ads will be deployed to reach potential visitors in priority international markets at the precise moment they begin researching their next trip. The Government is additionally seeking to strengthen Kenya's global tourism visibility through precision digital marketing campaigns targeting priority international markets and high-value travellers. The United States remains Kenya's largest source market, while India and China are fast emerging as significant growth markets — audiences for whom personalised digital engagement, rather than traditional broadcast advertising, is the primary channel.

Perhaps the most socially consequential element of the partnership is its commitment

to digital capacity building. Google's skilling programmes will equip young Kenyans and small tourism enterprises with specialised digital capabilities. A cohort of young local curators will be trained to design distinctive experiences using Kenya's digital assets on Google Arts and Culture, opening technology-enabled employment pathways that did not previously exist. The World Travel and Tourism Council has projected that Kenya's tourism sector is set to contribute Sh1.2 trillion

to the economy this year, supporting 1.7 million jobs — over eight percent of total national employment. The Google partnership is aimed at growing both of those numbers, and ensuring more of the growth flows to young people in communities that have historically sat at the margins of the tourism economy.

Alex Okosi, Managing Director for Google Sub-Saharan Africa, framed the initiative in terms of what it could mean for individuals, not just industries. "We are excited to see how the power of AI and our digital skilling initiatives can empower Kenyan youth and tourism SMEs," he said. "By supporting ecosystem innovators to train local curators and provide advanced market intelligence, we are helping to create a more resilient and inclusive tourism economy that showcases the very best of Kenya to the world."

The partnership follows a formal recommendation from the Kenya Tourism Rebranding and Repositioning Taskforce, lending it institutional credibility beyond a bilateral commercial agreement. It is, in the language of policy, a sector-wide strategic direc-

tion — not a pilot programme or an experiment. Ms Miano has previously described Kenya's tourism growth as reflecting deliberate investments in destination marketing, improved connectivity, and enhanced visitor experience, noting that international arrivals increased by nine percent, more than double the global tourism growth average. The Google partnership is the next deliberate investment in that trajectory.

Kenya ranked fourth on the African continent at a recent United Nations tourism forum in Riyadh — a strong position, but one that underscores the gap between where Kenya is and where Egypt and South Africa sit. Closing that gap will require more than scenery. It will require the kind of data intelligence, personalisation, and digital reach that the world's most sophisticated tourism destinations are already deploying. Kenya has now secured the partner to help build it.

The Maasai Mara will still take the breath away. The coral reefs of Watamu will still dazzle. The flamingos of Lake Nakuru will still paint the water pink. But from here on, the world will find its way to those places not just through a travel agent's brochure, but through an algorithm that already knows what kind of traveller it is speaking to — and knows exactly when to speak.



CS Rebecca Miano with members of the Kenya Tourism Rebranding and Repositioning Taskforce when she signed an AI-tourism powered strategic partnership with Google Kenya.

DO YOU WANT TO GET PUBLISHED?

