



Stakeholders urge softer penalties for street vendors
Stakeholders have raised concerns over the penalties proposed in the Street Vendors Bill, 2023, describing them as punitive and disconnected from the realities faced by small-scale traders.

Page 8



Study reveals gaps in response to child sexual exploitation
A new study on the reporting, investigation, and adjudication of Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (CSEA) in Kenya has revealed significant gaps in coordination, survivor support, and implementation of child protection laws

Page 12

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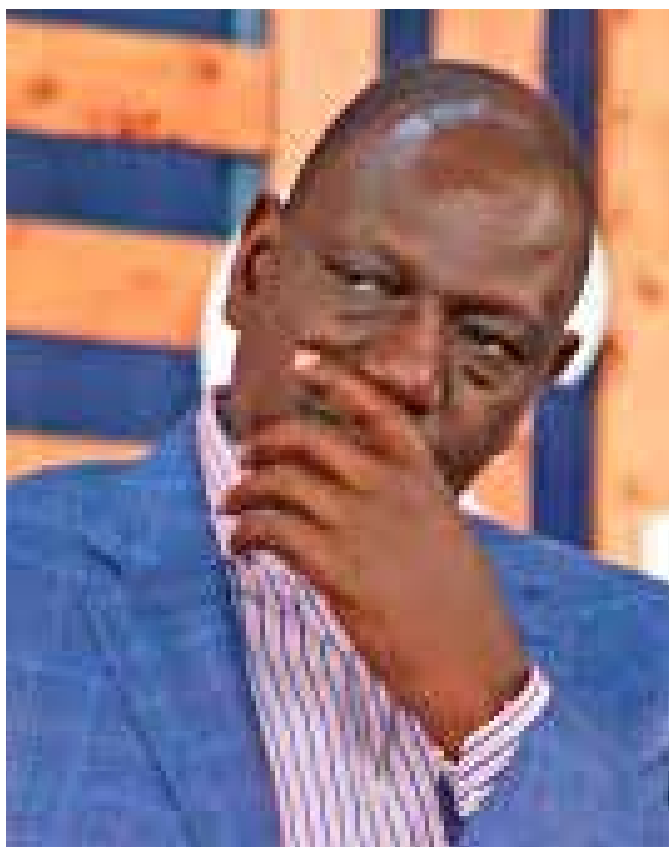
Daily ePAPER

Protest victims Survivors of state violence say the President's acknowledgement of security force excesses fell short of justice

Victims reject Ruto apology

Survivors of last year's anti-government protests have rejected President William Ruto's apology, insisting he meet them personally and publish the full list of beneficiaries of a KSh2 billion compensation fund. Hours after Ruto admitted state excesses that left thousands dead, maimed and businesses destroyed, the Coalition of Victims and Survivors Against State Violence dismissed his remarks as inadequate. Representing over 1,100 claimants of killings, torture, abductions and disappearances, the group said reconciliation cannot rest on ambiguity. "No apology can erase the bloodshed," said survivor Joshua Okayo, demanding direct apologies. Advocate Nick Karanja added that accountability requires face-to-face reckoning, not State House communiqués. Survivors warned that transparency and swift payments are essential, and cautioned that compensation cannot replace criminal prosecutions. They set a one-week deadline for payouts, threatening nationwide demonstrations if the government fails to act.

Page 9



A collage of President William Ruto and Joshua Okayo, a survivor of abduction

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IG holds high-level security summit with National Police Service Commanders

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyetimes

Some of the moments as captured in pictures

Inspector-General of the National Police Service Douglas Kanja yesterday convened a high-level security summit at the National Police Leadership Academy in Ng'ong, bringing together senior commanders from the Kenya Police Service, Administration Police Service and the Directorate of Criminal Investigations to review the country's security situation and enhance operational preparedness.

The meeting assessed current operations, analysed emerging crime trends and developed strategic interventions aimed at strengthening national security.

Accompanied by Deputy Inspector-General of the Kenya Police Service Eliud Lagat, Deputy Inspector-General of the Administration Police Service Gilbert Masengeli and Director of Criminal Investigations Mohamed Amin, Kanja commended commanders for their commitment in addressing evolving security threats.

He challenged them to adopt efficient, adaptive strategies that maximise available resources to maintain law and order and ensure the safety of Kenyans, residents and visitors.

The IG issued a stern warning over the resurgence of criminal gangs, declaring a zero-tolerance approach to operational negligence and directing officers to take immediate and decisive action against organised criminal groups across the country.

He reaffirmed the National Police Service's commitment to protecting lives and property, upholding the rule of law and fostering a secure environment that supports social stability and economic growth. The summit was attended by senior officers drawn from various specialised units within the National Police Service.



Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times



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NEWS IN BRIEF



Democratic Party of Kenya Secretary General Jacob Haji (left) with the party's National Chairperson, Young Democrats, Beatrice Njeri (right) after presenting a Life Membership Certificate to Florence Mumbua at the Democratic Party Headquarters in Nairobi. Ms. Florence Mumbua Matheka aspires MCA for Kathonzweni Ward, Makueni County. The party noted that Ms Mumbua is a passionate, articulate, and community-driven leader, and she represents a new generation of leadership that is focused on real issues and the needs of the people of Makueni County.



Kenya and the Republic of Korea have signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the mutual recognition of seafarers' Certificates of Competency, paving the way for expanded employment opportunities and stronger maritime cooperation between the two countries. Signed in Mombasa during the 11th Our Ocean Conference, the agreement aligns with international STCW standards and allows qualified Kenyan seafarers to work on Korean-flagged vessels, while Korean seafarers can serve on Kenyan-registered ships. Kenya Maritime Authority Director General CPA Omae Nyarandi signed the pact on Kenya's behalf. Cabinet Secretary for Mining, Blue Economy and Maritime Affairs Ali Hassan Joho described the deal as a major boost for Kenya's maritime sector, saying it validates the country's training standards and supports the government's agenda of creating jobs, enhancing skills and growing the Blue Economy.



A community-based organisation in Laikipia has launched a campaign to tackle period poverty among vulnerable schoolgirls by promoting access to reusable sanitary towels and menstrual cups. Binti Mwangaza CBO founder Ann Muriuki said poverty and stigma continue to force many girls, especially in pastoral communities, to miss school during menstruation. She noted that more than 30,000 learners have benefited from the initiative, contributing to improved school retention among girls. Despite the 2019 Kenya Menstrual Hygiene Management Policy requiring free sanitary products in public schools, implementation gaps persist. Speakers at a sensitisation forum in Nanyuki also urged communities to abandon harmful myths surrounding menstruation and called for greater menstrual hygiene education, safe spaces for girls, and open discussions to end shame and discrimination.



The Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR) has condemned the disruption of a peaceful civil society meeting at All Saints Cathedral, terming it an attack on constitutional freedoms and democratic governance. KNCHR Chairperson Claris Ogangah said the incident violated rights guaranteed under the Constitution, including freedoms of conscience, expression, association and peaceful assembly. She welcomed the swift response by the National Police Service and called for thorough investigations to identify and hold accountable those who planned, financed or carried out the attack. Ogangah also expressed concern over reports that young people may have been mobilised to intimidate participants, urging that youth be empowered to contribute positively to civic processes. She encouraged Kenyans to continue exercising their constitutional rights peacefully and without fear of harassment or intimidation.



The Kenya Electricity Transmission Company (KETRACO) has energized the 400kV Isinya-Konza Transmission Line and the new Konza Substation, strengthening power supply to Konza Technopolis and enhancing grid reliability in the Lower Eastern region. The Sh8 billion project, funded by the Government of Kenya and the Exim Bank of China, includes a 98-kilometre double-circuit transmission line and a 400/132/66kV substation equipped with high-capacity transformers. KETRACO Managing Director Eng. Kipkemoi Kibias said the project removes a major infrastructure bottleneck for Konza Technopolis, supporting data centres, manufacturing and technology investments aligned with Vision 2030. The upgrade will improve electricity transmission, provide an alternative supply route for Machakos, Kajiado, Makueni and Kitui counties, reduce outage risks and enhance the resilience of the national grid.



The Sigor Wei Wei Integrated Development Project has transformed livelihoods in West Pokot by turning drought-prone land into productive farmland through expanded irrigation. Cabinet Secretary Beatrice Askul Moe officially handed over Phase III of the project to the Wei Wei Farmers Community, describing it as a milestone for food security and resilience. Implemented through a partnership between the Kenyan and Italian governments, the three-phase project has attracted investments worth Sh3.21 billion. It now supports 1,500 acres of irrigation, produces about 1,000 tonnes of certified maize seed annually, generates over Sh60 million for farmers, and has created more than 1,000 jobs, significantly improving incomes and livelihoods in the region.

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Farming This project will greatly help our people to improve agriculture - Governor Njuki

Igambangombe farmers rejoice as 17-year wait ends with launch of multimillion irrigation project

BY Faith Mwanza, Faith Nkatha and Alex Njeru

@themtkenyatiimes

After waiting for 17 years to see their dream become a reality, hundreds of farmers in Igambang'ombe Ward are celebrating the launch of the Kamuthiga Irrigation Water Project, thanks to Tharaka Nithi County Government. The KSh150 million project, launched by Governor Muthomi Njuki alongside County Assembly Speaker John Mbabu is expected to transform agriculture in the semi-arid parts of Chuka/Igambang'ombe Constituency by providing a reliable water supply for irrigation throughout the year.

Speaking at Itugururu Agricultural Institute after commissioning the project at the Mwembe Tayari area, Governor Njuki said the initiative forms part of his administration's agricultural empowerment agenda aimed at enhancing food security, improving livelihoods and stimulating economic growth.

The project will benefit more than 600 farmers from Itugururu, Gaciegoki, Kathoge, Karangi, Kithanya, Kiamurungi, Kangangi and Kandega villages, among other areas.

"This project will greatly help our people to improve agriculture and that is why I am committed to completing

it," said Governor Njuki.

According to the governor, the irrigation scheme was first conceived 17 years ago but remained on paper due to a lack of funding. The project finally took off after the county government allocated KSh150 million for its implementation.

Speaker Mbabu praised Governor Njuki for spearheading transformative development projects across the county, saying significant progress had been made since he assumed office in 2017.

"A lot has been achieved under Governor Njuki's leadership, especially in agriculture, infrastructure and water development," said Mbabu.

County Executive Committee Member for Agriculture Njue Njagi noted that food production in the county had improved significantly due to various county government interventions, including the provision of certified seeds and investment in irrigation infrastructure.

Governor Njuki announced that he would launch another water project in Maara Constituency today and a similar project in Tharaka Constituency on Friday as part of efforts to ensure equitable development across the county.

He also criticized politicians whom he accused of attempting to sabotage county government projects, saying such actions would not derail his administration's develop-



Tharaka Nithi Governor Muthomi Njuki during launch of Kamuthiga Irrigation Water Project in Igambang'ombe ward. |

Photo: Alex Njeru

ment agenda.

Among the beneficiaries, Lucy Muthoni recalled how residents came together 17 years ago to conceptualize the irrigation project, only for it to stall due to financial constraints.

"We thank our governor for financing this project because we had lost hope in it. It will help us not only fight hunger but also engage in agribusiness," said Ms Muthoni.

Another farmer, John Mutembei, condemned leaders who politicize development projects, saying wananchi should reject such leaders. "It is wrong for any politician to oppose projects that are meant to improve the lives of the people," he said.

During the event, Njuki also reiterated his commitment to the construction of the em-

battled Itugururu Airstrip, arguing that the facility would open up the area for economic growth and investment.

He faulted politicians who had moved to court to stop the project, insisting that the airstrip would eventually be completed and made operational.

"When I came into office in 2017, I had to move people who had been allocated the airstrip land by my predecessor for farming because it would have eventually been grabbed," said the governor.

The launch of the Kamuthiga Irrigation Water Project is expected to boost year-round farming, reduce dependence on rainfall and strengthen food security in one of the county's traditionally dry regions.

Kenya hunts new coffee markets



Cooperatives and MSMEs CS Wycliffe Oparanya

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatiimes

Kenya is stepping up efforts to secure new international markets for its coffee as the country seeks to increase earnings from one of its most valuable cash crops.

Stakeholders across the coffee value chain convened in Nairobi this week to explore trade, investment, and buyer partnerships aimed at strengthening East African coffee's position in global markets and improving returns for the thousands of smallholder farmers who depend on the crop for their livelihoods.

