



Ruto defends scrapping of ID vetting in Northern Kenya

President William Ruto defended his administration's decision to abolish special vetting requirements for identity card applicants in Northern Kenya

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Former Freedom Fighters unite ahead of launch of National Research and Documentation Centres

A major step towards unity among Kenya's former freedom fighters was witnessed during the 63rd Madaraka Day celebrations as leaders of various liberation movements pledged to work together in advancing the welfare of veterans

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Marginalization President Ruto yesterday issued a formal apology to Northern Kenya for decades of state-led marginalization

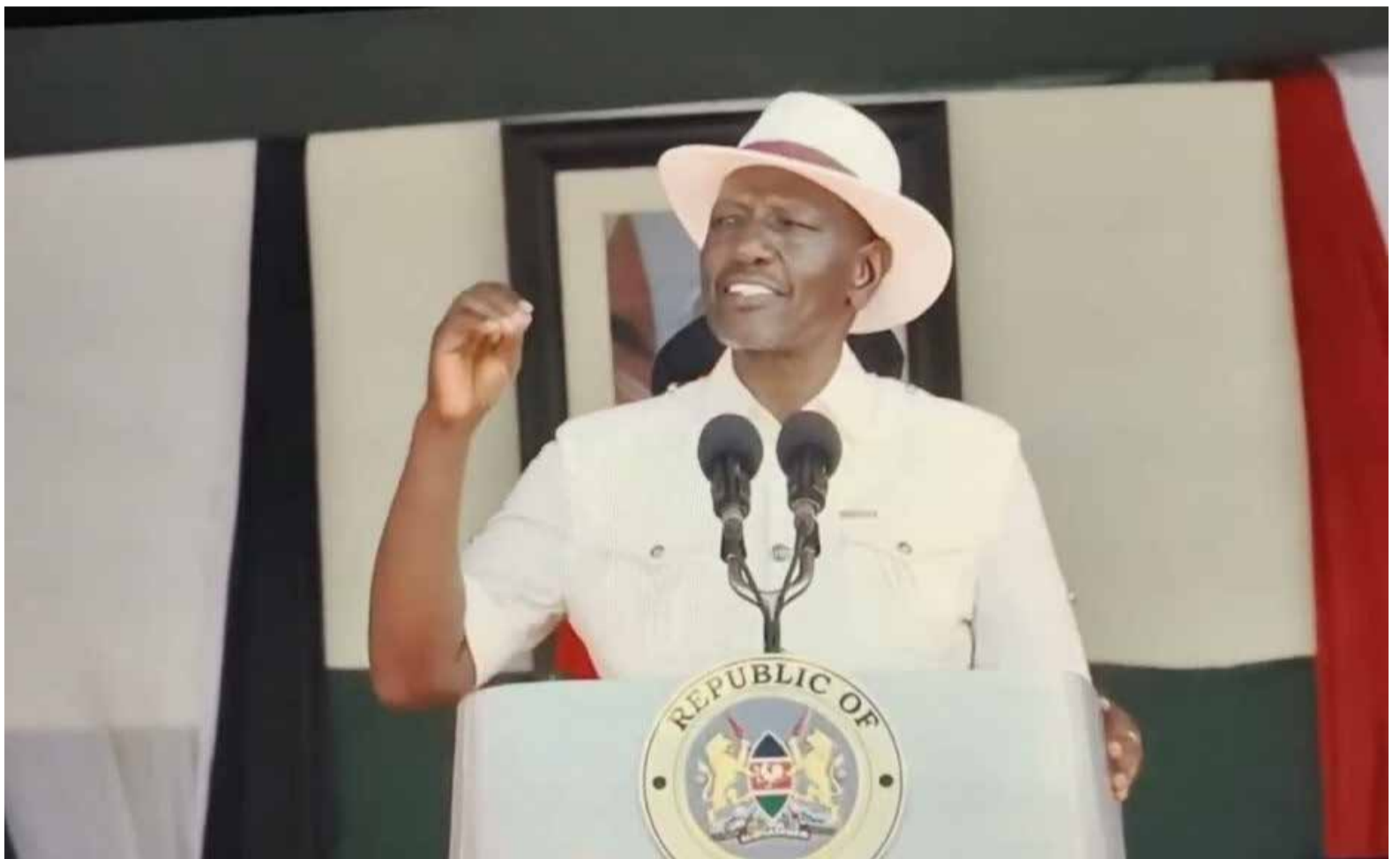
Ruto apologises to northern Kenya

President William Ruto yesterday issued a formal apology to Northern Kenya for decades of state-led marginalization and announced a Sh5 billion livestock investment programme, as Kenya marked the 63rd Madaraka Day celebrations in Wajir.

The President used the national celebrations to acknowledge historical discrimination against communities in the region, while outlining major government investments in livestock, healthcare, education, housing, roads and water infrastructure aimed at accelerating development.

Ruto also highlighted Wajir's hosting of Madaraka Day for the first time since independence, describing the event as a significant national milestone reflecting efforts to integrate historically underserved regions into Kenya's development agenda.

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President William Ruto in Wajir yesterday.

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Ruto led 63rd Madaraka day celebrations in Wajir

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

Some of the moments as captured in pictures

President William Ruto has formally apologised to the people of Northern Kenya for decades of marginalisation and underdevelopment, describing the 63rd Madaraka Day celebrations in Wajir as a historic moment in correcting a long-standing national injustice.