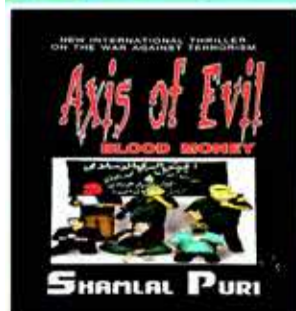
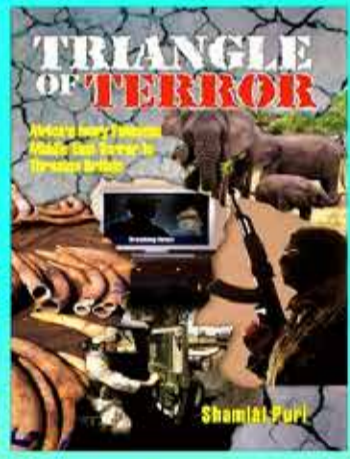
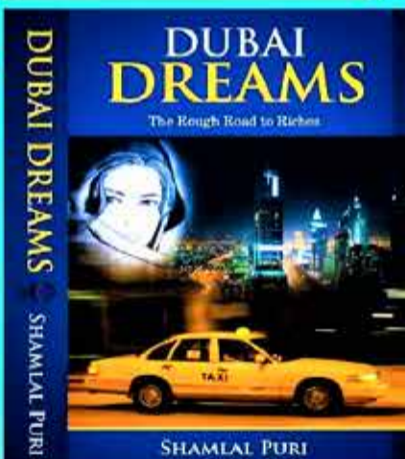
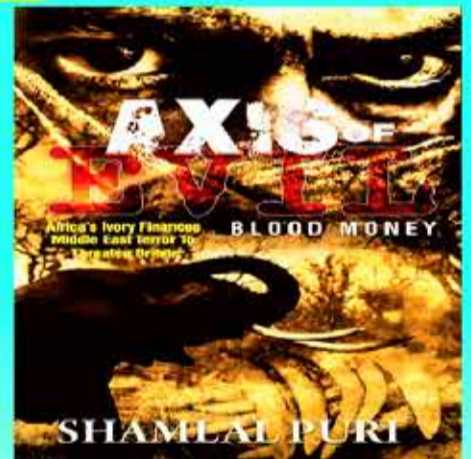
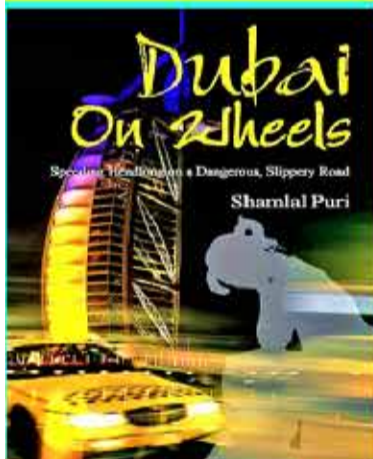
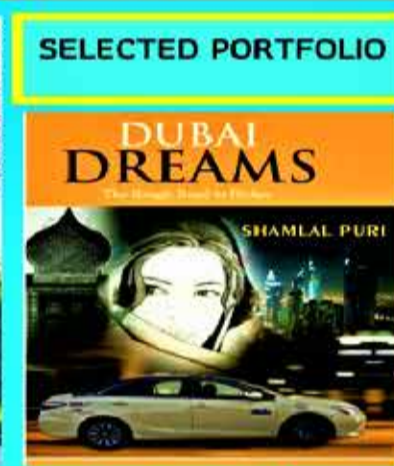
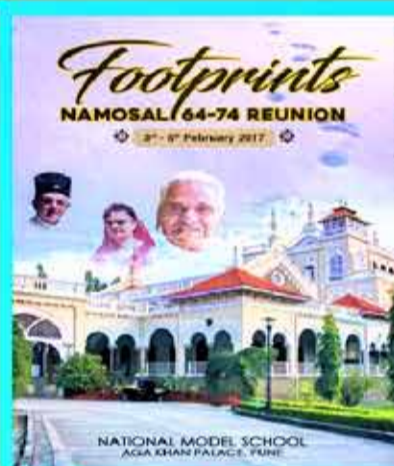
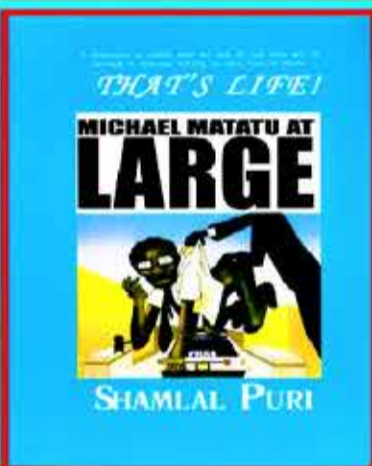
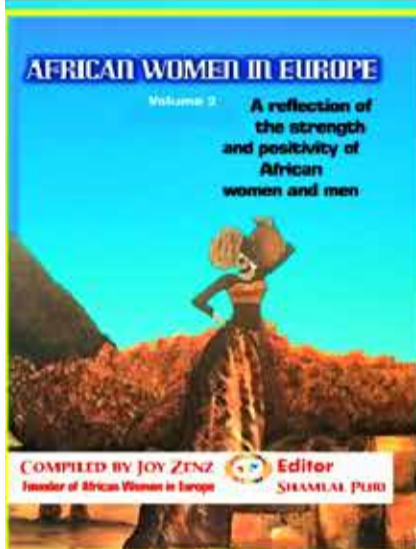
ARE YOU A WRITER OR CORPORATE?

Let Professional Editors and Authors turn your story into a Dream Book.

THRILLERS - FICTION - FICTION - BIOGRAPHIES - TRAVELGUES - HUMOUR- COFFEE TABLE - BROCHURES

London-based contract Publishers for independent and self-publish authors.

We offer one-stop top notch Editing, Expert Design, Proof Reading, Book Covers, Artwork, Digital, Litho Printing, E-Books, Corporate Brochures and UK ISBN number. Reasonable costs. We print and deliver books. Authors retain 100% sales profits.



The Crownbird Publishers logo and imprint owned by Adlink International (1989) Media Group London

Copies of some books available for sale: hard copy/ digital. Contact us: media@adlinkinternational.com Email Subject: Crownbird Books



ADLINK INTERNATIONAL (1989) MEDIA GROUP
Books Division
16 Upper Woburn Place, London WC1H 0AF (UK)
Tel: 44 330 606 1438
Email: media@adlinkinternational.com
www.adlinkinternational.com

Corruption A person with disabilities sitting helplessly in an under-equipped rural health facility understands the cost of corruption better

From national shame to village reality: How corruption is quietly consuming Kenya's future