The forum also serves as the launch pad for the East Africa Coffee Markets and Conference 2026, which organisers hope will draw fresh investment and expand trade opportunities across the region.

Patrick Kilemi, Principal Secretary for Cooperatives, struck an ambitious tone. "By

connecting farmers directly to markets and fostering practical engagement across the value chain, this conference aligns perfectly with the government of Kenya's vision for a vibrant, competitive, and farmer-centred coffee industry," he said. "We must place great emphasis on value addition, branding, and market differentiation."

Bernadette Murgor, founder of Smart Farmer Africa, pointed to persistent knowledge gaps among producers. "We want our farmers to learn about the latest technologies, what is happening in the market, and what buyers are looking for," she said. "There are farmers in the West Rift region who do not yet fully understand the best coffee-growing practices, and we want to give producers an opportunity to learn and improve."

For Kenya's smallholder farmers, the stakes could not be higher.

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Stakeholders urge softer penalties for street vendors



Starehe MP Amos Mwango

BY PSC

@themtkenyentimes

Stakeholders have raised concerns over the penalties proposed in the Street Vendors Bill, 2023, describing them as punitive and disconnected from the realities faced by small-scale traders.

Speaking before the National Assembly Trade Committee during stakeholder engagement on the Bill, legal counsel Phillis Kamau, who represented various market groups in Kiambu County, defended street vendors and urged lawmakers to reconsider the proposed fines.

She said street vendors have for years faced harassment from county enforcement officers and warned that introducing heavy penalties would give officers more power to intimidate and victimise traders.

She described street vendors as among the most vulnerable members of society, many of whom depend on daily earnings to support their families.

According to her, government efforts should focus on protecting and empowering vendors so they can grow their businesses into more stable enterprises rather than punishing them.

Committee members also ques-

tioned the severity of the proposed sanctions. Starehe MP Amos Mwango termed the penalties excessive and unfair to small traders struggling to make a living.

"The proposed fine of Ksh200,000 is too harsh for such business people. Most of their businesses are barely worth Ksh10,000, and it is therefore unrealistic to impose such a fine on them," said Mwango.

Officials from the State Department for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and the State Department for Trade also presented their submissions to the committee. The two departments called for a review of the penalties, arguing that the proposed fines are punitive and could negatively affect small traders.

The Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions, Hospitals and Allied Workers (KUDHEIHA) expressed support for the Bill but urged lawmakers to remove all fines contained in the proposed law. The union instead proposed the introduction of administrative penalties not exceeding KSh2,000.

The committee is expected to review all stakeholder submissions as well as the public views gathered from public hearings across several counties before drafting its report.



Lawyer Phillis Kamau before the parliamentary committee yesterday | Photo: Courtesy.

Kenya ranked 6th in Africa's digital rights, inclusion index



Digital rights

BY Michael Omondi

@themtkenyentimes

Kenya has been ranked sixth in the latest report on the state of digital rights and inclusion across the continent, according to a Digital Rights and Inclusion in Africa Report by Londa, considered to be the most comprehensive continental assessment within the continent.

In the latest report, which covered 29 countries across Central, East, North, South, and West Africa in 2025, the country has jumped three places, up from 9th place in 2024.

Notably, South Africa has retained its top position as Africa's leading digital rights-respecting country for the second time in a row, followed by Ghana, Namibia, Senegal, Egypt, Zambia, Kenya, Rwanda, Malawi, and Nigeria, respectively.

In addition, the research draws on desk-based legal and policy analysis, secondary data review, key informant interviews with regulators and sector stakeholders, and media monitoring to assess trends, developments, and emerging challenges.

From the press statement, Kenya and Rwanda are the only countries featured among the top ten in East Africa. The country's score is 37 out of 60, which is a three-point improvement on last year's performance, placing it as moderately compliant with international digital rights standards, well below South

Africa's benchmark score of 47 out of 60.

"Kenya's media landscape is among the most vibrant on the continent, though journalists face harassment and intimidation, and press-freedom-restricting laws remain on the books," read the report.

In contrast, Rwanda scored 36 out of 60, retaining its 2024 score. The country performed well in infrastructure and e-government but continued to record low scores in freedom of expression and in arbitrary arrests.

In this regard, Kenya marginally outperforms Rwanda overall, more so in judicial independence and emerging technology strategy.

Importantly, the Londa 2025 report calls on the Kenyan government to halt internet throttling and disruptions during protests, repeal over-broad provisions of the Computer Misuse and Cybercrimes Amendment Act 2024, ensure the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner has adequate enforcement resources, build a comprehensive Artificial Intelligence (AI) regulatory framework, and close the urban-rural digital inclusion gap.

It further urges the government to establish harmonized rules on cross-border data transfers, data localization, and cloud contracts to ensure that Kenyan public data and sensitive information are protected under Kenyan law.

Additionally, it calls on the govern-

ment to expand affordable connectivity by prioritising infrastructure in rural, informal, and marginalised communities.

Meanwhile, Kenya and 28 other African countries were evaluated using the Score Index, a 12-point indicator that ranks countries by performance.

Key indicators include access to information, freedom of expression, privacy protections, and digital inclusion, among others, with the report highlighting areas for improvement and persistent structural challenges across the region.

Significantly, the most improved countries in the ranking are Botswana and Egypt, which moved up by more than nine places. This was in stark contrast to countries like Nigeria and Cameroon, which dropped by five and ten places, respectively.

On the other hand, Mozambique, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Sudan all dropped in rank, placing them among the bottom five in the list.

Collectively, the report provides a comprehensive, data-driven assessment of internet freedoms, policy environments, and emerging digital rights risks across the continent. It provides an annual benchmark of progress and setbacks in digital rights protection, drawing on extensive country-level research and stakeholder engagement.

Protest victims The survivors have made their position unmistakably clear — they will settle for nothing less.

Protest victims reject Ruto's apology, demand compensation list be made public

Survivors of state violence say the President's acknowledgement of security force excesses fell short of justice — and warn of fresh street protests if payouts are not made within a week.

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyatimes

Survivors of state violence during last year's anti-government protests formally rejected President William Ruto's public apology yesterday, demanding instead that he address them personally and that the government immediately publish the full list of individuals earmarked to receive compensation from a newly announced Ksh.2 billion relief fund.

The rebuke came within hours of the President acknowledging state excesses that left thousands dead, maimed and with businesses reduced to rubble — an admission that his administration had previously resisted making. The Coalition of Victims and Survivors Against State Violence said the remarks, however historic in tone, did not constitute the reckoning that survivors and bereaved families have spent months demanding. The coalition, which represents more than 1,100 claimants spanning cases of extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, torture and abductions, said any reconciliation process built on ambiguity was no process at all.

"No apology can erase the bloodshed, trauma and pain inflicted on people whose only crime was exercising their constitutional right to peaceful protest," said Joshua Okayo, himself a survivor of abduction. "Because the brutality and excesses were personal, the apologies should also be personal. We therefore expect the President to extend the same apologies directly to the victims."

That view was echoed by Nick Karanja, an advocate who has represented survivors throughout the compensation process. He drew a sharp distinction between a statesman's general acknowledgement of wrongdoing and the direct, face-to-face accountability that victims say is the only credible foundation for healing. "A communiqué read in State House is not the same as looking a mother in the eye and telling her why her son never came home," Karanja told reporters.

The compensation framework, un-

veiled on Monday, establishes a Ksh.2 billion fund to settle more than 1,100 claims. It covers a broad spectrum of violations including loss of life, injuries, torture, unlawful detention, abductions and enforced disappearances. Human rights organisations broadly welcomed the mechanism as an overdue first step, but cautioned that its credibility would rest entirely on execution. Survivors went further, arguing that both the pool of beneficiaries and the sums attached to individual claims must be substantially increased before any payment schedule is finalised.

Beyond the numbers, the issue of transparency has become a flashpoint. Claimants say they have been given no sight of who appears on the compensation list or on what basis decisions were made, leaving open the possibility that eligible victims have been excluded — whether through bureaucratic failure or deliberate omission. Bernard Kavuli, a survivor who has become one of the process's most vocal critics, warned that patience among victims is exhausted.

"Kenyans will not tolerate further delays, excuses, bureaucracy or political sideshows meant to frustrate victims once again. Compensation must be swift, transparent, seamless and conducted in good faith," Kavuli said, speaking at a press briefing in Nairobi.

For families who lost relatives, the President's remarks also reopened grief that has never had the space to settle. Mwende, who declined to give her full name for fear of reprisal, lost a child during the demonstrations and expressed bewilderment at what she described as the selective scope of the President's contrition. Ruto's speech had referenced historical instances of state impunity stretching back decades, a framing that struck her as a deliberate deflection from more recent events.

"My question to the President is this: if you have admitted that our children disappeared, that some were abducted and that others were killed, why are you speaking about events that happened long ago in-



Bernard Kavuli, a survivor.

stead of addressing these recent cases?" she said.

Underlying all of the survivors' demands is a insistence that financial compensation, however necessary, cannot be a substitute for criminal accountability. A spokesperson for the coalition was unequivocal: the same police officers and state agents implicated in shootings, kidnappings and torture must face prosecution. Paying victims, the spokesperson argued, does not extinguish criminal liability. "Compensation does not erase the criminal responsibility of those involved in these acts," the representative said. "Investigations must proceed and those responsible must be held to account."

Legal analysts have noted that the government's framework is silent on accountability mechanisms, creating

a structural tension at the heart of the process. International human rights law, including standards set by the United Nations Basic Principles on the Right to a Remedy, holds that reparation and accountability are parallel obligations — neither one discharges the state's duty to pursue the other. Kenya's own Constitution, under Article 49 and the broader Bill of Rights, enshrines the right of victims to judicial remedy, a provision that advocacy groups say cannot be waived by executive decree.

The coalition has set a one-week deadline for the first compensation payments to be made, with leaders warning that failure to meet it will trigger nationwide demonstrations. Whether that ultimatum carries political weight depends largely on the organisational capacity that sur-

vivors' groups have built since last year's unrest — and, equally, on whether the government believes the threat is credible. Given that last year's protests forced the withdrawal of the Finance Bill and ultimately reshaped the Cabinet, there is little reason for Nairobi to dismiss it.

For now, the gap between a President who has offered words and a movement that wants consequences defines the central fault line of Kenya's post-protest reckoning. A government that has taken the significant step of acknowledging wrongdoing must now decide whether it is willing to take the harder step of being held accountable for it.

Awards The Huawei ICT Competition Global Finals were held in Shenzhen, China. More than 220,000 contestants came from universities and colleges from across the world

MKU wins global awards in China and America

Kenyan trio beats 220,000 participants to win Huawei global ICT crown as MKU signs another partnership with Nanjing Vocational College of Information Technology (NJCIT) and Nanjing Zhongxing Xinyanda Information Technology

BY James Wakahiu

@themtkenyaintimes

Mount Kenya University (MKU) has achieved three major milestones on the global stage, underscoring Kenya's rising leadership in technology education and innovation.

In Shenzhen, China, a Kenyan team including an MKU student secured a historic victory at the Huawei ICT Competition Global Finals, beating over 220,000 participants worldwide. In a historic victory for East Africa, a Kenyan trio have won the grand prize at the Huawei ICT Competition Global Finals in Shenzhen, China.

Catherine Atieno of JKUAT, Salem Kim of Machakos University and Brian Ngugi of Mount Kenya University, guided by instructor Kevin Tuei beat more than 220,000 students worldwide to secure the highest honour. This is the first time a team from Kenya has clinched the grand prize after years of regional success and participation in the competition.

The Huawei ICT Competition Global Finals were held in Shenzhen, China. More than 220,000 contestants came from universities and colleges from across the world.

The event, organised annually in collaboration with universities worldwide and UNESCO's International Bureau of Education (UNESCO-IBE), is regarded as one of the most prestigious global platforms for emerg-

ing technology talents. The competition assesses participants' knowledge and practical expertise in advanced ICT fields, including 5G, cloud technologies, networking and artificial intelligence.

Another team of four MKU students has once again put the institution on the spotlight after securing a finalist award at the prestigious Wege Prize 2026, held recently in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The team, represented by Mr. Wesley Njenga, walked away with \$2,500 (Sh323, 650) for their groundbreaking innovation, EcoScrubber, a hybrid emission control and carbon-capture system that transforms toxic pollutants from incinerator chimneys into usable construction materials.