The event was attended by Deputy President Kithure Kindiki, National Assembly Speaker Moses Wetang'ula, Senate Speaker Amason Kingi, Interior Cabinet Secretary Kipchumba Murkomen, Health Cabinet Secretary Aden Duale, Education Cabinet Secretary Julius Ogamba, Public Service Cabinet Secretary Geoffrey Ruku and Wajir Governor Ahmed Abdullahi.

Speaking at the celebrations, Ruto said the region had suffered years of neglect following the implementation of Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965, which contributed to under-investment and missed opportunities for generations of residents.

"On behalf of the Government and the Republic of Kenya, I extend my sincere apology to the people of Northern Kenya for the hardships and exclusion you have endured over the years," he said.

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Editor's Desk

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NEWS IN BRIEF



Former President Uhuru Kenyatta on Monday led the African Union Election Observation Mission in monitoring Ethiopia's June 1, 2026 General Elections, beginning their duties shortly before polling stations opened at 6:00 a.m. across the country. Speaking to the media after the initial observation exercise, Kenyatta expressed optimism that the elections would remain peaceful, orderly and credible throughout the voting process. He noted Ethiopia's unique importance as the host of the African Union and the diplomatic capital of Africa. Kenyatta emphasized that voting is a fundamental democratic right that enables citizens to choose their leaders and representatives. He also reaffirmed the African Union's commitment to promoting democratic governance, saying credible elections are vital for inclusion, representation and accountable leadership across the continent.



More than 12,400 Kenyan farmers have shifted from tobacco cultivation to food crop farming under the Tobacco-Free Farms initiative led by the World Health Organization (WHO), the Ministry of Health and development partners. Since its launch in Migori County in 2021, the programme has converted over 11,540 acres of tobacco farms to crops such as beans, groundnuts and finger millet, producing more than 3.8 million kilograms of food. Participating farmers have reported up to three times higher incomes. The initiative also reduces health risks associated with tobacco farming and supports farmers with inputs, training, financing and market access. Operating in four counties, the programme is expected to expand further as it promotes food security, better health and environmental sustainability.

A tragic incident in Kong'onge village, Rachuonyo West Sub-County, Homa Bay County, left two children dead after a house was set ablaze on Sunday. Witnesses said a 30-year-old woman, Veronica Anyango, allegedly locked her four children inside the house before setting it on fire. Two children aged five and eight escaped after neighbours broke in, but two younger siblings, aged one and three, died in the inferno. The woman was later found hanging from a tree near the homestead. Authorities suspect domestic disputes may have contributed to the tragedy. Investigations are ongoing as the surviving children receive treatment.



Sports Principal Secretary Elijah Mwangi has warned that rampant substance abuse in Murang'a County is undermining efforts to nurture sports talent among young people. Speaking during the Murang'a Community Run at Ihura Stadium, Mwangi said discipline is essential for success in athletics and urged youth to avoid drugs and alcohol. He noted that the Anti-Doping Agency of Kenya (ADAK) does not allow athletes who use prohibited substances to compete. The event attracted more than 2,000 participants from schools, institutions, government agencies and local communities. Senior Athletics Kenya officials and education leaders also attended. Winners of the 10-kilometre elite races received cash prizes of Sh200,000 each.



Embu County has confirmed its first case of Mpox involving a 29-year-old woman from Runyenjes Constituency. County Executive Committee Member for Health Jamal Runyenje said the case was confirmed on May 30 following laboratory tests. In response, the county has activated measures including investigations, contact tracing, active case searches, enhanced surveillance and infection prevention efforts. Community sensitization campaigns are also underway in collaboration with the Ministry of Health to prevent further spread. Residents have been urged to remain calm but vigilant and seek medical attention if they experience symptoms such as fever, skin rash, unusual lesions, swollen lymph nodes, body aches or fatigue. Health facilities have been placed on high alert as authorities intensify preparedness and response measures.



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Kirinyaga All public medical facilities in Kirinyaga have adequate supplies of medical supplies - CEC

Kirinyaga announces plans for health workers promotion, assures of uninterrupted services in hospitals

BY MKT REPORTER
@themkenyatimes

County Government of Kirinyaga says it is addressing all labour issues raised by health workers and has availed a budget for promotions.

Addressing medial at the Kerugoya County Referral Hospital, Chief Officer for Medical Services, Public Health and Sanitation Dr. Muriithi Nyaga said budget proposal for the promotion and re-designations has already been forwarded to the county assembly for approval.

Muriithi further dispel fear of interruption of services due to a planned work go-slow by a section of the health workers.

“The County Government of Kirinyaga has noted the intended go-slow by a section of health workers. It wishes to address the concerns raised, while assuring the public that health service delivery across the county will remain uninterrupted,” Muriithi said.

Further, the Chief Officer said the County Government had onboarded 237 casual employees into the integrated county payroll system, issued personal numbers and their salary arrears paid in full. He said 138 casuals are at different stages of verification for issuance of personal numbers.

He regretted the delay in



Governor Ann Waiguru

payment of salaries for the casuals due to the long process of getting them into Human Resource Information System (HRIS) and errors contained in identification documents submitted by some of the workers.

“The County Government of Kirinyaga deeply values the contributions of health-care workers and remains committed to constructive engagement to address workplace concerns. Such engagement must follow due process and utilise legally recognised representative structures,” he reiterated.

Muriithi said the exercise to streamline the management of casual wages has been ongoing for the last three months.