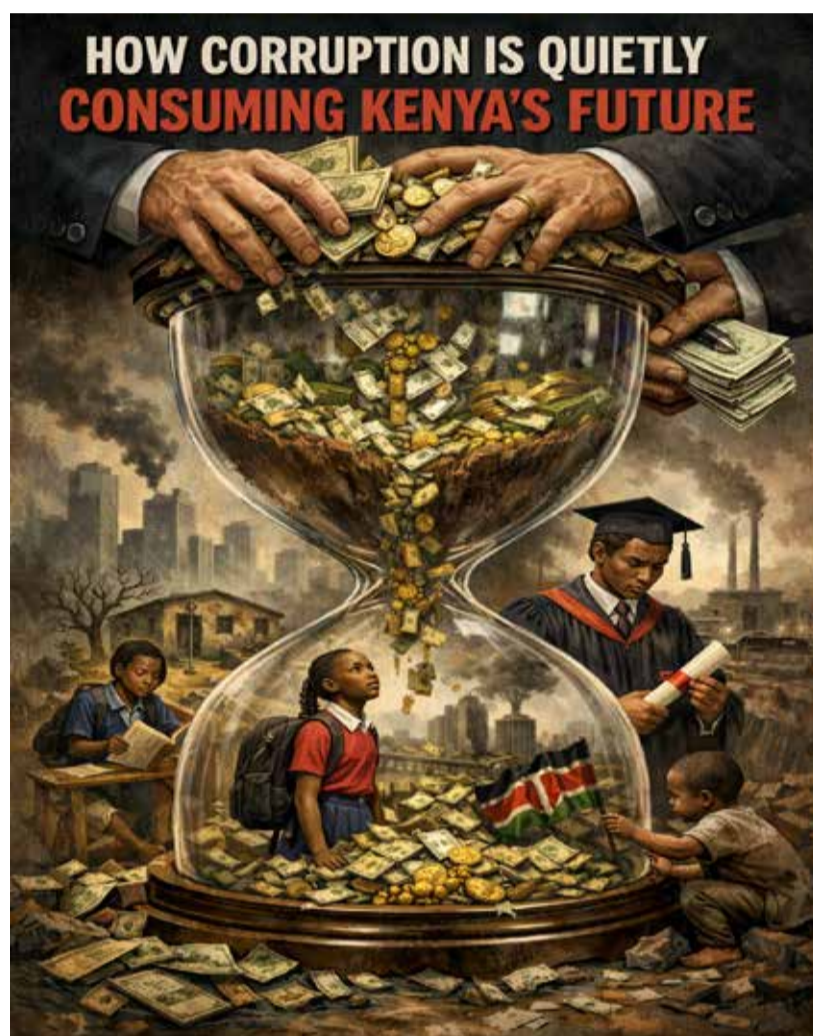


BY Fredrick Chelimo
@themtkenyatimes

Before devolution, the word corruption sounded strange, distant and to some extent foreign. The definition given by the collaborators, sympathizers and actors persuaded most that it was either harmless or an error. The terms misappropriation, misuse of public office and misallocation sounded far from theft of public money. The level of trust to government institutions and by extension its officers was high and believable. Medical drugs were full in public hospitals and services were rendered timely and in abundance and so were other critical public services.

In recent times, Kenya has witnessed a dangerous transformation of corruption from small isolated cases within national institutions into deeply entrenched culture spreading across counties, wards and villages with alarming speed. What was once discussed as a problem of powerful elites in Nairobi has now become part of everyday life in local communities where abandoned projects, inflated tenders, ghost programs and disappearing public funds are increasingly normalized. The country is slowly reaching a point where corruption is no longer shocking news but an expected feature of governance.

When the constitution 2010, introduced devolution, millions of Kenyans embraced it as a historic opportunity to correct decades of exclusion and centralized neglect. Citizens expected healthcare to improve, education to be cost effective, and development resources to touch public lives. Devolution carried the much-anticipated promises, closer governance, accountable leadership, and directly see how resources are utilized within their communities. Instead, a complete contradiction. While money moved closer to the people, corruption also moved closer



er.

Today, citizens no longer need audit reports to understand corruption as they can physically see it. They walk past stalled water projects despite millions allocated and spend, stalled dispensaries built only on foundation level, roads repeatedly launched, youth empowerment funds while unemployment continues, persons with disabilities funds disappearing without trace while the beneficiaries still suffer. This sinks the citizens deeper into poverty while the politically connected individuals continue to accumulate wealth at the full glare of the citizens unabated. For ordinary citizens, corruption is no longer an abstract governance debate, but a direct assault on survival itself.

A person with disabilities sitting helplessly in an under-equipped rural health facility understands the cost of corruption better than any policy paper can explain. A child learning under a leaking roof while education budgets disappear understands the cruelty of corruption before fully

understanding politics. The greatest dilemma facing citizens is that they are trapped between outrage and helplessness. They are heavily taxed, constantly reminded of economic hardship and urged to tighten their belts in the name of national recovery, yet stories of misuse of public resources continue surfacing daily. Citizens are asked to sacrifice while sections of leaders display lifestyles impossible to explain through legitimate earnings.

Interestingly, same citizens often find themselves participating in systems that sustain the very corruption they condemn. During elections, communities sometimes reward leaders based on tribal loyalty, political patronage, and immediate financial handouts rather than integrity and competence. Leaders accused of serious economic crimes continue receiving political protection because they remain influential within ethnic or political alliance. Society condemns corruption publicly while quietly accommodating it socially

and politically.

This contradiction has created a dangerous normalization of impunity. Corruption in Kenya today is no longer simply about individuals stealing money, it has evolved into organized networks involving politicians, contractors, procurement officers, bureaucrats and business interests operating within sophisticated patronage systems. The cartels. In many devolved units, tenders are allegedly shared through political loyalty, oversight institutions weakened through intimidation or compromise and accountability mechanisms manipulated to protect powerful interests.

The challenge is worsened by the separation between authority and accountability. When scandals emerge, investigations always target junior officers while those controlling budgets, issuing instructions or influencing procurement decisions remain politically insulated. Procurement officers sign documents, but who approved the projects? Accountants process payments, but who authorized inflated budgets? Technical officers supervise implementation, but who politically benefits from contracts?

This is the dilemma Kenya must confront honestly. A society cannot effectively fight corruption while punishing executors of authority and protecting sources of authority. Money, authority and accountability must exist within one transparent chain of responsibility. Whoever controls public funds must carry direct responsibility for their use. Whoever influences procurement decisions must remain answerable for the outcomes. Whoever benefits politically from public expenditure must face equal scrutiny. Without aligning these three pillars, anti-corruption campaigns risk becoming political theatre rather than genuine reform.

The spread of corruption into devolved units also reflects the reality that institutions expanded faster than oversight systems matured. Counties suddenly gained access to enormous financial resources while internal controls remained weak, auditing systems underdeveloped, and political interference widespread. County assemblies expected to offer over-

sight in most cases become politically aligned with executives instead of citizens. In such an environment, corruption flourishes behind procedural compliance and political protection.