The Wege Prize, organized by Michigan-based Ferris State University's Kendall College of Art and Design (KCAD), challenges university students from around the world to collaboratively solve complex, systems-level problems by developing products, services, and business models based on the three core principles of the circular economy: eliminating waste and pollution, keeping products and materials in circulation, and regenerating natural systems.

This year's competition attracted 87 teams from over 30 countries, representing nearly 200 academic disciplines. Through a rigorous, iterative process spanning multiple phases, teams received in-depth feedback from expert judges, refining their rough concepts into fully-fledged frameworks. From this com-

petitive field, the MKU team comprising Mr. Wesley Njenga, Mr. Franklin Mwendwa, Mr. Elijah Maina, and Mr. Ejike Chinyere, all from the School of Public Health emerged as one of five teams invited to pitch in the United States.

The inspiration behind EcoScrubber came from an ordinary yet powerful moment on a road in Thika. The students witnessed a truck belching thick black smoke while passersby struggled to breathe. That encounter sparked a compelling question: could those harmful emissions be captured and repurposed rather than left to pollute the air? The team took that question back to the university's Innovation and incubation centre, where they began turning the concept into reality.

Speaking during the award



Catherine Atieno of JKUAT, Salim Kim of Machakos University, Brian Ngugi of Mount Kenya University and their instructor Kevin Tuei beat more than 220,000 students from around the world to win the Huawei global award | Photo: Courtesy

ceremony, team lead Wesley Njenga expressed pride in how the University has supported their journey to the global stage. "We were honoured to showcase home-grown solutions like EcoScrubber, as well as compete with the best in the world," he said.

The student was accompanied by the Institutions Head, Innovations, Intellectual Property and community Engagement, Mr. Donatus Njoroge who provided guidance throughout the pitch sessions. "We are proud of their progress so far and we will continue to offer technical support, and global exposure on their path to commercialization," Mr. Donatus noted. Industry leaders and educa-

tion stakeholders have hailed the achievement as a strong affirmation of Kenya's growing capacity to compete globally in technology and innovation. The win also highlights the increasing role of young Africans—and women in particular—in shaping the future of digital transformation.

Together, the MKU partnership and the global competition triumph signal a transformative moment for technology education in Kenya. They demonstrate the country's commitment to equipping learners with future-ready, industry-aligned skills while strengthening international collaboration.

As MKU continues to expand its global partnerships and Kenyan students excel on

the world stage, the nation is positioning itself as a leading hub for ICT talent development, innovation, and digital transformation in Africa.

Shenzhen played host to the closing and awards ceremony of the 10th Huawei ICT Competition Global Final, bringing a record-breaking edition of the talent showcase to an end. This year's ICT Competition attracted more than 220,000 university students and faculty members from over 2,000 tertiary institutions across more than 100 countries and regions, making it the largest edition in the competition's history.

After progressing through national and regional rounds, 177 teams from 49 countries and regions advanced to the Global Final and received awards, underscoring the growing global consensus on the importance of ICT talent development.

At the closing and awards ceremony, Mr. Ritchie (Honghua) Peng, President of Huawei ICT Strategy and Business Development Department, said the competition reflects the company's long-standing commitment to using technology for good and for sustainable social and environmental development.

Peng said the Innovation Competition demonstrated the value of learning through



A Chinese team participates at the Huawei ICT global award finals held in Shenzhen, China.

Awards The Huawei ICT Competition Global Finals were held in Shenzhen, China. More than 220,000 contestants came from universities and colleges from across the world

MKU wins global awards in China and America

Contd from page 10

competition as a tool to address real-world challenges, adding that participants in the Practice and Programming Competitions stood out for their dedication, curiosity and deep technical focus.

He also announced the introduction of a new Ascend AI Operator Development Track in the Chinese mainland for the next edition. The track is designed to help young developers engage more directly with cutting-edge industry technologies through task-based challenges.

The Huawei ICT Competition is an annual global event designed for students and teachers from colleges and universities. It offers an international platform for competition and exchange, enabling participants to strengthen their ICT knowledge, improve practical skills, and foster innovation using the latest technologies and platforms.

Since its launch in 2015, the competition has been gaining significant momentum, with more countries and students joining each year. In China, it has been listed as a national competition for university students, while globally, it has been recognized as a key partner flagship program by UNESCO's Global Skills Academy.

Dr Shafika Isaacs, Director AI (Artificial Intelligence) of UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education and Chief of Section for Technology and AI in Education, praised the partnership between UNESCO and Huawei and commended the participants for their performance. She highlighted that the future of AI requires collaboration among governments, international organizations, academia and industry.

UNESCO and Huawei have been working together

through initiatives such as AI capacity building programs in Arab countries and ICT education partnership programs in Central Asia and the Caucasus. These efforts aim to strengthen higher education and vocational training systems and develop future-ready talent.

"Students in this year's Huawei ICT Competition demonstrated their ability to tackle real-world challenges across cultural boundaries by applying emerging technologies – showing not only creativity but also a responsible approach to technology that embodies the purpose of education," Dr Isaacs said.

This year marked the 10th edition of the Huawei ICT competition. After the practice, innovation, and programming competitions, 18 outstanding teams from eight countries were awarded the grand prize. In the Practice Competition, the Network Track Grand Prize went to the Algerian team, Brazilian team, Nigerian team, and Shenzhen Polytechnic University.

The Cloud Track Grand Prize went to the Egyptian, Algeria, Central South University of Forestry and Technology and the Kenyan team. Egypt also won the Computing Track Grand Prize together with the Henan Institute of Economics and Trade, the Dominican Republic and Algerian teams while Shenzhen Polytechnic University took home the Ascend AI Track Grand Prize.

Wuhan University of Technology of China, Ahmadu Bello University of Nigeria, National University of Singapore and Fujian Normal University were voted the most innovative colleges. The Programming Competition Grand Prize was won by Wuhan Vocational College of Software and Engineering.

Special awards were also presented during the ceremony. The women in tech

award went to seven all-female teams from Azerbaijan, Nigeria, Kenya, China, and Bahrain; while the Green Development Award was won by two teams from Ghana and China.

Ten students from China received fast passes to the Huawei Future Business Leader Track. The most valuable instructor award was conferred on 16 exceptional instructors from nine countries and regions, including Pakistan, China, Nigeria, Egypt, UAE, Brazil, Hong Kong SAR (China), Thailand, Türkiye. Six teams from Egypt, Brazil, Malaysia, Poland, and Pakistan earned the ICT Competition Online Popularity Award.

The awards ceremony attracted diplomatic representatives from 11 countries, including ambassadors, consuls general, and counselors, who attended in person to present awards to students from their home countries.

During the Global Final, Huawei also hosted the AI Accelerating Education Transformation Summit, bringing together educators and industry experts to discuss the role of AI in driving educational transformation and innovation and to share leading practices in industry-academia collaboration.

At the summit, Huawei unveiled its ICT Academy AI Course Solution, which is designed to provide universities with a comprehensive AI learning pathway and support the development of AI talent at scale. It also released the ICT Skills Development Insight Report with Recommendations for Nine Countries of Central Asia & the Caucasus, offering policymakers actionable insights to guide talent and industry development policies.

Special awards were also presented during the ceremony. The Women in Tech Award went to seven all-female teams from Azerbaijan,



MKU students and their instructor at the School of Computing and Informatics | Photo: Courtesy

Nigeria, Kenya, China, and Bahrain; while the Green Development Award was won by two teams from Ghana and China. Ten students from China received Fast Passes to the Huawei Future Business Leader Track. The Most Valuable Instructor Award was conferred on 16 exceptional instructors from nine countries and regions, including Pakistan, China, Nigeria, Egypt, UAE, Brazil, Hong Kong SAR (China), Thailand, Türkiye. Six teams from Egypt, Brazil, Malaysia, Poland, and Pakistan earned the ICT Competition Online Popularity Award.

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general, and counselors, who attended in person to present awards to students from their home countries.

Meanwhile, in Nanjing, China, MKU signed a landmark Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Nanjing Vocational College of Information Technology (NJCIT) and Nanjing Zhongxing Xinyanda Information Technology Co. to deliver globally accredited programmes in emerging technologies. The strategic partnership will enable MKU to offer internationally recognized, Xinyanda-accredited courses in:

Speaking during the signing ceremony, NJCIT Principal Prof. Kong Jie emphasized the partnership's role in advancing China-Africa vocational

education cooperation, noting that it will promote both technical excellence and cultural exchange.

MKU Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Academic and Research Affairs, Dr. Mercyline Kamande, highlighted the importance of the partnership in enhancing institutional capacity, particularly through AI Training of Trainers (ToT) programmes that will equip faculty with advanced skills and global exposure.

In recognition of MKU's leadership in applied education, NJCIT conferred Visiting Professor titles on MKU Vice-Chancellor Prof. Deogratius Jaganyi and Prof. Peter Wanderi, further cementing the institution's growing global footprint.



MKU students sharing their experiences using a laptop in the campus | Photo: Courtesy

Sexual exploitation The research assessed the functionality of child protection services by examining survivor journeys and case management processes across seven counties

Study reveals gaps in response to child sexual exploitation

BY Anita Kariuki and Sallo Gobana

@themkenyaintimes

A new study on the reporting, investigation, and adjudication of Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (CSEA) in Kenya has revealed significant gaps in coordination, survivor support, and implementation of child protection laws, despite the country having established legal and institutional frameworks.

The study, conducted by Midrift Hurinet in partnership with the Childlight Global Child Safety Institute and the Anti-Human Trafficking and Child Protection Unit (AHTCPU), was launched in Nairobi yesterday.

The research assessed the functionality of child protection services by examining survivor journeys and case management processes across seven counties, namely Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu, Nakuru, Kisii, Busia, and Garissa.

Using a mixed-methods approach, the researchers combined case file reviews, direct observation, key informant interviews, and document analysis to evaluate how institutions handle cases of child sexual exploitation and abuse.

According to the findings, the study reviewed 57 closed CSEA case files, observed 56 institutions involved in child protection, and carried out in-depth interviews with 58 stakeholders working across the child protection sector in the seven counties.

The report established that although Kenya has made notable progress in strengthening child protection systems, weaknesses in collaboration among institutions, inadequate survivor support services and poor implementation of policies continue to undermine effective responses to child sexual exploitation and abuse.

The findings show that 54.7 per cent of perpetrators were male and well known to the child, dispelling the common belief that offenders are usually strangers. The study also found that the majority of survivors, accounting for 79 per cent, were girls aged between six and 11 years.

The researchers noted that while Kenya has put in place legal frameworks such as the Sexual Offences Act of 2006 and the Children's Act of 2022, child sexual exploitation and abuse remain prevalent.

They attributed this partly to inadequate implementation of existing laws, policies, and child protection mechanisms.

The study further underscored the importance of timely access to medical treatment, psychosocial support, and coordinated services in helping survivors recover and strengthening their access to justice.

Speaking during the launch, Midrift researcher Leslie Rono said the findings highlight the urgent need to improve the way institutions respond to survivors of abuse. "If there's one thing that needs to change, it's how we respond to survivors. Systems must be faster, more sensitive, and more coordinated," Rono said.

Another Midrift researcher, Elizabeth Anyango, said the study challenges widespread misconceptions about perpetrators of child sexual abuse.

"Many people believe that child abusers are strangers, but the reality is very different. Across the seven counties where Midrift conducted the study, 54 per cent of the perpetrators were male and very well known to the child," she said.

Anyango added that the cases reviewed painted a disturbing picture of the vulnerability of young children to sexual ex-

ploitation and abuse.

"The cases reviewed were very disheartening because the majority of the survivors of child sexual exploitation and abuse were young girls between the ages of six and 11 years old," she noted.

The Childlight Global Child Safety Institute, which funded the research, said the findings provide an opportunity to strengthen Kenya's child protection systems and ensure survivors receive better support.

Lydia Davenport of Childlight commended Kenya for demonstrating commitment to safeguarding children through laws, policies, and child protection structures but emphasized the need for further improvements.

"This important study, by shining a light on the lived experiences of survivors, identifies opportunities to further strengthen trauma-informed support, improve coordina-



Ms Elizabeth Anyango

tion across services, enhance awareness, and ensure cases are resolved as effectively and efficiently as possible," Davenport said.

She added that Childlight was grateful for the opportunity to support the initiative and hoped the findings would inform continued efforts by government agencies, practitioners, and communities to place the needs of survivors at the center of the response.