“In line with a national directive to streamline the County

Government has initiated the process of onboarding casual workers into the integrated county payroll system, which has now replaced the manual payment of wages,” he added.

The Chief Officer said all public medical facilities in Kirinyaga have adequate supplies of medical supplies to support effective service delivery.

“In April, the County Government placed a major order for medicines and medical supplies through KEMSA, supplemented by procurement from local suppliers for items unavailable through KEMSA. As a result, public health facilities across the county are currently well stocked with essential medicines and supplies,” Muriithi said.

Kirinyaga County Assembly Health Committee Chairman Bosco Gichangi asked a section of politicians to stop politicizing and inciting health issues and inciting workers against their employer.

Gichangi who was accompanied by some members of the committee said the issue of promotion of health workers was in the final stage of being resolved with the committee already having received budget proposals from the executive.

“I can confirm that we received the budget proposal from the executive two weeks ago and we are in the process of looking at it before it is tabled for approval by the whole house,” he said.

Ruto led 63rd Madaraka day celebrations in Wajir



President William Ruto, his deputy Kithure Kindiki among leaders at Wajir

Contd from page 2

The President outlined key investments aimed at accelerating development in the region. He highlighted the establishment of teacher training colleges in Wajir, Kotulo and Mandera, with more than 4,600 trainees currently enrolled. He also announced plans to integrate Duksi, Madrassa and pastoral instruction into the national education framework. Ruto said over 800,000 res-


idents have registered with the Social Health Authority, while KSh8.1 billion has been paid to hospitals in the region. He further cited KSh38.5 billion in affordable housing investments, the ongoing KSh100 billion Northern Kenya Gateway Corridor project, and a proposed KSh5 billion livestock investment company targeting more than 350,000 pastoralists. He pledged that no part of Kenya would be left behind because of geography, history or politics.



Wajir Governor Ahmed Abdullahi

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NAIROBI

Three held after foiled Parklands robbery



Lavender Akinyi Ogilo

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

Three suspects are in custody after a failed robbery attempt at a Parklands residential compound in Nairobi on Sunday, with one arrested while disguised in a Muslim hijab attempting to flee in an Uber.

According to the Directorate of Criminal Investigation, the incident unfolded at around 2:00 PM when a resident of Parklands Court Limited noticed a suspicious black Nissan X-Trail parked in the compound, occupied by four individuals claiming to be delivering a parcel in a khaki envelope, accompanied by a Delta 7 Security guard identified as Dorine Linda Imodia. The resident raised an alarm and moved to block the vehicle, but a delay in securing the compound gate allowed most of the occupants to escape on foot, abandoning the car at the scene.

Officers from Parklands Police Station arrested Lavender Akinyi Ogilo shortly afterwards, having changed into a hijab and attempting to board a ride-hailing vehicle

nearby. The DCI linked her to a series of house-breaking incidents in the area. CCTV footage recovered from the scene confirmed she had alighted outside the premises before the X-Trail entered the compound. Upon interrogation, she admitted to acting in concert with the four who escaped.

Investigators recovered a telling haul from the abandoned vehicle — metal crowbars, a Y spanner, motor vehicle ignition keys, a surveillance disk, assorted screws, a khaki bag and two sets of registration plates bearing the number KDK 162E, are registered to a Toyota Crown Saloon, raising serious concerns about the car's true origin and whether it had been deliberately misplated ahead of the attempted robbery.

Two security personnel have also been detained as authorities investigate their possible involvement in the incident.

With four suspects still at large, police have urged residents in the area to remain vigilant.



President William Ruto addressing Kenyans from Wajir yesterday.

Ruto defends scrapping of ID vetting in Northern Kenya

BY Suleiman Mbatiah

@themtkenyatimes

President William Ruto defended his administration's decision to abolish special vetting requirements for identity card applicants in Northern Kenya, saying the reforms ended discrimination while retaining safeguards against the illegal acquisition of citizenship documents during Madaraka Day celebrations in Wajir.

Addressing thousands gathered at Wajir Stadium yesterday, Ruto said the government had removed what he described as a decades-old system that subjected citizens from Northern Kenya to additional scrutiny when seeking identity cards.

The President argued that the previous framework unfairly targeted communities in border counties, forcing many applicants to produce extra documentation and undergo lengthy verification processes unavailable elsewhere in Kenya.

Ruto linked the reforms to broader efforts aimed at addressing historical marginalisation in Northern Kenya, a region long affected by underinvestment, security challenges and limited access to public services.

"I signed the Presidential Proclamation on the Registration and Issuance of IDs and Birth Certificates in Northern Kenya and other bor-

der counties, ending that system of discrimination," Ruto said.

The proclamation was signed in Wajir in February 2025 and removed mandatory extra vetting committees that had been required for many identity card applicants in border regions.

During his address, the President cited examples of young residents who had obtained national identity cards after turning eighteen without facing additional administrative hurdles previously common in the region.

He maintained that citizenship verification procedures remain in place through existing registration systems, stressing that government agencies continue to scrutinise applications to prevent fraud and protect national security.

The reforms sparked national debate after their introduction, with supporters describing them as a constitutional correction, while critics raised concerns about possible vulnerabilities along Kenya's porous borders with Somalia and Ethiopia.

"A strong nation does not choose between security and justice. A strong nation protects both. That is exactly what we are doing," the President said.