Kenya is not without hope as the country possesses the most progressive constitutions, an active media, courageous civil society and millions of citizens who genuinely desire accountable leadership. The challenge is whether political leadership and society itself are willing to confront corruption structurally rather than selectively. The solutions are difficult but not impossible.

Public finance systems must be radically transparent from the national government down to the village projects. Every Kenyan should easily access information showing money allocated, who received the contracts and status of implementation. Citizens cannot protect resources they cannot trace. Oversight institutions must be insulated from political interference. Anti-corruption agencies, auditors and investigative bodies must operate independently and fearlessly regardless of status of individuals involved.

Accountability must move upward. Senior political and administrative authorities should bear equal or greater responsibility than junior officers implementing instructions. The source of authority must never remain untouchable. Civic education must redefine leadership. Communities must stop celebrating unexplained wealth and begin rewarding integrity, competence and service delivery. Political patronage financed through public theft should never be mistaken for generosity.

Citizens themselves must reclaim vigilance. Devolution was meant to empower wananchi, not local cartels. Public participation must move beyond attending meetings to actively questioning budgets, monitoring projects and demanding explanations from leaders.

Kenya's corruption crisis is no longer about stolen money, but about future direction of the nation itself and whether public institutions will serve citizens or protect networks of cartels. It is also about whether devolution will remain a vehicle of local transformation or become decentralization of impunity. Kenya risks creating a generation that sees theft of public resources not as a national shame but as an ordinary path to power and success and the most frightening loss of all.

"A nation does not collapse the day money is stolen. It begins collapsing the day theft stops shocking the conscience of its people"

BUSINESS From record losses to a \$2 billion investor hunt — Kenya's national carrier is betting its future on ambition, not survival.

Kenya Airways plots comeback with fresh capital and bold African expansion

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

Kenya Airways has launched a multi-pronged capital recovery drive, including plans to bid to become the national carrier of another African country, as its new chairman and acting chief executive set out the clearest public account yet of the airline's path back to sustained profitability.

The disclosures were made on Thursday at the Aviation Media Lab in Mombasa, where Chairman Kiprono Kittony and Acting Chief Executive Captain George Kamal addressed journalists with a candour that the airline's leadership has not always been known for. The mood was neither defensive nor triumphalist. It was the measured confidence of people who understand the scale of what they are dealing with — and believe they have a credible plan to deal with it.

The plan has several layers. In the immediate term, the airline is seeking short-term emergency funding to address liquidity needs while it pursues the larger prize: a strategic investor willing to inject up to \$2 billion into the carrier. Acting Chief Executive George Kamal has confirmed talks with four strategic investors drawn from across the globe, including one from Africa, in what would represent the most significant infusion of outside capital in the airline's history. The airline's current market capitalisation stands at approximately Ksh46 billion — making the investor target roughly 5.6 times its current value on the Nairobi Securities Exchange, where its PLC listing remains a vehicle for broader public investment.

Kamal said Kenya Airways is targeting a fleet of over 50 aircraft by 2035, up from its current 37, eyeing a mix of long-range and medium and short-haul planes — but he was clear that the expansion is contingent on securing a strategic investor. "So we are



KQ chairman Kiprono Kittony and acting CEO George Kamal at the Aviation Media Lab in Mombasa

looking at over 50 aircraft by 2035. But for this we require an investor to be in place," he said.

The most arresting disclosure of the Mombasa briefing was the plan to bid to operate as the national airline of a second country. Mr. Kittony did not name the country, but the ambition is significant — it would transform Kenya Airways from a single-nation carrier into a multi-state aviation asset, generating new revenue streams while extending the KQ brand across the continent. "There is a plan and you're going to see a stronger and more robust airline. We are planning to bid for becoming a national airline for another country," Mr. Kittony said. The strategy aligns with a broader vision of positioning Nairobi not merely as a Kenyan hub but as the principal gateway to the African continent for international capital and commerce.

Captain Kamal framed the airline's strategic value in terms that go beyond aviation. "Kenya Airways is more than an airline — it is a strategic national instrument. Nairobi serves as the main investment entry in the nation," he said. The language is deliberate. Kenya Airways has long struggled to translate its strategic importance into financial performance, but the argument that it is an irreplaceable piece of national economic infrastructure has gained new credibility as Nairobi's position as Africa's

business hub has strengthened.

Mr. Kittony was equally direct about the structural challenges the airline faces. "The fundamentals for our business remain strong. We are not responding to a demand problem but a structural problem," he said, adding: "This is a period of reset and not retreat. We are making decisions today to build a stronger, more resilient future."

The chairman also acknowledged, with notable frankness, that the airline's revolving door of leadership has not served it well. Since 2003, Kenya Airways has cycled through a succession of chief executives, each inheriting a different configuration of the same underlying problems. Titus Naikuni expanded the fleet aggressively between 2004 and 2014 but left behind significant debt exposure. Mbuvi Ngunze presided over record losses exceeding Ksh25 billion between 2014 and 2017. Sebastian Mikosz focused on renegotiating debt and cutting costs until 2019 but could not return the airline to profitability. Allan Kilavuka took the helm during the Covid-19 pandemic — perhaps the worst moment in commercial aviation history — and managed to steer the carrier back toward financial health. In 2024, Kenya Airways recorded its first pretax profit in many years, reporting Ksh5.53 billion against a loss of Ksh22.86 billion the previous year, aided signifi-

cantly by foreign exchange gains of Ksh10.55 billion and a strengthening shilling.