The report recommends stronger integration of data systems to facilitate information sharing among agencies handling child protection matters, as well as improved

inter-agency coordination and stricter enforcement of existing child protection laws and policies.

It also calls for urgent and sustained public awareness campaigns to discourage traditional and informal methods of resolving cases of child sexual exploitation and abuse within communities, noting that such practices often deny survivors justice and protection.

Further, the study advocates for enhanced capacity building for child protection actors, including investigators, social workers, health professionals, and judicial officers, to

strengthen reporting, investigation, case management, and adjudication of child sexual exploitation and abuse cases across the country.

Stakeholders at the launch expressed hope that the study's findings and recommendations will contribute to policy reforms and more effective collaboration among institutions charged with protecting children, ultimately improving access to justice and support services for survivors.



Lydia Davenport of Childlight speaking during the launch of results of a study on the reporting, investigation, and adjudication of Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (CSEA) in Kenya. | Photo: Anita Kariuki.

Probe According to the report, the financial statements reflected pending bills amounting to KSh14.53 billion.

Accounts committee probes audit queries on office of the President accounts

BY PSC
@themkenyentimes

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC), chaired by Butere MP Tindi Mwale yesterday examined the Auditor-General’s Report for the 2023/2024 Financial Year on the accounts of the Executive Office of the President.

The Principal Administrative Secretary in the Executive Office of the President, Mr. Arthur Osiya, appeared before the Committee to respond to issues raised in the audit report.

During the session, MPs sought clarification on several matters flagged by the Auditor-General.

According to the report, the financial statements reflected pending bills amounting to KSh14.53 billion.

The Auditor-General noted that the amount related to bills that were not



PAC chairman Tindi Mwale during yesterday’s session. Photos/Courtesy.

settled during the year under review and were instead carried forward to the 2024/2025 financial year.

“Failure to settle bills in the year to which they relate adversely affects the implementation of the subsequent year’s budgeted programmes, as the outstanding bills form a first charge on that year’s budget provision,” the report states in part.

In his response, Mr. Osiya acknowledged that the pending bills stood at KSh14,528,324,070.

He explained that KSh14,142,182,553 of the amount comprised historical bills inherited from the defunct Nairobi Metropolitan Services (NMS), while KSh386,141,517 related to the Office of the President headquarters for



Principal Administrative Secretary in the Executive Office of the President, Mr. Arthur Osiya taking oath before the parliamentary committee yesterday.

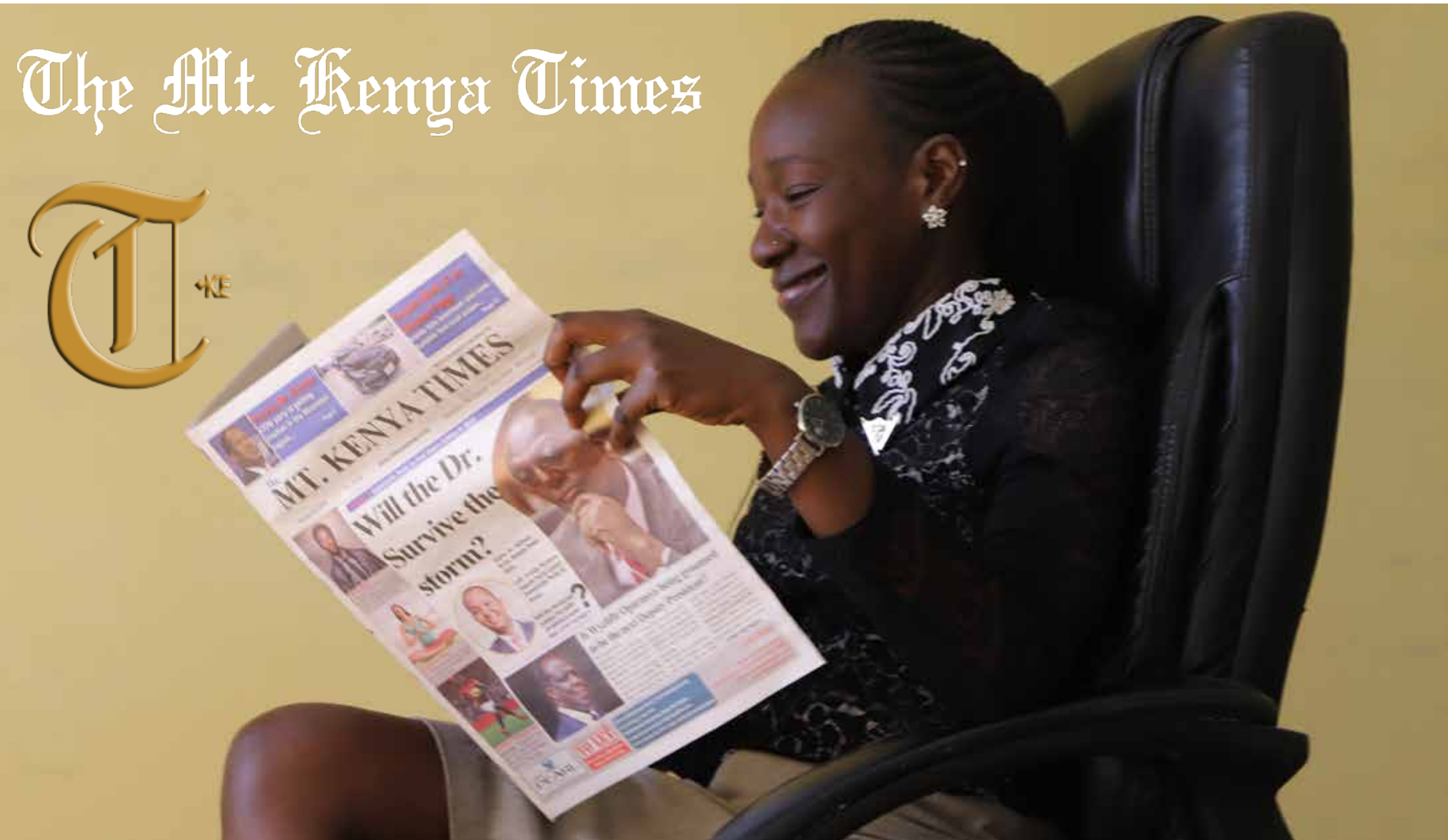
the 2023/2024 financial year.

“On the historical pending bills relating to NMS, the Office has since submitted them to the Pending Bills Verification Committee under the National Treasury for review,” Mr. Osiya told the Committee.

Committee members, however, expressed concern that the team from the Executive Office of the President

had not provided sufficient documentation to adequately address some of the audit queries.

The committee chairman directed Mr. Osiya to furnish the Committee with additional documents to support the responses and facilitate further scrutiny of the issues raised by the Auditor-General.



My Innisfree



Olympus, at your arrival,
Did soften its thunder;
And Aphrodite, in the sea,
Forgot her mirrors.
For your presence marked
The new definition of beauty.

Lowering his golden lyre,
Ashamed did Apollo feel,
For no hymn he wrote
Could ever learn the rhythm
Nor the music of your breath.

Towards you as a man,
I do not walk, but
As a half-myth, half-memory.
Perhaps Orpheus I am,
Who still reckons
That love can
Take its birth
Even in the darkness To return what was lost.

And in my chest,
Where peace prevails
Out of your nearness alone,
Like an old dreamer
On a lake shore
Speaking of Innisfree,
Arrives W. B. Yeats.

At the edge of the sky,
Byron stands and smiles
When all restless journeys
Slow down finally.
The storms that fancied wandering
Were seen settled when you were near;
What once felt like exile, became home.

And I, between gods and poets,
Learned nothing but
One simple myth:
Written in epics
Isn't a paradise,
But a moment
Where every legend,
Every verse,
Every longing
Recognises you, my love,
And calls it enough.

©Abdul Samad

Leads onward to eternity



The stream that hums through stone and field
May wander slow, yet harvests yield,
It sculpts the rock both slow and sure
And finds a pathway everywhere

The dawn arrives with measured pace,
No hurried stride, no reckless race,
Yet night gives way to mornings light,
For life belongs to those who grow.

My father spoke in accents wise,
“Rest is rust”—a truth that never dies.
For iron left untouched will fade,
And idle hands lose what they’ve made.

The mind, like fertile soil, must be
Turned often for new growth to see,
Challenge the thoughts, awaken the brain,
Or weeds of silence shall remain.

The grey cells thrive when learning stays,
Fed by wonder through the days,
An active mind, alert and bright,
Keeps wisdom’s lamp forever alight.

Stagnation is a silent grave,
A thief that steals the gifts we have,
But movement,however small it seems,

Keeps life alive and fuels our dreams.

The Gita’s voice still calls today:
“You have the right to action alone”, it says,
Not to the fruits that may appear,
But to the work pursued sincere.

The Holy Bible gently shows:
“Faith without works is dead,” it knows,
For living faith is seen in deed,
In every thought and noble seed.

The Quran urges humankind:
“Man shall have only what he strives for,” we find;
A timeless truth, steadfast and clear
Progress belongs to those who persevere.

So do not fear the slower pace,
Nor envy those who swiftly race,
Each faithful step, though small it be,
Leads onward to eternity

Like rivers flowing to the sea,
Like stars that move unceasingly,
Keep learning, striving, day by day,
For life itself is found along the way.

Stand not still where shadows lie,
But lift your gaze toward the sky.
For every step, however small,
Is better far than none at all.

Nandini AnandKumar
Educator,Writer,Motivator Freelancer
(In Service of Education)

Nothing will destroy you more than the weight of your own thoughts



Never carry any past thoughts as a snail,
Away from your thoughts and be a butterfly.
Your own thoughts pull back you and make fail.
Don't allow your shadow to dominate you .

The weight of your thoughts destroys you as a
flame destroys the candle.
Loaded vehicles never run fast.
Try to fly as a balloon on air.

The passenger who carries more luggage
Never comfort , ever enjoy the trip.
Let your thoughts go away.
And feel free like a bird to fly.

Rajesh Kanna B N

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M.Sc.,M.A.,M.,
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BT Asst.
GMHSCHOOL, TIRUR.
TIRUVALLUR DISTRICT.
Tamil Nadu
India.
Creative Writers.
Educationist.

Welcome future



The future waits with open door,
For those who strive and seek for more.
Each moment spent with purpose true,
Builds brighter paths for me and you.

Today is not a thing to waste,
Success is never won in haste.
The seeds we plant with care and grace,
Will bloom tomorrow in their place.

A minute lost may never return,
But every lesson helps us learn.
The present is a precious key,
To shape the life we're meant to see.

Work with hope and dreams in sight,
Turn every challenge into light.
Use today in the wisest way,
And the future will smile one day.

V. Jayanthi
Graduate teacher
PUMS Konganancherry
Chengalpattu district
Tamil Nadu India

The most beautiful coincidence is you



When the flood of dreams is scattered
Sometimes my friends closed the door
I found you among people
The most beautiful coincidence is you.

With thoughts rising to the sky
Undoubtedly, my heart was closed to you

There was love on my life's path
The most beautiful coincidence is you.

The only truth in my mistakes
Without you, I would never know what “happiness”
is
The only infinite happiness in my imagination
The most beautiful coincidence is you.

You were by my side in every situation
Fate gave us happiness every moment
Millions of people made wishes
The most beautiful coincidence is us.

Bobonazarova Yulduz, 2nd year student of
Urgench State Pedagogical Institute

The phones are tied with wires the people are free



Now the phones were wireless the people are tied.

Once, the phones were in our control,
Bound by wires and fixed in place.
We used them with purpose and reason,
Only for messages of urgency.
Each call was valuable,
And every moment carried meaning.
Now the phones are wireless,
Free to travel wherever we go.
Yet they have become playthings,

Holding the attention of all.
From infants to adults,
Many remain constantly engaged.
The phone itself seems the master,
While people follow its command.
The wireless world has a magic attraction,
Drawing eyes and minds each day.
Technology is a wonderful servant,
But it should never become our ruler.
The greatest freedom is not wireless connection,
But the ability to put the phone aside
And remain connected to life itself..

N. SELVARANI
B. T. ASST.
GHS SAKKARAKKOTTAI.
RAMANATHAPURAM
TAMILNADU
INDIA

Digital rights In this regard, Kenya marginally outperforms Rwanda overall, more so in judicial independence and emerging technology strategy.