Human rights organisations have for years criticised the extra vetting regime, arguing that it disproportionately affected ethnic Somali

communities despite constitutional guarantees of equal treatment for Kenyan citizens.

The Kenya National Commission on Human Rights and civil society groups have previously documented complaints involving delayed identity card processing, restricted access to education, employment and financial services linked to documentation barriers.

Beyond identification reforms, Ruto announced continued investments in education, healthcare, housing, roads and livestock development, presenting them as part of a wider strategy to integrate historically underserved regions.

He highlighted ongoing construction of the Northern Kenya Gateway Corridor linking Isiolo, Wajir and Mandera, alongside expanded teacher recruitment, health coverage and youth empowerment programmes.

The President also directed the Education Ministry to engage stakeholders on integrating Duksi, Madrassa and pastoral instruction pathways into Kenya's formal education framework.

In a previous address, Interior CS Kipchumba Murkomen said the government is expected to monitor registration systems, strengthen citizenship verification mechanisms and advance policy measures intended to expand inclusion while safeguarding national security.

Northern Kenya I offer my sincere apology for the marginalisation that you have endured over the years. Poleni sana, ndugu zetu

Ruto offers state apology to Northern Kenya over marginalization, announces major development push

BY Suleiman Mbatiah

[@themkenyatimes](#)

President William Ruto yesterday issued a formal apology to Northern Kenya for decades of state-led marginalization and announced a Sh5 billion livestock investment programme, as Kenya marked the 63rd Madaraka Day celebrations in Wajir.

The President used the national celebrations to acknowledge historical discrimination against communities in the region, while outlining major government investments in livestock, healthcare, education, housing, roads and water infrastructure aimed at accelerating development.

Ruto also highlighted Wajir's hosting of Madaraka Day for the first time since independence, describing the event as a significant national milestone reflecting efforts to integrate historically underserved regions into Kenya's development agenda.

The address combined symbolic reconciliation with policy announcements, including measures targeting pastoral livelihoods, identity document reforms, expanded healthcare coverage and infrastructure projects valued at tens of billions of shillings across Northern Kenya.

"I offer my sincere apology for the marginalisation that you have endured over the years. Poleni sana, ndugu zetu. It was never meant to be this way," Ruto told residents gathered at Wajir Stadium.

The apology referenced decades of exclusion linked to post-independence development policies, including Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965, which prioritised investment in so-called high-potential areas while many arid and semi-arid regions lagged behind.

Ruto said his administration was reversing that legacy through investments in roads, schools, healthcare facilities, housing projects and economic programmes designed to improve opportunities for communities previously excluded from mainstream development initiatives.

He defended the government's decision to abolish special vetting requirements for identity card applicants in Northern Kenya, saying the reforms ended discriminatory practices while maintaining verifica-



President William Ruto in Wajir yesterday.

tion procedures necessary to protect citizenship integrity and national security.

The President said thousands of young people had already benefited from the changes introduced through a presidential proclamation signed in Wajir in February 2025, allowing eligible citizens to obtain identification documents without additional hurdles.

"A strong nation does not choose between security and justice. A strong nation protects both. That is exactly what we are doing," Ruto said while defending the reforms.

His remarks came amid national debate over identification procedures in border counties, with supporters arguing the previous system unfairly targeted certain communities, while critics expressed concerns about potential security implications in frontier regions.

Beyond governance reforms, the

President announced a new Sh5 billion County Livestock Investment Company initiative targeting more than 350,000 pastoralists across 21 arid and semi-arid counties, with registration expected to begin immediately.

The programme aims to enable pastoralist communities to establish and own livestock investment companies, improving access to markets, finance, insurance services and value-addition opportunities within Kenya's livestock sector.

"That is why we are establishing a KSh 5 billion County Livestock Investment Company initiative to support more than 350,000 pastoralists across 21 ASAL counties to form and own livestock investment companies," he said.

Government figures presented during the speech showed livestock contributes about 12 per cent of Kenya's gross domestic product

and 42 per cent of agricultural GDP, while supporting most households in arid regions.

Ruto said recent interventions included vaccination of more than 10 million animals, expansion of vaccine production capacity, establishment of feedlots and restoration of degraded rangelands to improve resilience among pastoral communities.

The President also cited growth in livestock exports, saying meat exports increased from Sh8.9 billion in 2022 to Sh16.4 billion in 2025, while dairy exports nearly tripled during the same period.

On healthcare, he said the Social Health Authority had registered approximately 800,000 residents from Wajir, Garissa and Mandera counties and paid Sh8.1 billion in claims for services delivered within the three counties.

The speech further highlighted a

Sh100 billion Northern Kenya Gateway Corridor linking Isiolo, Wajir and Mandera, alongside affordable housing projects and education investments including teacher recruitment, school feeding programmes and expanded technical training opportunities.

"No child is too far away to deserve opportunity. No citizen is too distant to deserve dignity. No county is too remote to deserve development," Ruto said as he outlined the government's vision for the region.

The government is expected to begin implementing the livestock investment initiative, advance registration of pastoralist-owned companies and continue consultations on education, healthcare and infrastructure programmes aimed at accelerating development across Northern Kenya.