Captain Kamal was elevated from Chief Operating Officer to Acting Chief Executive in December 2025, following Kilavuka's departure after six years in the role. The reconstituted board — which includes economist Dr. David Ndi, corporate strategist Chris Diaz, and finance scholar Prof. Winnie Iminza Nyamute alongside Mr. Kittony — is tasked with overseeing the capital raise, fleet expansion, and route development strategy while a competitive recruitment process for a permanent chief executive runs in parallel.

The operational context is not without complication. Three wide-bodied Boeing 787 Dreamliners were grounded in the first quarter of 2025, reducing operating capacity by 20 percent — a constraint

that has weighed heavily on revenue. Yet load factors have hit nearly 100 percent as the Middle East conflict reroutes passengers through Nairobi instead of disrupted Gulf hubs, providing the airline with an unexpected demand tailwind at a moment when it most needs it.

On cargo — long an underperforming area relative to the airline's potential — Kamal said KQ is targeting a jump from its current 11 percent market share at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport to 30 percent, underpinned by four dedicated cargo aircraft and plans for long-range freighter capacity. Cargo growth, combined with fleet expansion, a strategic investor, and the possible addition of a second national carrier mandate, would fundamentally reshape the airline's revenue base.

Mr. Kittony said the 2025 results should be seen "within

the broader context of an industry facing unprecedented operational constraints, but still underpinned by strong fundamentals, mainly strong travel demand." It is a fair characterisation. Kenya Airways is not a broken airline. It is a structurally constrained one, operating in a market that is growing faster than almost any other in the world, in a hub city whose connectivity is increasingly indispensable to the continent.

The board appointments followed a public commitment by President William Ruto to refresh the airline's leadership as part of a broader push to stabilise the carrier and attract new capital. That political backing matters — but it is the \$2 billion investor conversation, the fleet expansion plan, and the audacious bid to fly under a second nation's flag that will ultimately determine whether this particular chapter of Kenya Airways' story ends differently from the ones that came before.

The Pride of Africa has been through tougher moments. The question is whether, this time, the plan is bigger than the problem.



AIRBNB SETUP

- ▶ Apartment furnishing
- ▶ Bed and mattress setup
- ▶ Living room setup
- ▶ Curtains and blinds installation
- ▶ Lighting installation

- ▶ Wall art and decor styling
- ▶ Kitchen setup (utensils, appliances)
- ▶ Bathroom essentials setup
- ▶ Bed dressing and styling
- ▶ Final space styling for guest experience

Start Consultation Today!

+254 705 721 612

www.nestorainteriors.com

hello@nestorainteriors.com

Ebola DR Congo has faced Ebola sixteen times before and beaten it every time. Tedros arrived carrying that history as both shield and rallying cry.

DR Congo's 17th Ebola battle: WHO chief arrives in Kinshasa as death toll mounts

With no vaccine, no ceasefire, and more than 200 dead, the world's top health official has flown into the heart of an outbreak that is testing even Congo's formidable epidemic resilience.

BY Norman Mwale
@themtkenyatimes

The World Health Organization Director-General, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, arrived in Kinshasa on Thursday to lead the international response to the Democratic Republic of DR Congo's seventeenth Ebola outbreak, which has killed more than 200 people and infected over 900 since the government declared a surge on 15 May.

The visit marks the most senior-level international engagement since the outbreak was declared a public health emergency of international concern — a designation that unlocks accelerated global funding and coordination. Tedros travelled first to the capital before heading to Ituri province in the country's northeast, where cases were first detected weeks ago and where the virus continues to circulate amid active conflict and widespread displacement.

DR Congo has faced Ebola sixteen times before and beaten it every time. Tedros arrived carrying that history as both shield and rallying cry. "This country has defeated Ebola 16 times. The 17th will be no different. But we must act now, together," he posted on X before departing for Kinshasa. The message was deliberate — part reassurance, part warning. The confidence is earned. The urgency is real.

What makes this outbreak particularly alarming is the strain at its centre. Unlike previous outbreaks that involved the better-known Zaire strain, for which approved vaccines and treatments exist, this one involves the Bundibugyo variant — a rarer, less-studied strain for which there is currently no licensed vaccine and no proven therapeutic. Health authorities are therefore operating without the pharmaceutical safety net that helped contain DR Congo's deadly 2018 to 2020 outbreak in North Kivu, which killed

more than 2,000 people and became

build community trust or isolate the

the second-largest Ebola outbreak in recorded history.

The WHO said it is moving swiftly to close that gap. In partnership with DR Congo's national medical research institution, the agency is expanding its laboratory network across the affected region to accelerate case confirmation, reduce diagnostic turnaround times, and enable faster isolation of infected individuals. Real-time data, health officials argue, is the single most powerful tool available in the absence of a vaccine — it determines how quickly contacts are traced, how efficiently resources are deployed, and how much of the virus's spread can be interrupted before it takes hold in new communities.

But the outbreak is not unfolding in a vacuum. Eastern DR Congo remains one of the most complex humanitarian environments on the planet. Armed groups continue to operate across Ituri and neighbouring provinces, displacing civilians into overcrowded camps where disease spreads easily and health workers struggle to gain access. Tedros addressed this directly and without diplomatic softening: "We cannot

sick while bombs are falling," he said.

The WHO chief used his platform to call on all warring parties in eastern DR Congo to agree to an immediate ceasefire for humanitarian purposes, warning that ongoing fighting is fracturing the containment corridors that response teams depend on. Aid convoys have been turned back. Health facilities have been attacked. In some communities, misinformation and deep-rooted distrust of outside intervention have made community engagement — the backbone of any

effective Ebola response — extremely difficult to sustain.