Peace Ambassadors rally youth to reclaim values and build stronger communities

BY DMS
@themkenyentimes

A renewed campaign to promote peace, restore family values and empower young people has been launched in Nairobi, with community leaders calling for collective action to address the social challenges facing the country. The Global Union of Peace and Development (GUPD) yesterday convened a consultative forum for its peace ambassadors at Ofafa Jericho Comprehensive School, where it unveiled initiatives aimed at nurturing responsible citizenship, strengthening family values and creating opportunities for vulnerable groups. The meeting, led by GUPD President Ambassador Eugene Kavune Nzabonimba, brought together representatives from different parts of the country to chart a common vision for community transformation through dialogue, service and leadership. Addressing the gathering, Nzabonimba challenged the

peace ambassadors to become “vision carriers” committed to promoting harmony and inspiring positive action in their communities. “A vision carrier is more than a title holder. It is a person who embraces the responsibility of fostering dialogue, encouraging understanding and becoming a bridge for peacebuilding, conflict resolution and community development,” he said. He urged the ambassadors to uphold professionalism, ethical conduct and accountability as they execute programmes designed to strengthen social cohesion and contribute to the creation of a peaceful, united and prosperous nation. The forum comes at a time when Kenya continues to grapple with rising cases of youth unemployment, drug abuse, corruption and increasing concerns over the erosion of family values. Participants proposed a series of practical interventions aimed at addressing these challenges. Among the recommendations was the establishment of outreach programmes that



Ambassador Eugene Kavune Nzabonimba addressing the forum yesterday.

bring together people from diverse backgrounds to pursue shared development goals. The ambassadors also pledged to roll out leadership development initiatives targeting both educated and uneducated youth in a bid to reduce social vices such as theft, corruption and drug addiction. The programmes, they said, would equip young people with life skills, mentorship



GUPD President Eugene Kavune Nzabonimba with Ambassador Mary Wahogo at Ofafa Jericho Comprehensive School yesterday | Photo: Courtesy.

and opportunities to become agents of positive change. Recognising the growing needs among vulnerable groups, the caucus announced plans to expand charitable activities across the country. These include visits to children’s homes, provision of food and essential supplies to disadvantaged families, and support for rescue centres caring for abandoned children. The proposal was championed by Ambassador Mary Wahogo, who called on leaders to move beyond rhetoric and respond to the urgent needs of communities. “We must create systems that restore dignity and hope. Supporting vulnerable children and families is a shared responsibility that requires compassion and commitment,” she said. The peace ambassadors further resolved to organise workshops, seminars and public awareness campaigns on peacebuilding, conflict resolution and responsible citizenship to deepen civic consciousness at the grassroots. They also underscored the importance of economic empowerment, proposing financial support mechanisms for skilled youth to help them establish self-employment ventures and reduce dependence on limited formal employment opportunities. Ms Wahogo who is the programmes director reaffirmed the organisation’s readiness to collaborate with government agencies, private sector players and civil society organisations. “We cannot work in isolation. Partnerships are essential if we are to improve the well-being of communities and deliver sustainable solutions to the challenges affecting our people,” she said. Ambassador Nzabonimba has in recent years been associated with regional peace and humanitarian initiatives, advocating dialogue, social justice and community empowerment as pathways to sustainable development. Through GUPD and allied organisations, he has championed grassroots peace efforts and the mobilisation of citizens around shared values of unity and service. Those present expressed optimism that the newly strengthened network of peace ambassadors would play a pivotal role in rebuilding trust, nurturing ethical leadership and inspiring communities to embrace peaceful coexistence. Their message was simple but urgent: lasting development can only flourish where peace, integrity and shared responsibility take root.

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Sacco Ollin Sacco celebrated its Golden Jubilee last weekend, marking 50 years since its establishment on June 14, 1976

Ollin Sacco marks 50 years of growth, targets KSh70 billion assets by 2030

BY Jane Mugambi

@themtkenyatimes

What began as a modest savings initiative by five teachers in 1976 has grown into one of Kenya's leading savings and credit cooperative societies, transforming the lives of tens of thousands of members across the country and beyond.

Ollin Sacco celebrated its Golden Jubilee last weekend, marking 50 years since its establishment on June 14, 1976.

The institution traces its roots to the Withdrawal Savings Society before evolving into Muhigia Co-operative Savings and Credit Society and eventually rebranding as Ollin Sacco.

From an initial membership of just 163 teachers, the Sacco has expanded to a global membership of more than 46,000 people this year.

The Sacco's journey started in Kerugoya when five teachers resolved to save a portion of their salaries. Their commitment inspired colleagues after the benefits of collective savings became evident within a few months, attracting more teachers to join the initiative.

Today, Ollin Sacco has grown into a Tier One financial institution regulated by the Sacco Societies Regulatory Authority (SASRA), with assets worth KSh15 billion and an ambitious growth strategy aimed at reaching KSh70 billion in assets and over 60,000 members by 2030.

Speaking during the celebrations, Chief Executive Officer CPA John Gathige said the Sacco remains committed to its founding mission of transforming lives through financial empowerment.

"In the next four and a half years, the Sacco will have a growth of KSh30 billion in assets with over 60,000 members," said Gathige.

Gathige's own journey mirrors the institution's growth.



From left: CEO Ollin sacco, John Gathige, CIC Insurance Chair Dr Nelson Kuria and Ollin chairman Cyrus Kabute. | Photo: Jane Mugambi

He joined the Sacco as a Front Office Services Activity (FOSA) manager before rising through the ranks to become CEO. Under his leadership, Ollin Sacco has expanded its footprint across the country and attracted members from beyond Kenya's borders.

The Sacco currently operates branches in Kerugoya, Kianyaga, Mwea, Nairobi, Kitengela, Kajiado, Kiserian, Kimana, Narok, Thika and Kiambu, with plans underway to establish another branch in Kilgoris.

While launching the Young Members Club, Gathige urged young people to embrace a savings culture, noting that the Sacco's success story was built on the discipline and foresight of its pioneer members.

He said Ollin is now broadening its membership base beyond teachers to include professionals from other sectors. "We are moving from the teaching fraternity, targeting other professionals. We want to touch every family in the world," he said.

The CEO added that the Sacco is investing in innovative financial solutions that will enable members to access

services conveniently through their mobile phones.

The chief guest at the event, CIC Insurance Group Chairperson Dr Nelson Kuria, praised Ollin Sacco's leadership and commitment to serving its members.

"My relationship with Muhigia spans many years. Under Mr Gathige's leadership, the Sacco has remained focused on delivering credible services while upholding its core values and respecting its members," said Dr Kuria.

He described Ollin's 50-year journey as proof of what ordinary people can achieve through a shared vision.

"When ordinary people come together around an extraordinary idea, the testament is not merely time; the vision is anchored in purpose," he said.

Dr Kuria challenged Saccos across the country to provide affordable credit facilities to protect young Kenyans from predatory digital lenders.

"Saccos, I pose a challenge to you. Kindly offer friendly loans for our young people to keep digital lenders from taking advantage of them through exorbitant interest rates," he said.

The impact of Ollin Sacco was also evident in testimo-

nies shared by members.

Young Members Ambassador Felista Wambui recounted how the Sacco transformed her life from a struggling boda boda operator into a property owner and entrepreneur.

Wambui said she initially approached the Sacco with scepticism but decided to start saving Sh30 daily.

With her savings record, she secured her first loan of KSh70,000, which enabled her to purchase a motorcycle. After repaying the loan, she acquired a second motorcycle through another facility.

The income generated from the two motorcycles allowed her to continue saving and eventually qualify for larger loans that helped her buy land, build a family home and establish rental units.

"I was a squad operator in

Kayole when I heard about Ollin. I started with small daily savings and gradually built my financial capacity. Today, I own two motorcycles, land, rental units and I have built a house for my family," she said.

Wambui, who is not yet 30 years old, said she recently purchased an old lorry that she is converting into a towing truck, leveraging her skills as a mechanic.

"I can attest that Ollin is a Sacco that uplifts lives. If someone had told me years ago that I would one day own property, I would not have believed it. Today, I am a landlady," she said amid laughter.

She encouraged young people to join Saccos and cultivate a savings culture, saying they represent the next generation of financially empowered Kenyans.

As Ollin Sacco enters its next chapter, its leadership says the institution remains committed to expanding financial inclusion, embracing innovation and preserving the values that inspired five teachers in Kerugoya to begin saving half a century ago.




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SCAN FOR MAJISAFI

Climate The students and teachers shared firsthand experiences of climate impacts, including rising temperatures, prolonged droughts, floods, and food insecurity

Acting locally for global impact: Greening communities and schools for climate resilience

BY Ireen Twongirwe
@themtkenyatimes

Letter to the Negotiators

As climate negotiations continue in Bonn during SB64, grassroots organisations such as Women for Green Economy Movement Uganda (WoGEM Uganda), Action for Climate and Environmental Justice Uganda (ACEJ Uganda), and Green Walk Engineering Limited are proving that climate action is not confined to conference halls and boardrooms. It is happening on the ground, in the very communities that face the realities of the climate crisis every single day.

On 12 June 2026, WoGEM Uganda planted more than 100 fruit trees at Kyigandalo Secondary School in eastern Uganda. During that engagement, we reached over 1,000 students and teachers, equipping them with climate knowledge and raising awareness about the urgent importance of protecting and conserving our environment. The energy in that schoolyard was something no conference room has ever quite matched.

The students and teachers shared firsthand experiences of climate impacts — rising temperatures, prolonged droughts, devastating floods, and creeping food insecurity. These challenges have disrupted school programmes, affected attendance, and taken a measurable toll on academic performance. While many students were unfamiliar with the technical language of climate change, they understood, deeply and instinctively, the value of trees in sustaining healthy ecosystems and livelihoods. That understanding is not taught from a textbook. It is lived.

This initiative demonstrates something that policymakers



WoGEM Uganda at Kyigandalo Secondary School in Eastern Uganda

would do well to internalise: climate action is not merely discussed at international conferences. It is actively being implemented in communities that are among the most affected by the crisis. By planting fruit trees, we are contributing to carbon sequestration, ecosystem restoration, food security, and community resilience — while directly supporting the goals of the Paris Agreement to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

As global leaders continue to negotiate and follow up on climate finance commitments from Global North countries, grassroots organisations are already moving. We are transferring climate knowledge to future generations, restoring degraded landscapes, and building resilient communities — all of this with limited

During our discussions, students also raised the increasing levels of deforestation in their communities, driven by demand for firewood, charcoal, and timber. These activities continue to worsen the crisis. We explored sustainable alternatives together and emphasised the importance of transitioning towards decentralised renewable energy solutions that are affordable, accessible, inclusive, and genuinely sustainable for all — not just for those with the means to afford them.



resources, and without waiting for permission.

During our discussions, students also raised the increasing levels of deforestation in their communities, driven by demand for firewood, charcoal, and timber. These activities continue to worsen the crisis. We explored sustainable alternatives together and emphasised the importance of transitioning towards decentralised renewable energy solutions that are affordable, accessible, inclusive, and genuinely sustainable for all — not just for those with the means to afford them.

What our engagement revealed is an urgent need not only to transfer climate technologies, but to transform mindsets. Schools and communities must become centres of climate education where future generations are

equipped with the knowledge and skills to respond to environmental challenges. The classroom and the community are the frontlines. They deserve to be treated as such.

At the event, I spoke about the interconnected nature of climate change, gender equality, health, and wellbeing. Climate change disproportionately affects marginalised women, limiting access to livelihoods, healthcare, and reproductive health services, while deepening stress, trauma, and mental health challenges. Women often carry the heaviest burdens of caregiving and household responsibility, making them especially vulnerable when climate shocks hit. That vulnerability is not incidental. It is structural.

I also emphasised the importance of self-care and collec-

tive wellbeing within climate justice movements. The struggle for climate justice did not begin with us, and it will not end with us. That reality calls for solidarity, for the courage to share our stories, to heal from injustices, and to challenge the systems of inequality and patriarchy that continue to marginalise communities — including our own.

It is worth stating plainly: Africa contributes less than four per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions, yet bears some of the most severe consequences of the climate crisis. Climate finance remains essential, but we cannot afford to wait indefinitely for commitments to be fulfilled. The crisis is already here. Communities need solutions today, not at the next conference, and not in the next funding cycle.