Protests A High Court order has temporarily halted the project, but public anxiety continues to mount across Laikipia county

Residents block Laikipia airbase over planned Ebola facility

BY MKT REPORTER
@themkenyatimes

Hundreds of Nanyuki residents marched on Laikipia Airbase on Monday to protest a proposed Ebola quarantine and isolation facility, only to be turned back by armed Kenya Air Force personnel who cordoned off the military installation and forced demonstrators to redirect their procession into Nanyuki town. Security forces maintained a visible presence throughout the day as the crowd moved through the central business district under police escort. Authorities reported that

the demonstration remained largely peaceful, though it caused traffic disruptions and intermittent interruptions to business activity along major streets. No significant incidents of violence were recorded. The protests follow a High Court ruling issued three days earlier, in which the court granted conservatory orders temporarily blocking the establishment or operationalisation of any Ebola quarantine, isolation, or treatment facility in Kenya under the disputed arrangement. The court also barred the admission or transfer of Ebola-exposed individuals into the country pending

a full hearing. The petition was filed by the Katiba Institute and certified as urgent. The Law Society of Kenya, led by Charles Kanjama, has been among the most vocal opponents of the proposal. “We owe patients human solidarity, but public health requires facilities to be placed near outbreak epicentres,” Kanjama said, arguing that hosting Ebola-exposed individuals in Kenya posed unnecessary risks to public health and that containment efforts should instead be concentrated closer to affected regions such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda.



Kenya Air Force personnel block protesters at the perimeter of Laikipia Airbase.

Local member of parliament Sarah Korere was equally unambiguous. “As residents of Nanyuki, we have said we do not want that Ebola rescue centre in Nanyuki — and not just in Laikipia, we don’t want it in Kenya,” she said, adding that the proposal threatened the region’s tourism economy and public confidence.

Health Cabinet Secretary Aden Duale has sought to reassure the public, insisting that any international arrangement involving Ebola treatment must comply strictly with Kenyan law and that the country’s sovereignty and health safeguards cannot be bypassed. Public Health Principal Secretary Mary Muthoni

added that isolation facilities are standard components of epidemic preparedness and that Kenya’s laboratories are equipped for rapid testing. With the court order in place and public opposition hardening, the government’s next move will be closely watched.

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Freedom Fighters The decision to work together will strengthen our voice and make it easier to pursue issues affecting former freedom fighters

Former Freedom Fighters unite ahead of launch of National Research and Documentation Centre

BY MKT REPORTER
@themkenyatimes

A major step towards unity among Kenya's former freedom fighters was witnessed during the 63rd Madaraka Day celebrations as leaders of various liberation movements pledged to work together in advancing the welfare of veterans and preserving the country's liberation history.

The commitment comes ahead of the official opening of a Research and Documentation Centre in Nairobi today, an initiative aimed at archiving the history and contributions of freedom fighters from the attainment of independence in 1963 to the present day.

MMV Associates CLG Director General James Njuguna Mahuria announced that his

organisation had resolved to work closely with Mau Mau War Veterans Association Chairman Maina Njenga in a move expected to strengthen efforts to safeguard historical records and push for compensation of former freedom fighters.

Mahuria described the collaboration as a significant milestone, saying it would usher in a new era of cooper-



Former freedom fighters and their descendants led Gitu Kahengeri pose for a photo with Kiambu County senior National Government Administration Officers after the 63rd Madaraka day celebrations that were held at Thika stadium.



Former freedom fighters and their descendants led Gitu Kahengeri pose for a photo with Kiambu County senior National Government Administration Officers after the 63rd Madaraka day celebrations that were held at Thika stadium.

ation among groups that have previously operated independently.

"The decision to work together will strengthen our voice and make it easier to pursue issues affecting former freedom fighters, including compensation and the preservation of our history," he said.

The new Research and Documentation Centre, which will be housed at the Kenya National Archives along Moi Avenue in Nairobi, is expected to serve as a central repository of records relating to Kenya's struggle for independence and subsequent nation-building efforts.

According to Mahuria, the facility will collect, preserve and document information on former freedom fighters and their descendants while also serving as a national office for the movement.

He said preparations for the official launch had been completed, with legal experts, representatives of non-governmental organisations and other stakeholders invited to support the establishment of a broader international network that will see the caucus affiliated with the proposed World Federation of Kenya.

Mahuria noted that preserving historical records is crucial in ensuring that the sacrifices made by those who fought for Kenya's independence are not forgotten by fu-

ture generations.

He further called on various factions and associations representing former freedom fighters to set aside their differences and unite for the common good of their members and descendants.

"Unity among former freedom fighters will strengthen our ability to advocate for our rights and collectively pursue issues such as compensation and recognition," he said.

He added that plans aimed at securing compensation for veterans were at an advanced stage, dismissing claims that little progress had been made on the matter.

The Mau Mau War Veterans Association has operated from offices at the National Archives for more than two decades following official recognition of the movement by former President Mwai Kibaki.

Mahuria also called for reconciliation between former freedom fighters and those who collaborated with the colonial administration during the struggle for independence.

He said historical divisions should no longer define modern Kenya, urging all citizens to focus on national unity and development.

"Each side acted according to its circumstances at the time. Today, we are all Kenyans and should work together for the prosperity and progress of our

country," he said.

Separately, Mahuria commended the leadership of Wajir County for presenting camels to President William Ruto during this year's Madaraka Day celebrations and for supporting the naming of the county's new stadium after former Cabinet Minister Mohammed Khalif.

He described the gestures as a reflection of respect for Kenya's leaders and historical figures who contributed to national development.