Health officials acknowledged these challenges while insisting that the response, led by the DR Congolese government with WHO support, remains on track. DR Congo's experience base is substantial. The country has built an institutional memory around Ebola that few nations possess, having navigated outbreaks in remote forests, urban centres, and active conflict zones over four decades. Epidemiologists, contact tracers, and community health workers who have confronted the virus be-

fore are being redeployed to Ituri, bringing hard-won knowledge that no training manual can fully replicate.

International partners including the United States Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, Médecins Sans Frontières, and UNICEF have confirmed their operational presence in the region, though all have noted that security conditions and community resistance remain the primary obstacles to an accelerated response. Funding commitments from donor governments are being fast-tracked following the emergency declaration, though advocacy groups have cautioned that money announced in capitals often arrives in the field weeks too late.

For the families of the more than 200 people already lost to this outbreak, the geopolitics of emergency declarations and laboratory networks are abstractions. In the villages of Ituri, where some households have lost multiple members, Ebola has returned with the particular cruelty it reserves for communities already exhausted by war and poverty. Health workers say they are encountering grief layered on grief — people who have already buried too many and are now burying again.

Tedros's arrival will not, by itself, stop the virus. No visit does. But it signals to the DR Congolese government, to donors, to warring factions, and to the communities at the outbreak's centre that the world is watching and that the institutional weight of the global health system is engaged. Whether that engagement translates into the speed and scale the moment demands will be determined not in Kinshasa's conference rooms but in the villages of Ituri, where health workers are rising before dawn to trace contacts, earn trust, and hold a line against a virus that has never once waited for the world to be ready.

DR Congo has beaten Ebola sixteen times. The seventeenth battle has begun — and this time, it is fighting without a vaccine, in a war zone, against a clock that does not stop.



World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Gone without a trace: The hidden agony of Kenyan parents searching for their missing children

By Hadassah Karangu

Across Kenya, dinner tables have empty seats, beds go untouched, and mothers cry themselves to sleep. Behind the smiles seen in public, countless parents carry one of the heaviest burdens imaginable — the disappearance of their children. For these families, life stopped the moment their child went missing.

Some children disappeared on their way to school. Others vanished running errands, playing outside, or travelling to town. Across informal settlements, villages, and major cities, reports of missing children continue to grip parents with a fear that never truly leaves.

Every knock on the door brings sudden hope. Every unknown call makes hearts race. Parents move between police stations,

hospitals, children's homes, and morgues, desperately searching for answers — clinging to faded photographs because giving up feels like betrayal.

In recent years, child disappearances linked to human trafficking, kidnapping, family disputes, online exploitation, and street life have grown increasingly alarming. Social media is flooded daily with missing child posters shared by desperate relatives. Yet behind every viral image is a broken family slowly drowning in grief.

Many parents sink into depression, trauma, and sleeplessness. Some lose jobs. Others drain savings printing posters, crossing counties, and chasing false leads. Society, meanwhile, moves on too quickly — a missing child trends for a day or two before the scroll continues. But for the parents left behind, the

nightmare has no end. Every sunrise is another reminder that their child has not come home.

Child protection experts continue urging faster police response, stronger community awareness, and better protection systems. Parents are encouraged to monitor children's movements, friendships, and online activity as dangers evolve. But policy alone is not enough.

These families need humanity — neighbours who stay alert, communities that refuse to look away, and authorities who treat every missing child as an emergency, not a statistic.

Because no parent deserves the torture of not knowing whether their child is hungry, unsafe, or alive.

Somewhere tonight in Kenya, a mother will kneel beside an empty bed and pray. A father



illustration of The hidden agony of Kenyan parents searching for their missing children

will quietly swallow tears he cannot afford to show. Until those children come home, their parents carry an invisible

wound — and a nation that calls itself civilised cannot afford to let them carry it alone. Hadassah Karangu is a student

at Laikipia University with an interest in child rights and social justice.

A nation numb to crisis

Kenya is not running out of problems — it is running out of outrage.

By Oliver Ogutu

Sixteen children died in a school fire. Parents wept. Leaders issued statements. Hashtags trended. Then Kenya moved on.

That silence is the real crisis.

The country is absorbing shock after shock with barely a pause. Fuel prices drain households weekly. Hospitals dispense expired drugs — when they have any at all. Graduates queue for jobs that do not exist. Young men die in police custody and the cases quietly disappear. Corruption scandals arrive so frequently that last week's outrage is already forgotten by Monday. And now a Finance Bill threatens to squeeze citizens who are already bone-dry.

Each of these would constitute a national emergency anywhere else. Here, they have become background noise.

The most dangerous shift is not the crises themselves — it is how ordinary they have become. A school fire should shake a country for months. A single death in police custody should trigger

sustained public fury. Unemployment at this scale should dominate every parliamentary session. Instead, Kenyans have been quietly conditioned to absorb disaster, complain online by day, and return to surviving by night. The country is not just overwhelmed — it is emotionally exhausted.

Young people feel it most acutely. Education no longer guarantees opportunity. Hard work no longer promises stability. Leadership no longer inspires confidence. Politics has become expensive theatre staged for the benefit of its performers, while ordinary citizens foot the bill and bear the consequences.

Worse still, national attention has been weaponised against itself. Every week delivers a fresh controversy engineered — or conveniently timed — to bury the previous one before accountability arrives. By the time citizens begin demanding answers, another crisis has already taken the stage. The cycle is not accidental. Outrage that never lands anywhere is outrage that changes nothing.