Across Uganda, communities are drawing on indigenous knowledge and local innovation to advance climate and gender justice. The trees we planted at Kyigandalo will not only help reduce emissions — they will contribute to household incomes, improve nutrition, and support local economic development. This is climate action that serves both people and planet, rooted in the soil of lived experience.

Real solutions already exist within our communities. What is needed now is greater recognition, direct funding, and sustained investment in grassroots-led adaptation and mitigation efforts. Not filtered through layers of bureaucracy. Not diluted by conditionality. Directly, to the people doing the work.

We say it plainly, as we always have: nothing for us without us.

Ireen Twongirwe is Executive Director of Women for Green Economy Movement Uganda (WoGEM Uganda) and a climate justice advocate.

For God and My Country

Elections Let us be precise about what is happening, because euphemism is the first refuge of a people who have surrendered their dignity without admitting it

The ballot and the bloodline: How Kenyans conspire against themselves every five years

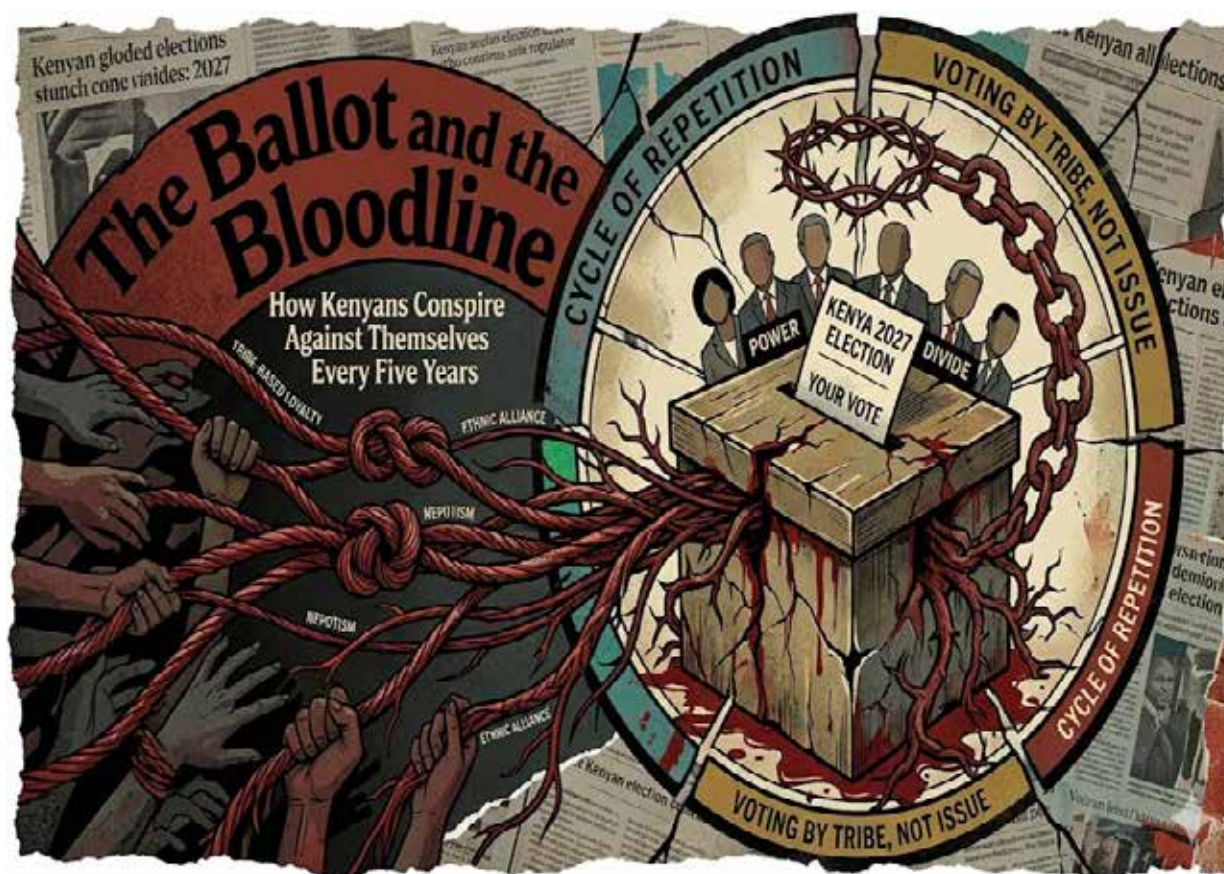


By: Jerameel Kevins Owuor
Odhiambo
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There is a scene in Chinua Achebe's *A Man of the People* so devastatingly prescient that one wonders whether Achebe had, by some prophetic faculty, studied a Kenyan electoral cycle before writing it. Chief the Honourable M.A. Nanga, Member of Parliament, is corrupt, spectacular, and utterly beloved. He steals with flamboyance. He governs with impunity. He wins with a landslide. And the people the suffering, lucid, fully-conscious people vote him back in anyway, because he is theirs, because he comes from their stock, because the pot he fills at their table is the only pot that ever gets filled. Achebe was writing about Nigeria in 1966. He was writing about Kenya in 2027. The geography changes; the pathology endures.

Let us be precise about what is happening, because euphemism is the first refuge of a people who have surrendered their dignity without admitting it. Kenyans, in remarkable numbers, have arrived at a peculiar intellectual position: they believe the incumbent regime is a catastrophe, and they simultaneously believe it cannot be voted out. These two convictions cohabit in the Kenyan political mind not as a contradiction demanding resolution but as a comfortable duvet under which civic paralysis sleeps soundly. The regime is terrible, yes but it has money. It has ethnic arithmetic. It will assemble a coalition broad enough to make resistance look foolish. And so the citizen, rather than becoming the indispensable sovereign that Article 1 of the Constitution of Kenya 2010 declares him to be, transforms himself into a spectator at a theatre he is paying for with his taxes and his silence.

Article 1 is unambiguous to the point of severity: "All sovereign power belongs to the people of Kenya and shall be exercised only in accordance with this Constitution." Not some of the power. Not the power that tribal chieftains and political



The ballot and the bloodline

financiers have not yet claimed. All sovereign power. The framers of the 2010 Constitution, emerging from the wreckage of the post-election violence of 2007–2008, inscribed popular sovereignty not as aspiration but as foundational legal fact. They built around it a formidable scaffolding Articles 35, 37, 38, and 119 guaranteeing access to information, the right to petition, electoral participation, and public engagement because they understood, as James Madison had understood two centuries prior, that "a people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives." The architecture of accountability is already in the building. The tenants have simply chosen not to use the stairs.

And what of the eight million registered voters who did not show up in August 2022? Eight million. That is not voter apathy; that is a civic dereliction on the scale of a constitutional crisis. The winner of that election secured approximately 7.2 million votes. The arithmetic does not need elaboration it prosecutes itself. A democratic republic in which the margin of presidential victory is smaller than the pool of voluntary abstentions is not a functioning democracy; it is a performed one, a rit-

ual enacted for the benefit of international observers and donor agencies while the actual sovereign power is squandered in silence. The people who stayed home did not escape complicity. They authored the result. Abstention is itself a vote one cast in favour of whoever the machinery of incumbency is designed to benefit.

But the pathologies run deeper than abstention. There are citizens who will not vote because their preferred candidate has exited the race. There are those who will vote for the incumbent specifically to wound a rival community deploying the ballot not as an instrument of governance but as a weapon of ethnic spite, a political IED buried at the crossroads of the national interest. There are those whose loyalty is calcified around the question of who has employed their tribesmen in the civil service, as though the republic were a family business and the measure of good governance were the tribal headcount in the Attorney General's chambers. And there are those who simply see no need, who have so thoroughly internalized their own powerlessness that the Constitution's promise of popular sovereignty strikes them as a kind of fiction charming, perhaps, but not something a reasonable person would bet

their afternoon on.

Chief Nanga would recognise all of them. He cultivated precisely this ecosystem. In Achebe's novel, the educated protagonist Odili initially believes he can expose Nanga, challenge him, unseat him through principle and publicity. He is, of course, routed not primarily by fraud, but by the genuine affection the people have for their tormentor. Nanga feeds them. Nanga sees them. Nanga is magnificently, entertainingly corrupt in ways that feel almost like entertainment. Odili's rectitude cannot compete. It is too abstract. It offers no bride price, no harambee contribution, no appointment letter. The people are not fools; they are simply making rational calculations within a system that has taught them that integrity does not feed children.

This is Kenya's inheritance. The pathologies did not emerge from nowhere they were incubated at independence, when the Lancaster House negotiations bequeathed to a nascent republic the skeleton of Westminster democracy grafted onto the living tissue of ethnic competition for the post-colonial state. The ethnic mathematics of Kenyan elections did not appear in 2022; they were there in 1963, when Kenyatta's KANU and Odinga's KADU carved

the country into competing ethnic allegiances with the precision of men who understood that the tribe, not the citizen, would be the fundamental unit of political mobilisation for decades to come. Sixty years later, the tribal ledger is still the primary instrument of electoral arithmetic. The coalition that will win the next general election is already being assembled not around policy platforms but around demographic projections which community, delivered in bloc, tips which county, which county tips which region, which region tips the national count.

This is not inevitable. It is chosen. It is reproduced, election cycle by election cycle, by citizens who know better and behave otherwise, by an intelligentsia that diagnoses the disease with admirable precision and then votes tribally in the privacy of the polling booth, by civil society organisations some of them excellent that monitor elections with rigour and then watch their careful reports gather dust. The Constitution provides the remedy: robust civic participation, an independent judiciary empowered by Chapter Ten, a devolved system of government under Article 174 designed precisely to decentralize power away from the ethnic competitions of the centre. The remedy sits on the shelf, unopened, because the patient has convinced himself he is not sick merely unfortunate.

Perhaps the psychologists and political scientists must now do what constitutional lawyers cannot. The legal architecture of democratic accountability is, for Kenya, largely complete. What remains is a deficit not of law but of political will a collective failure of civic nerve that is, in the end, a psychological and sociological emergency dressed in the borrowed clothes of inevitability. A country is, as someone once observed, only as good as the history it refuses to repeat. Kenya's generation of constitutional promise the generation that voted yes in 2010, that marched in 2017 and 2019 and 2023 has not yet decided whether it will repeat or rupture that history.

The choice, irritatingly, remains theirs. It always was. That is precisely what Article 1 means.

The author is a legal researcher and writer.

Tragedy School dormitories consumed in flames, students appearing before courts, teachers injured while trying to restore order

The children we are losing: How a society that fears discomfort is rising a generation unprepared for life



BY Fredrick Chelimo
@themkenyatimes

There are tragedies that break the hearts, those that expose the truths, those that leave us grieving and those that leave us questioning about everything we thought we understood about ourselves. From time to time, a nation encounters events so painful that they cease to belong to the families affected and instead become moral moments – moments that compel collective reflection. They force society to confront not only what happened, but what conditions allowed it to become imaginable.

Kenya has stood before such moments with unsettling frequency. School dormitories consumed in flames, students appearing before courts, teachers injured while trying to restore order, schools closing indefinitely, and parents receiving calls they never imagined they would receive. Children carrying wounds – physical, emotional, psychological – long before adulthood has even introduced itself.

And then came the tragedy that unsettled the conscience of an entire nation. At Utumishi Girls Academy in Gilgil, Nakuru County, what should have been an ordinary night inside a boarding school ended in unbearable loss. Young girls who had gone to bed expecting lessons the following day never returned home. Sixteen lives were lost, many others sustained injuries and across homes villages and communities, grief travelled faster than explanation.

No official report, no investigation and no public state-



Mr. Ireri Nyagah one of the Naivasha leaders during one of the victims' funeral services in Naivasha

ment can fully account for that silence that follows such loss. Sixteen unfinished stories, sixteen empty chairs, sixteen names that could have become professionals, inventors, leaders, families and memory. No civilized society should speak such numbers with familiarity. Yet as painful as the deaths are, they leave behind questions that extend beyond investigations, accountability and institutional review.

What happened to our children? Why are our schools increasingly carrying emotional burdens they were never designed to bear? Why are ordinary frustrations escalating into extra-ordinary acts of destruction? Why do some children appear increasingly unable to tolerate disappointment, correction, delay or authority? These questions are uncomfortable because they resist easy blame. It is tempting to point at children, teachers, social media, modern parenting, and emerging technologies.

But children do not emerge from nowhere, they are formed, observed into adult-

hood and observe values before they articulate them. They become fluent in what they repeatedly experience. And perhaps one of the most uncomfortable realities of our time, is that while we have become more sophisticated in raising successful children, we may be becoming less deliberate in raising resilient human beings.