The launch of the Research and Documentation Centre is expected to mark a significant chapter in efforts to preserve Kenya's liberation history while strengthening collaboration among former freedom fighters across the country.

Tragedy Officials disclosed that preliminary findings suggested some staff members had received warnings about possible unrest but allegedly failed to intervene

Kihika urges national reflection after deadly Utumishi Girls fire incident

BY Suleiman Mbatiah
@themtkenyatimes

Nakuru Governor Susan Kihika has called for a tough national conversation following recurring deadly attacks in schools, saying the latest dormitory fire tragedy exposed urgent concerns about student safety, accountability, and institutional oversight.

Kihika's remarks followed the deadly fire at Utumishi Girls Academy in Gilgil, Nakuru County, where 16 students died and dozens sustained injuries after flames engulfed a dormitory during the night.

Authorities said the fire erupted shortly after midnight as more than 200 students slept inside the dormitory, triggering panic as learners attempted to escape through windows and corridors.

Investigators, education officials, and police have since launched extensive inquiries into possible safety compliance failures, dormitory conditions, emergency preparedness measures, and staff conduct before the incident.

Her statement came after surveillance footage allegedly showed students setting mattresses ablaze near dormitory exits while their classmates slept. Seven key suspects have since been arrested and are expected to be arraigned today.

"This has to be one of the toughest videos to watch. The last few days have been tough, but to actually see these girls set the dormitory on fire while their classmates and friends slept is the most horrific thing I have ever seen," Kihika said.

Education Cabinet Secretary Julius Ogamba said preliminary investigations had identified serious concerns regarding adherence to safety procedures, while cautioning that inquiries remain ongoing.

Government officials reported that at least 80 students were injured during the disaster, although most were later discharged after receiving

treatment for burns and trauma.

The government has since disbanded the school's board of management and announced disciplinary and legal action against personnel found responsible for negligence or regulatory breaches.

Officials disclosed that preliminary findings suggested some staff members had received warnings about possible unrest but allegedly failed to intervene before the tragedy unfolded.

The incident has renewed debate over conditions in boarding schools after authorities recorded numerous school fires nationwide, many previously linked to student unrest, disciplinary disputes, and safety shortcomings.

Kenya's history of deadly school fires stretches back decades, with investigations repeatedly identifying locked exits, student unrest, poor infrastructure, and inadequate emergency response systems as contributing factors.

Over the past three decades, at least 175 students have died in school fire incidents across Kenya, highlighting persistent safety failures despite repeated calls for reforms.

"We must have a tough conversation in this country. We have a big problem. My heart goes out to the families of the 16 girls who lost their lives," Kihika said in an emotional Facebook post.

One of the earliest major incidents occurred in 1991 at St. Kizito Secondary School in Meru, where 19 students died following unrest at the institution.

In 1997, a dormitory fire at Bombolulu Girls Secondary School in Kwale County claimed 26 lives after students reportedly became trapped inside overcrowded sleeping quarters.

Two years later, another school fire at Nyeri High School killed four students, further intensifying concerns about safety standards in boarding facilities nation-

wide.

The deadliest school fire in Kenya's history occurred in March 2001 at Kyanguli Secondary School in Machakos County, where 67 students died after a dormitory was set ablaze.

Court proceedings later linked the Kyanguli tragedy to arson, with investigations indicating that students allegedly set mattresses on fire following disciplinary disagreements within the school.

The scale of the disaster prompted nationwide reviews of school safety policies, dormitory design standards, emergency preparedness requirements, and student welfare management systems.

Despite reforms introduced after Kyanguli, fatal incidents continued to occur across the country, exposing challenges in consistently implementing and enforcing recommended safety measures.

In 2010, a dormitory fire at Endarasha Boys Secondary School in Nyeri County



CS Kipchumba Murkomen, GVN Susan Kihika with other leaders at Utumishi Girls Academy last Thursday.

killed two students and renewed scrutiny of conditions in boarding schools.

Another deadly incident occurred in 2012 at St. Theresa's Asumbi Girls Boarding Primary School in Homa Bay County, where eight learners lost their lives.

Investigators examining the Asumbi tragedy reportedly linked the blaze to an electrical fault, highlighting infrastructure deficiencies alongside recurring concerns about student safety.

Three years later, a fire at Stephjoy Boys High School in Kiambu County killed two students, adding to the growing list of school fire tragedies

in Kenya.

A major turning point came in 2017 when a dormitory fire struck Hillside Endarasha Academy in Nyeri County, killing 21 boys as they slept.

Authorities investigating the Endarasha tragedy examined allegations of overcrowding, emergency response challenges, and possible shortcomings in compliance with safety requirements.

Education experts, lawmakers, and child welfare advocates have repeatedly argued that periodic inspections alone are insufficient without sustained investment in infrastructure, counselling services, and risk management systems.

In September 2024, another

devastating dormitory fire struck Hillside Endarasha Academy in Nyeri County, killing 21 boys as they slept.

Authorities investigating the Endarasha tragedy examined allegations of overcrowding, emergency response challenges, and possible shortcomings in compliance with safety requirements.

Education experts, lawmakers, and child welfare advocates have repeatedly argued that periodic inspections alone are insufficient without sustained investment in infrastructure, counselling services, and risk management systems.



A vehicle leaving Utumishi Girls Academy. | Photo: Courtesy.

Drainage Local trader Nelson Ombasa, who runs a clothing shop in the town centre, said the impact on commerce has become severe.