The question Kenyans are quietly asking is not complicated: how much longer before frustration hardens into hopelessness?

A nation cannot govern itself permanently from survival mode. Citizens need more than eloquent condolences and parliamentary committees that report to no one. They need hospitals that heal, schools that are safe, an economy that rewards effort, security forces that protect rather than prey, and leaders who understand that public office is not a harvest.

Kenya has the institutions. What is missing is the collective refusal to accept their failure as normal.

Because the true measure of a society is not how many crises it faces — it is how long it takes before it stops being shocked by them. When tragedy becomes routine, the nation itself is already in danger.

Kenya is not yet there. But it is closer than it should be.



SPORTS
NEWSPHOTOS
SCORES
OPINIONS
STATISTICS
SCHEDULES
BREAKING NEWS

Sports >> *What happened at Chahwanda last Sunday was not football — and Zimbabwe deserves better.

When passion turns to pain: Restoring discipline at Chahwanda Stadium

By Norman Mwale

Violence overshadowed a Premier Soccer League fixture at Chahwanda Stadium last Sunday when clashes between supporters of Hardrock and Dynamos FC left several fans injured and cast a dark shadow over Zimbabwean football.

It should have been a great afternoon of football. Two passionate fanbases, a fierce local rivalry, the kind of atmosphere that reminds you why this sport matters so deeply to so many people. Instead, Chahwanda Stadium became the site of scenes that nobody who witnessed them will remember fondly — and that too many people will have reason to remember painfully. For those who were hurt, what began as a Sunday afternoon out ended in an emergency room. That is not what football is for. That is not what any of us come through those gates for.

The violence that erupted during the Hardrock and Dynamos FC fixture was not simply an unfortunate incident. It was a warning. Football, at its most electric, stirs emotions that few other things in life can match. That intensity is part of its magic. But when that intensity is left without structure, without accountability, without the firm hand of leadership from clubs, officials, and administrators alike, it can curdle quickly into something dangerous. What happened last Sunday was exactly that — passion without guardrails, rivalry without respect.

Mbizo legislator Mr. Corban Madzivanyika has been measured and thoughtful in his response, and rightly so. Rather than rushing to assign blame before the full facts are known, he has urged calm while acknowledging something important: that Zimbabwean supporters are still learning the discipline that competitive sport demands. That is not a criticism — it is an hon-



Mbizo Legislator Corban Madzivanyika

est observation, and it points toward the kind of patient, deliberate work that will actually make a difference. Sportsmanship is not instinctive. It is taught, modelled, and reinforced over time. It takes clubs, leagues, officials, and communities all pulling in the same direction.

So where do we go from here? First, the police must investigate what happened thoroughly and without favour. Those found to have incited or participated in violence must face consequences that are firm enough to make the next potential troublemaker think twice. A slap on the wrist will change nothing. A genuine consequence might. Second, referees must be supported in performing their duties with consistency and impartiality. Perceptions of bias — whether

founded or not — have a way of igniting already tense situations. The credibility of match officiating is not a minor concern; it sits at the heart of supporter trust.

Third, and perhaps most importantly, clubs must do more. Comprehensive security arrangements, effective liaison with local police, trained stewards who understand crowd management — these are not luxuries. They are basic responsibilities that come with running a professional football club. Hardrock and Dynamos FC both carry the weight of large, passionate followings. With that comes a duty of care that extends beyond the pitch.

The Premier Soccer League also has a role to play in educating supporters about the laws of the game and how officiating

decisions are made. Much of the frustration that boils over in the stands stems from misunderstanding — a sending-off that seems arbitrary, an offside call that feels personal. Better-informed supporters make calmer supporters.

To every person who was hurt at Chahwanda last Sunday — we are sorry that happened to you. You went to watch football and came home carrying something you should never have had to carry. Your experience is not a footnote. It is the reason this conversation matters.

Zimbabwean football is worth fighting for. Just not like that.

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *There are moments in sport when a single name on a team sheet carries the weight of an entire nation's hopes.

Messi to lead Argentina's defence of World Cup crown in 2026



Lionel Messi

By Norman Mwale

Lionel Messi will captain Argentina at the 2026 FIFA World Cup after coach Lionel Scaloni named him in a 26-man squad on Thursday, confirming the 38-year-old for a record sixth tournament appearance and putting him at the heart of the defending champions' bid to retain the title on North American soil.

There are moments in sport when a single name on a team sheet carries the weight of an entire nation's hopes. This was one of them. When the Argentine Football Association released the squad on 28 May, the question everyone had been quietly asking for weeks was finally answered: Messi is going to the World Cup. Again. For the sixth time. At an age when most footballers have long since hung up their boots, the man who has defined this generation of the sport is preparing to walk out at another tournament, captain's armband on his arm, a nation behind

him, and history in his sights.

Should he feature in all of Argentina's matches, Messi will become the first men's player to appear in six World Cups, equalling the mark set by Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo. It is the kind of statistical milestone that would feel extraordinary attached to anyone else. For Messi, it is simply the next chapter.

His inclusion had been far from certain. In the weeks leading up to the squad announcement, Messi suffered muscle fatigue in his left hamstring while playing for Inter Miami, forcing him off in the 73rd minute of his final club appearance before the tournament. Inter Miami confirmed that further tests pointed to an overload caused by fatigue, with his availability for the early stages of the World Cup dependent on clinical progress. For a man who turns 39 during the tournament, the concern was not merely tactical — it was existential. Would his body allow him one more run at the biggest stage in

football?

Scaloni never wavered. "It's a question that's more for him, but for my part you already know what I think," the coach said at a news conference in March. "I'll do everything possible for him to be there." He was as good as his word.