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Across many homesteads today, love increasingly expresses itself through protection. Parents want their children to avoid the hardships they themselves endured. The want them to suffer less, work less, feel less disappointment, and suspending natural human instinct. The protection has become overprotection, support become substitution, care become rescue and children are defended before they reflect. They are comforted before they take responsibility, and excused before they apologize.

Every inconvenience is removed, obstacles negotiated, every discomfort softened and quietly, often without realizing it, adults begin communicating a dangerous message: life should never feel difficult, while life has never promised comfort. Life asks people to wait, to lose, to be corrected, to try again, to co-exist with others, to carry disappointments without collapsing and to hear “no” without interpreting rejection. It also encourages that we encounter authority without experiencing humiliation, fail without

self-destruction.

These capacities are not inherited, they are cultivated and when they are not cultivated, ordinary experiences can begin to feel unbearable. The poor grade becomes rejection, correction becomes disrespect, rules become oppression, delay becomes injustice, disagreement becomes conflict and frustration becomes rage. This is not because children are becoming less intelligent, but because emotional endurance cannot be downloaded, purchased or inherited. It must be formed.

Teachers across many schools increasingly describe a generation carrying remarkable strengths and difficult vulnerabilities at the same time. Students who are articulate but emotionally exhausted, connected yet lonely, confident, yet deeply fragile and ambitious yet overwhelmed by setbacks. Students who possess unprecedented access to information but limited opportunities to develop patience, self-regulation and internal discipline. This is not crisis of intelligence but crisis of information.

Homes alone cannot manage and schools cannot become substitute parents. Schools however remain among society's most important institutions for shaping human beings. Where homes weaken and institutions become overstretched, children often grow in knowledge but remain underdeveloped in character and this is where the danger begins. In unattended conversations, emotional absence, in homes where everyone is connected but nobody is listening, in schools where performance is measured and well-being is neglected, and communities where achievements are celebrated while character is outsourced.

One day society wakes up to tragedy and asks how things reached here. The answer is rarely one event. It is a result

of many neglected moments, missed opportunities, and abdicated responsibilities. The solution is not punishment alone; children need more than freedom. They require formation, parents who are warm enough to care and courageous enough to establish boundaries, ready to participate in family life and carry responsibilities.

Teachers must be empowered to guide fairly and firmly, schools must strengthen guiding and counselling, mentorship, life skills, conflict resolution and students' well-being. Government must treat child development and school safety as strategic national priority. Communities must rebuild mentorship and society must stop measuring success only by grades, income and achievement while neglecting the architecture of character. Education is civilization reproducing itself.

Children who learn responsibility become adults who contribute, child who learn restrain protects others, children who learn empathy preserve dignity and children who learn resilience survive difficulties without destroying what belongs to everyone. The future of our schools will therefore be secured by stronger homes, healthier institutions, present parenting and children who know both freedom and responsibility. Children who understand that strength is not found in rebellion but in character.

The biggest questions persistently remain. If our children are becoming increasingly unable to carry disappointment, what have they been watching us models? If schools are becoming places of distress instead of formation, what have we neglected while celebrating success? If children are speaking loudly through behaviour, what conversation have we failed to hear? If teachers no longer feel empowered to guide and parents no longer feel obligated to shape, who exactly is raising our children?

And when history eventually asks what kind of adults we were while our children searched for guidance, structure and meaning- what answer will we leave behind?

U.S., Iran U.S. President Donald Trump said earlier in the day that the U.S.-Iran peace deal “is now complete” and that the Strait of Hormuz will reopen

U.S., Iran reach deal to end war: what comes next?

BY Xinhua News Agency

@themtkenyatimes

The United States and Iran on Monday announced the finalization of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to end hostilities following months of negotiations.

Despite widespread viewing of the agreement as an important step toward peace, it does not resolve the underlying disputes, leaving the future trajectory of U.S.-Iran relations and the regional situation still shrouded in uncertainty.

What's in the deal?

U.S. President Donald Trump said earlier in the day that the U.S.-Iran peace deal “is now complete” and that the Strait of Hormuz will reopen upon the signing of the deal on Friday. The deal would also include a commitment from Iran not to obtain nuclear weapons, Trump told The Wall Street Journal. There would be strong nuclear inspections on the Iranians, Trump said, without specifying how they would work. He also expressed no urgency to extract nuclear material from Iran, saying “there’s no rush.” Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei stressed on Monday that ending the war in Lebanon is an “inseparable” part of the finalized MoU. He listed some of the other provisions in the deal, including the release of Iran’s frozen assets and the reconstruction of the damage sustained by the country during the war, stressing that under the deal, the United States commits to implement measures regarding both issues.

The exact terms of the MoU are not publicly available so far. Details will be made public within next 24 to 48 hours, according to media reports on Monday. “The United States showed greater flexibility regarding some Iranian demands related to lifting or gradually easing sanctions, while Iran likely accepted additional restrictions and monitoring measures related to its nuclear program,” Palestinian political analyst Mustafa Ibrahim told Xinhua. “What happened does not reflect a victory for one side over the other, but rather an attempt to reach a middle ground that achieves the minimum interests of both sides,” Ibrahim said.



This combination of pictures created on November 7, 2024 shows Iran’s supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei (L) in Tehran on July 5, 2024, and then Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump (R) in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on November 4, 2024.

How's the deal viewed?

Countries and international organizations have welcomed the finalization of the MoU and called for its full implementation to help achieve lasting peace. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres welcomed the deal, and hoped that the parties would build on this new momentum and redouble their efforts toward a final resolution of the conflict, his spokesperson said Sunday. Britain, France, Germany and Italy also welcomed the MoU, saying in a joint statement that they were “prepared to lift relevant sanctions in response to clear, verifiable steps by Iran on its nuclear program.” Ahmed Aboul-Gheit, secretary-general of the Arab League, said he hoped the development would mark an important step for bringing a definitive end to attacks on Arab territories, and help create conditions conducive to launching a process aimed at ending the conflict and achieving lasting stability in the region. He called on the parties involved to approach the next phase of negotiations on key issues in a positive spirit and work toward a peaceful resolution of the crisis. Lebanese President Joseph Aoun said the MoU could help end

military escalations in the region, including in Lebanon. He commended the deal’s recognition that Lebanon’s security and stability are essential for achieving regional stability.

What comes next?

Analysts say that some of the consensus achieved is of great significance. First and foremost, the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz would help ease tensions in global energy markets.

However, many key issues remain unresolved, and the real test will come after the MoU is signed in Switzerland. “Technical negotiations on Iran’s nuclear file will prove difficult,” researchers at the U.S. think tank the Center for Strategic and International Studies said in a commentary. “The last time Iran and the United States secured a comprehensive nuclear accord was in 2015, after two years of negotiations.” “Tehran has signaled an unwillingness to compromise on key demands and will try to play for time, knowing that President Trump is unlikely to resume the military campaign in the run-up to the November midterm elections,” they said. Another

factor shaping the peace prospects is the conflict along the Israel-Lebanon front. “The Israel-Lebanon front has become part of a much larger regional equation. What happens there affects not only Israel and Lebanon but also calculations in Washington, Tehran, and other regional capitals,” Palestinian political analyst Abdel Majid Suwailem told Xinhua. “An escalation could create a political atmosphere in which compromise

becomes more difficult and security concerns take precedence over diplomacy,” Suwailem added. “The reported agreement appears to focus on urgent issues necessary to halt escalation ... More contentious subjects have been deferred to future negotiations,” said Aram Kiwan, an Arab Israeli political analyst and columnist, noting that he sees the most likely scenario as a lengthy, phased negotiating process.



Protest-related violence Kenya's reckoning with protest violence goes deeper than money — it is a test of the nation's soul

Beyond compensation: the search for justice in a wounded nation

BY Hadassah Karangu
@themkenyatimes

When a nation mourns, what price can be placed on a human life? That is the question Kenya finds itself grappling with as conversations around compensating victims of protest-related violence continue to dominate public discourse. Across the country, families carry invisible scars. Some lost loved ones. Others are nursing injuries that changed their lives forever. Many are still searching for answers. Compensation may ease financial burdens, but it cannot silence the grief of a mother who will never again hear her child's voice. It cannot fill the empty chair at the family table. It cannot restore dreams cut short in the chaos of violence. For many Kenyans, the debate is no longer just about money. It is about



Kenya's protest violence

justice. The recent protests exposed more than political disagreements. They revealed a nation struggling with deep frustrations over governance, economic hardship, unemployment, and the widening gap between leaders and ordinary citizens. The streets became a stage where hope collided with anger, and where demands for change were met with uncertainty and loss. In such moments, compensation is necessary. Families who have lost breadwinners deserve support. Victims facing mounting medical

expenses deserve assistance. A government that truly values its people must acknowledge their suffering. Yet compensation must never become a substitute for accountability. A cheque may cover hospital bills, but it cannot answer the harder questions. Who bears responsibility when lives are lost? What lessons have been learned? What measures are being put in place to ensure such tragedies are never repeated? These questions matter because justice is not measured by the amount of money paid out. It is measured by truth, by accountability, and by a nation's willingness to confront its own failures. As Kenya slowly turns toward the future and the politics of 2027 begin to take shape, leaders across the political divide must remember that citizens are demanding more than speeches and promises. They are demanding trust. They are demand-

ing transparency. Above all, they are demanding leadership that places the dignity of human life above political interest. The future of this country will not be secured through compensation alone. It will be secured through honest dialogue, stronger institutions, genuine respect for human rights, and a firm commitment to peaceful engagement even when opinions differ sharply. The true test of a nation is not how it responds when everything is going well. It is how it responds when tragedy strikes. Kenya now faces that test. The challenge before us is far greater than compensating victims. It is about building a country where no parent has to bury a child because of political unrest. It is about creating a society where justice is not an afterthought but a foundation. Only then will the wounds begin to heal. Only then will compensation mean more than a payment. It will become part of a larger journey — toward justice, reconciliation, and a better Kenya for generations to come.

INTERNATIONAL

Floods "This is a humanitarian crisis on our doorstep. We will not leave anyone behind." – Alan Winde

Western Cape floods leave hundreds homeless as recovery efforts intensify

BY Norman Mwale
@themkenyatimes

Hundreds of residents across the Western Cape remain displaced after days of torrential rain triggered widespread flooding that submerged homes, washed away roads and crippled essential services. The deluge, which began last week, has left entire communities in towns such as George, Knysna and parts of Cape Town's informal settlements without shelter, clean water or electricity, with emergency teams still working to reach the most isolated areas. Provincial Premier Alan Winde described the scale of the disaster as "unprecedented in recent years" and confirmed that more than 800 households had been affected, while damage to infrastructure was expected to run into hundreds of millions of rand. "This is a humanitarian crisis on our doorstep. We will not leave



Western Cape floods leave hundreds homeless

anyone behind," Winde said during a visit to a relief centre in George, where families are sleeping on mats and relying on donations for basic necessities. Local government officials echoed the urgency, with George Mayor Jackie Tarentaal warning that the ground remains saturated and further rain could worsen conditions: "Our teams are stretched, but we are prioritising the most vulnerable first. Shelters are full, and we are appealing for more support from the private sector and NGOs." Humanitarian organisations on the ground spoke of scenes of desperation and resilience in equal measure.

Gift of the Givers spokesperson Ali Sablay noted that volunteers had distributed blankets, food parcels and hygiene kits but stressed that long-term housing solutions were urgently needed: "People lost everything overnight. They are grateful for a hot meal, but the trauma will linger long after the water recedes." Community leader Nomsa Mbeki from the Kwanonqaba township said residents had been warning about poor drainage for years and now felt abandoned by the system: "We keep telling them the stormwater drains are blocked, but no one listens until there is a disaster. We just want safe homes for our children." The South African Weather Service has cautioned that more showers are forecast for the region, prompting disaster management authorities to keep evacuation orders in place along low-lying riverbanks. As the Western Cape counts the cost, the focus is shifting from rescue to recovery, with officials under pressure to deliver not only immediate relief but lasting solutions for those who now face an uncertain future without a roof over their heads.

SPORTS NEWS

PHOTOS
SCORES
OPINIONS
STATISTICS
SCHEDULES
BREAKING NEWS



Sports >> **"Real Madrid is the biggest club in the world and I grew up watching this team. I did not come here to be comfortable. I came here to win."*

Real Madrid sign Chelsea defender Cucurella

By Norman Mwale

"Real Madrid is the biggest club in the world and I grew up watching this team. I did not come here to be comfortable. I came here to win."