Kisii residents demand fix for flooding streets

BY MKT REPORTER
@themkenyentimes

Residents of Kisii town are calling on the county government to urgently address a chronic drainage crisis that regularly submerges streets, disrupts transport, and forces businesses to close whenever heavy rain strikes the highland town.

The problem, residents say, stems from blocked drainage channels, poorly designed water catchment infrastructure, and years of deferred maintenance — compounded by inadequate garbage management that chokes existing outlets. Kisii town’s vulnerability is structural: situated within the Lake Victoria basin and surrounded by the densely forested Kisii highlands, the area receives rainfall throughout the year, meaning the consequences of a failing

drainage system are felt repeatedly and without reprieve.

Local trader Nelson Ombasa, who runs a clothing shop in the town centre, said the impact on commerce has become severe. “Whenever it rains, dirty rainwater rushes through the market area and into our shops. Many customers cannot access the businesses in such conditions,” he said. Several traders have reported significant stock losses following recent flooding that left portions of the town’s roads submerged for hours after heavy downpours.

The disruption extends beyond commerce. Office worker Declan Moseti said movement through the town becomes treacherous for those on foot. “It is not easy to move around town, especially if you don’t have a vehicle,” he said, describing sidewalks and roads that turn impassable in the rain.



Kisii residents are urging the authorities to upgrade the drainage system and clear blocked channels. | Photo: Courtesy]

For long-term residents, the frustration is rooted as much in inaction as in inconvenience. “It is very frustrating for people and businesses because this area experiences rains

almost all the time,” said Anne Nyakerario, a town resident. “It is frustrating that little has changed over the years.”

Residents are now pressing the

county government to upgrade the drainage network, clear blocked channels, and implement a sustainable maintenance plan before the next rains arrive.

The Mt. Kenya Times



The soundless cries



When silence swells behind the eyes
And sorrow has no voice,
The heart becomes a captive cage
That never made a choice.

A silent storm may rage within
Yet tear the soul apart,
Like thunder trapped within the clouds
That tears the skyless heart.

Tears are streams the soul must free,
Not burden the spirit must bear,
For hidden grief like un-burst rainclouds

Still smoulders deep and softly weeps.

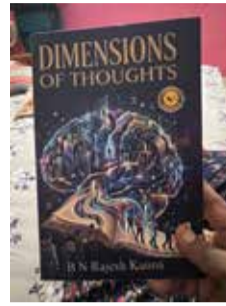
The throat grows tight with unshed cries,
The heart bears wound no eyes can see,
While aching thoughts like trembling leaves
Drift sleepless through the restless night.

So if your weary soul must break,
Then let the teardrops fall,
For even rain must leave the clouds
To heal the earth at all.

Cry freely when the pain runs deep,
Let sorrow ebb and go,
For hearts that breathe their grief aloud
Will bloom again and grow.

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

Rajesh Kanna Sir's book Dimensions of Thoughts is truly a wonderful collection of emotions, reflections, and originality



Among the 91 poems, many poems impressed me deeply, and some poems felt like they completely cleansed my heart and mind with their powerful thoughts and expressions.

What attracted me the most was the author's originality in using pure and traditional Tamil words like Aavaranpoo, Seeragam, Inji, Kadukkai, Maavu, Kashayams and many more. These words beautifully carry the fragrance of our culture and roots, making the poems feel natural and alive. It clearly shows the poet's strong connection with Tamil language and tradition.

One poem that impressed me immensely was 'Media Addiction'. The way the poet begins each

sentence with "Can we spare our time with...?" reflects his creative thinking and clever usage of poetic devices. The repetition not only gives rhythm to the poem but also makes the readers think deeply about how media slowly occupies our lives. The poem is simple yet striking in its impact.

Every poem in this book carries a unique dimension of thought, emotion, and social awareness. I totally loved all the 91 poems and admired the way the author transforms ordinary observations into meaningful poetry.

I wholeheartedly wish Rajesh Kanna Sir to continue writing many more inspiring poems, and may his writings travel beyond boundaries and reach the entire universe.

Anandhi S
BT Asst (English)
GHSS Kandigai

The Mt Kenya Times was not just a newspaper in my journey – it became a light that guided my dreams



When my words were still hidden in silence,
you gave them a voice.
When doubt surrounded me,
your encouragement gave me strength to
continue writing.

Every published poem became more than a
moment of happiness —
it became proof that young dreams deserve to be
seen, heard, and believed in.
You did not only publish my poems;
you inspired a young writer to believe that words
can cross borders,
touch hearts, and create change.
For that,
I will always remain deeply grateful.

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

Cry with no sound hurts the most



Crying with no sound hurts the most
A great burst of the heart
Crying with no sound tempting to weep aloud
But can't,....A deep sorrow embedded in
us,,Makes us to cry so so deep

A strong shower of tear
Break the lids so ever
Rushing up from the bereived heart
To cry and lament aloud
But stopped and closed the wide mouth,..
Temporarily shut with cloth
As situation is such,
Everything gone so so worst,
Hurts the heart and soul
To bleed so strong and long,
But for heaven's sake
Wipes off everything nd
Goes off smiling,,crying in
And laughing out,such a great struggle so
ridiculous
Placed in one's life with a great strife.
Crying with no sound really hurts the human as it
crushes the loving bonds!!!!!!!

V.R. VIJAYALAKSHMI, GRADUATE TEACHER,
CW WRITERS GROUP, KANCHIPURAM
DISTRICT,TAMILNADU INDIA.