The squad itself reflects a careful balance of the tried, the trusted, and the emerging. Seventeen members of the Qatar 2022 winning side return, including goalkeeper Emiliano Martínez, defender Nicolás Otamendi, and midfielders Rodrigo De Paul, Alexis Mac Allister, and Enzo Fernández. Strikers Julián Álvarez and Lautaro Martínez are also back, giving Argentina one of the most potent attacking combinations in world football. Alongside the familiar names, Scaloni has made room for younger talent — Valentín Barco, Nicolás Paz, and Giuliano Simeone among them — signalling that this squad is being built not just for 2026 but for the years

beyond.

Notable absentees include Ángel Di María, who retired from international football following the 2024 Copa América, and left back Marcos Acuña, who missed out due to fitness concerns. Their absence closes a chapter, but does little to diminish the quality at Scaloni's disposal.

Argentina open their Group J campaign on 16 June against Algeria at Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City, before facing Austria and then Jordan in Dallas. They do so as defending champions and, in the eyes of many, as favourites — in the first ever 48-team World Cup, co-hosted across the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

For Messi, this is the final act. For Argentina, it is a chance to make history twice. The world will be watching.

SPORTS NEWS



PHOTOS
SCORES
OPINIONS
STATISTICS
SCHEDULES
BREAKING NEWS



SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



A bright future drawn on white paper: Zarina's international flight of creativity

By: **Abdug'apporov Abdullo**
@themkenyatimes



Worth Noting:

- Zarina's creative path has been recognized at prestigious competitions and festivals. Her first major success came when she won 1st place at the "YANGI O'ZBEKISTON IQTIDOR-LARI" competition held in Andijan. Soon after, her graphic works amazed the jury at the international "KHIVA ART FEST-2026" held in the historic city of Khiva, where she once again proudly earned 1st place.
- However, this was only the beginning. At the "ART & MUSIC PLANET" creative project in Tashkent and the international competition "NEW STARS - TASHKENT," organized in cooperation with the "Kairat Kyrgyz" International Creative Center of the Kyrgyz Republic, Zarina achieved the highest honor by winning the Grand Prix. This victory granted her a fully funded opportunity to participate in prestigious international competitions abroad.

Not everyone is gifted with the ability to see the world through colors and express emotions through lines. There is a fascinating branch of visual art that can deeply touch the human soul without excessive colors—graphic art, where the mysterious harmony of black and white alone speaks volumes. Every line created in graphic drawing requires not only skill but also great courage, precision, and patience. Today, one of the young talents leaving her unique artistic signature in this captivating world is 15-year-old Robidjanova Zarina Abdurahmon qizi, a student of class 10 "G" at the Specialized Art School of Namangan.

Talent Hidden Within Lines

Among her peers, Zarina stands out not only for her excellent academic performance and exemplary behavior but also for her remarkable talent and determination. Each graphic artwork emerging from her pencil invites viewers into deep reflection. Behind every seemingly simple stroke lies months of tireless effort and an endless desire to acquire new knowledge. Fearlessly moving toward her goals, this young artist dreamed of introducing the beauty of Uzbek art to the world—and today she is proving that dream through real achievements.

A Victorious Journey: From Andijan to Bishkek

Zarina's creative path has been recognized at prestigious competitions and festivals. Her first major success came when she won 1st place at the "YANGI O'ZBEKISTON IQTIDOR-LARI" competition held in Andijan. Soon after, her graphic works amazed the jury at the international "KHIVA ART FEST-2026" held in the historic city of Khiva, where she once again proudly earned 1st place.

However, this was only the beginning. At the "ART & MUSIC PLANET" creative project in Tashkent and the international competition "NEW STARS - TASHKENT," organized in cooperation with the "Kairat Kyrgyz" International Creative Center of the Kyrgyz Republic, Zarina achieved the highest honor by winning the Grand Prix. This victory granted her

a fully funded opportunity to participate in prestigious international competitions abroad.

That opportunity led her toward even greater heights. In March of this year, at the traditional 7th International "BALA CHAK - 2026" Competition held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, the talented young artist from Namangan once again demonstrated her exceptional abilities. Competing among participants from numerous countries, Zarina distinguished herself through her unique graphic artworks and proudly became the Grand Prix winner once again.

Creativity, Knowledge, and Active Participation

Throughout the academic year, Zarina produced a considerable amount of creative work. She is not only successful in art but also completes the school year as an exemplary student in all academic subjects. Beyond competitions, she actively participates in every organizational and creative event at school.

It is worth especially mentioning that she also took an active role in this year's traditional international festival of visual and applied arts. For her achievements and participation, she was honored with memorable gifts and a special diploma by the Head of the Namangan Regional Department of the Academy of Arts of Uzbekistan.

We sincerely wish Zarina Robidjanova, who serves as an example to others through her human values and whose eyes shine with unwavering confidence in the future, even greater creative achievements and higher victories ahead. Indeed, the future of an artist whose intentions are pure and ambitions are great will surely be as beautiful and unique as the artworks she creates.

The future belongs to the youth. Students like Zarina are the reliable foundation of our nation's tomorrow. May your soaring journey continue, bright star of the New Uzbekistan!

Abdug'apporov Abdullo
Teacher of the "Design" Department
Namangan Specialized Art School



Abdug'apporov Abdullo with Robidjanova Zarina Abdurahmon.



Robidjanova Zarina Abdurahmon



Robidjanova Zarina Abdurahmon and her support team



Robidjanova Zarina Abdurahmon and her support team