Real Madrid have completed the signing of Chelsea left-back Marc Cucurella in a deal worth a reported €55 million, bolstering Carlo Ancelotti's defensive options ahead of the new La Liga season. The 26-year-old Spaniard has agreed a five-year contract at the Santiago Bernabéu and becomes Los Blancos' second major defensive acquisition of the summer window after the arrival of a central defender from the Bundesliga.

Cucurella's move ends a two-year spell at Stamford Bridge that was marked by flashes of attacking quality but also inconsistency amid Chelsea's broader struggles. The former Brighton and Barcelona full-back was viewed as surplus to requirements under new Chelsea head coach Enzo Maresca, who is reshaping the squad to fit a possession-based system that demands different profiles in wide areas. Madrid moved quickly once it became clear the Spain international was available, seeing him as an immediate solution to cover for Ferland Mendy and to provide tactical flexibility on the left flank.

Speaking after completing his medical and signing the contract, Cucurella said he was "proud and ready" for the challenge at the Bernabéu. "Real Madrid is the biggest club in the world and I grew up watching this team," he said. "I know what it means to wear this shirt. I will give everything for the badge, for the fans and for my teammates. I am coming to work hard, to learn and to help the team win trophies."

Real Madrid president Floren-



Marc Cucurella

tino Pérez described Cucurella as a player who embodied the club's values of commitment and competitiveness. "Marc is a modern full-back with energy, intelligence and experience at the highest level," Pérez said. "He understands the demands of playing for Real Madrid and we are convinced he will contribute a great deal to the squad. He arrives at a club that demands excellence every day."

Carlo Ancelotti welcomed the addition, noting Cucurella's versatility and work rate would be crucial across a long season that includes La Liga, the Champions League and domestic cups. "Marc gives us balance," Ancelotti said. "He can defend one-on-one, he can support the attack, and he has the mentality to compete at this level. We already have Ferland, but injuries and the number of matches mean we need quality in every position. Marc fits our idea of football."

The transfer represents a significant loss for Chelsea, who signed Cucurella for an initial

€65 million in 2022 but have now accepted a lower fee to streamline the squad and comply with financial regulations. Chelsea co-sporting directors Paul Winstanley and Laurence Stewart thanked the player for his service and said the club wished him well. "Marc gave his all while he was here and we appreciate his professionalism," they said in a joint statement. "This move allows Marc to return to Spain and allows us to continue reshaping the squad in line with the head coach's plans."

For Real Madrid, the deal addresses a key area of concern after Mendy missed large parts of last season through injury and with Nacho Fernández having departed. Cucurella's ability to invert into midfield or overlap in wide areas is expected to suit Ancelotti's system, which often asks full-backs to contribute to build-up play. The Spaniard's experience in the Premier League and with the national team, including appearances at Euro 2024, was also a factor in

Madrid's decision to act decisively.

Supporters reacted quickly on social media, with many welcoming a player known for his relentless energy and commitment. Former Madrid left-back Roberto Carlos posted a message of support, saying Cucurella would "feel the Bernabéu" once he settled in. The defender will join pre-season training immediately and is expected to be available for Madrid's final warm-up fixtures before the league campaign begins.

The transfer brings Chelsea's summer outgoings closer to €180 million as the club continues to trim a large squad assembled over the past two years. For Cucurella, it is a return to Spain and an opportunity to compete for honours at the highest level. As he put it after holding up the white shirt for the first time: "I did not come here to be comfortable. I came here to win."

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *The Tunisian Football Federation has dismissed national team head coach Jalel Kadri with immediate effect following a humiliating 5-1 friendly defeat to Sweden in Solna

Tunisia fires coach after 5-1 defeat to Sweden



Coach Sabri Lamouchi

By Norman Mwale

“Results at this level are non-negotiable. A 5-1 defeat is not acceptable for Tunisia.”

The Tunisian Football Federation has dismissed national team head coach Jalel Kadri with immediate effect following a humiliating 5-1 friendly defeat to Sweden in Solna, a result that has intensified scrutiny over the team’s preparations ahead of World Cup qualifying. The federation announced the decision on Monday morning, stating that the heavy loss exposed “tactical, physical and mental shortcomings” that could not be ignored with competitive fixtures approaching.

Tunisia entered the match hoping to build confidence after a mixed run of results, but instead suffered their worst defeat in three years. Sweden scored three times before half-time and added two more in the second half, while Tunisia’s only response came through a late consolation from Youssef Msakni. The performance drew sharp criticism from supporters and pundits, many of whom questioned the

team’s organisation, pressing intensity and defensive transitions.

In a brief statement, the federation said the executive committee had met overnight to review the match and decided a change was necessary to “restore credibility and competitiveness”. “Results at this level are non-negotiable,” the statement read. “A 5-1 defeat is not acceptable for Tunisia. We thank Jalel Kadri for his service and commitment, but the team requires a new direction.” Kadri, 52, had been in charge since January 2022 and led the Carthage Eagles to the last 16 of the Africa Cup of Nations in 2023, but his tenure ended amid growing dissatisfaction over style of play and squad selection.

Speaking to reporters before news of his dismissal broke, Kadri accepted responsibility for the result but defended the broader project he had been building. “We played against a strong Sweden side and we were punished for our mistakes,” he said. “One match does not erase two years of work. I believe in this group of players. However, I understand that in football the coach is always the first to be held accountable.”

Players were subdued after the final whistle, with captain Aïssa Laïdouni admitting the team had failed to meet expectations. “We are professionals and we must accept the criticism,” Laïdouni said. “Sweden were better in every department. We cannot concede five goals and expect to keep the coach. Now we must focus on what comes next and show a different face when the qualifiers begin.”

Swedish head coach Jon Dahl Tomasson praised his side’s efficiency but acknowledged Tunisia’s struggles. “We played well and took our chances, but I also saw a Tunisia team that looked short of confidence,” Tomasson said. “International football punishes you quickly if you are not compact. I wish the Tunisia players and staff well for the future.”

The federation has appointed assistant coach Maher Kanzari as interim manager while it searches for a permanent replacement. Kanzari will take charge of the next training camp, with World Cup qualifying matches scheduled to resume in September. Federation president Wadie Jary said the priority now was stability and restoring belief with-

in the squad. “We have talented players and a proud footballing history,” Jary said. “This defeat must serve as a wake-up call. The new coach, whoever it is, will be expected to build a team that competes with identity and discipline.”

Analysts in Tunis said the decision was inevitable given the scale of the defeat and the proximity of qualifiers. “Tunisia cannot afford to enter World Cup qualifying with doubts about leadership,” said former international Radhi Jaïdi. “The 5-1 scoreline is not just a number. It reflects deeper issues around mentality and preparation. A change gives the players a chance to reset.”

For Tunisia, a nation that has qualified for six World Cups and expects to compete at the highest level in Africa, the heavy loss to Sweden has become a turning point. As the federation moves quickly to appoint a successor, the immediate challenge for Kanzari and the players will be to rebuild confidence and prove that the 5-1 night in Solna was an aberration, not a definition of this team.

SPORTS NEWS

PHOTOS
SCORES
OPINIONS
STATISTICS
SCHEDULES
BREAKING NEWS



Sadia Jahan Rothi: A leading voice for climate justice and youth empowerment



By: Anila Bukhari
@themtkenyatimes

Sadia Jahan Rothi is an inspiring environmental and climate activist from Bangladesh whose dedication to climate justice, sustainability, and youth empowerment has positioned her among the emerging leaders shaping the future of global climate action. With over seven years of experience in climate education, advocacy, policy analysis, and youth engagement, she has devoted her life to addressing environmental challenges while ensuring that young people are meaningfully included in decision-making processes at local, national, regional, and international levels.

Her journey into climate activism began in 2018 when she joined the youth-led organization Eco-Network Global. The turning point came when she witnessed firsthand the devastating impacts of climate change on vulnerable communities living in the coastal regions of Bangladesh. Seeing families struggle against rising sea levels, extreme weather events, and environmental degradation deeply influenced her perspective and motivated her to take action. Rather than remaining a passive observer, Sadia committed herself to becoming a voice for those most affected by the climate crisis.

Through her involvement with Eco-Network Global, Sadia steadily developed her leadership skills and expanded her influence within the environmental movement. Her dedication, strategic thinking, and passion for sustainable development eventually led her to serve as Director of the organization. In this role, she has worked tirelessly to educate young people, promote climate awareness, and advocate for stronger environmental policies. Her leadership has helped create opportunities

for youth to actively participate in climate discussions and contribute to solutions that address environmental challenges.

Beyond her national contributions, Sadia has played an active role in global climate governance through her engagement with YOUNGO, the official Youth Constituency of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Through this platform, she has collaborated with young climate leaders from around the world to advocate for meaningful youth inclusion in climate negotiations and policy development. Her work reflects a strong belief that young people are not merely future stakeholders but essential partners in creating sustainable solutions today.

Recognized for her commitment to climate resilience and adaptation, Sadia was selected as a Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) Youth Fellow. This prestigious opportunity enabled her to work alongside global experts and policymakers focused on addressing the challenges faced by climate-vulnerable nations. Her contributions have emphasized the importance of equitable climate action and the need to amplify the voices of communities that are disproportionately affected by environmental crises.

Adding to her impressive portfolio of achievements, Sadia served as Youth Advisor to the Chief Executive Officer of the Global Center on Adaptation (GCA). In this capacity, she provided valuable insights on youth perspectives regarding climate adaptation and resilience-building strategies. Her advisory role reinforced her reputation as a trusted advocate for youth engagement and highlighted her ability to bridge the gap between young activists and high-level decision-makers.

Sadia's influence extends across numerous international forums and United Nations platforms. She has represented youth voices at some of the world's most significant climate and development conferences. Among her notable engagements, she attended the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP29)

as a Party Delegate, contributing to critical discussions surrounding climate mitigation, adaptation, and sustainable development. She also participated in COP28 and COP27, demonstrating her consistent commitment to global climate negotiations.

Her international experience further includes participation in the Asia Pacific Dialogue for Human Rights 75, the 79th Session of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP), and the UN Water Conference 2023. Through these platforms, Sadia has engaged with policymakers, diplomats, academics, and civil society leaders, advocating for policies that prioritize environmental sustainability, climate resilience, and intergenerational equity.

Sadia's remarkable contributions have earned her widespread recognition and numerous accolades. In 2022, she received the prestigious Inspiring Women Volunteer Award, honoring her exceptional service to society and her efforts in promoting sustainable development. The award was jointly presented by UN Women, United Nations Volunteers (UNV), Plan International, Action-Aid Bangladesh, and VSO, highlighting the significance of her impact across multiple sectors.

The Bangladesh University of Professionals (BUP) also recognized her outstanding commitment to combating climate change by presenting her with the Senate Award. This honor reflected her dedication to creating positive environmental change and acknowledged her leadership within Bangladesh's growing climate movement.

In addition to her advocacy work, Sadia has demonstrated excellence in innovation and problem-solving through her success in various climate-related competitions. In 2019, she emerged as the Champion of Climathon, an internationally recognized climate innovation competition supported by EIT Climate-KIC. Her achievement showcased her ability to develop practical and impactful solutions for addressing climate challenges.



Sadia Jahan Rothi

Continuing her record of success, she won Solve-A-Thon in 2022, a renewable energy-focused competition organized by the World Bank Bangladesh. This accomplishment underscored her commitment to promoting clean energy solutions and highlighted her capacity to contribute innovative ideas to the transition toward a more sustainable future.

Throughout her career, Sadia Jahan Rothi has remained steadfast in her mission to create a more equitable and climate-resilient world. Her work is driven by the conviction that climate action must be inclusive, collaborative, and centered on the needs of vulnerable communities. By combining grassroots activism with international advocacy, she has successfully amplified youth voices

and influenced conversations on environmental policy and sustainable development.

As a leader, advocate, and change-maker, Sadia continues to inspire countless young people to engage in climate action and become active participants in shaping a sustainable future. Her journey demonstrates the transformative power of dedication, empathy, and leadership in addressing one of the most pressing challenges of our time. Through her unwavering commitment to environmental justice and youth empowerment, she stands as a powerful example of how one individual can make a meaningful difference on both national and global stages.