Thank you for publishing our members' poems



Dear Editorial Team,

I am writing this letter on behalf of our entire group, Creative Writers, to express our sincere thanks to everyone at The Mount Kenya Times.

We are truly grateful to your team for reviewing, selecting, and publishing the poetry pieces written by our members in your popular e-magazine.

Seeing our work featured in your publication is a huge milestone and an exciting moment for all of us. As a grassroots group of writers, finding platforms that welcome new voices can be

challenging.

Your e-magazine gives excellent visibility to emerging authors, and we really appreciate your commitment to supporting creative writing and sharing diverse perspectives with your readers.

The poems look wonderful in your digital layout, and the presentation is highly professional. This feature has given our members a major confidence boost, and it has motivated everyone in our community to keep writing, improving their skills, and sharing their stories.

Thank you once again for your time, effort, and support of our writers. We thoroughly enjoy reading your magazine editions, and we hope to stay in touch and work together on future poetry submissions.

Warm regards,
Faith Beulsh
Creative Writes
India

A kind word never broke anyone's mouth



A kind word never broke anyone's mouth
It heals deep wounds and gives us strength
throughout
Unkind words create irritation and pain
Leading this generation on the wrong lane.

Words are more powerful, sharper than a sword
Speaking with kindness is a beautiful art
Positive vibes can brighten every place
Humanity shines through gentle grace.

A kind word never breaks anyone's heart,
Yet it can heal souls that fall apart.
It costs nothing, still wins every heart
And brings the whole world closer, never apart.

C.Santhi
B.T.Asst.
Govt. Model Girls HSS.
Bhuvanagiri

Law A proper legal framework on public participation could help restore trust, reduce suspicion, improve transparency, and create a more structured engagement

Bridging the trust gap: Why Kenya urgently needs a proper public participation framework law

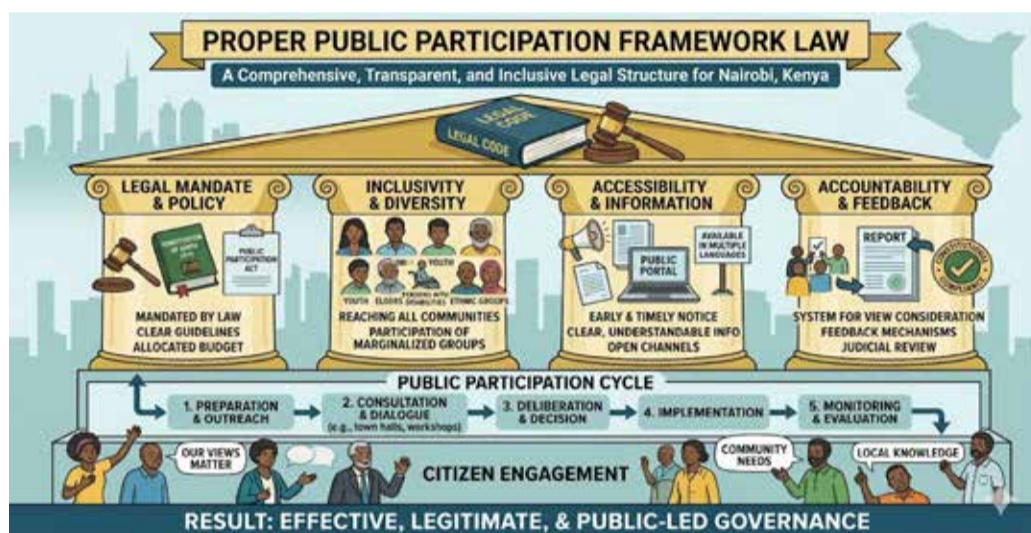


BY Paul Kinyanjui
@themkenyatimes

From the recurring fuel price increases to the skepticism and public suspicion surrounding the Finance Bill 2026, the country continues to witness endless debates, accusations, media press briefings, and growing mistrust between the National Assembly, the National Treasury, the public, and the media.

This raises an important national question: Could there be a more amicable, structured, and legally sound solution to these recurring conflicts?

It is gradually becoming ev-



ident that Kenya still lacks a clear, comprehensive, and enforceable legal framework that properly defines how public participation should be conducted. This existing ambiguity in public participation processes remains a major governance gap.

One of the best ways to reduce the current political ten-

sions and conflicts of interest is not only through proper civic education and public awareness by all stakeholders, but also through the establishment of a Proper Public Participation Policy Framework Bill (PPPPB).

In my opinion, this remains the missing link; whether by deliberate omission or institu-

tional oversight.

This proposal draws constitutional backing from several provisions of the Constitution of Kenya, particularly Articles 1, 10, 27, 29, 32, 33, 35, 37, 40, 73, 118, 174, 196, 201, and 232, all of which collectively emphasize public participation, transparency, accountability, integrity, access

to information, good governance, and responsible public service.

My humble and urgent appeal is therefore directed to the Office of the Chief Justice, together with the Office of the Attorney General, to urgently support the development of a comprehensive and enforceable Public Participation Policy Framework Bill before the country witnesses more ugly and avoidable confrontations.

The infiltration into Parliament on 25th June 2024, followed by the later attack on a court facility in Kikuyu, alongside destruction of property, loss of lives, looting, vandalism, and unrest witnessed on 25th June 2025, are painful incidents that should never be repeated again.

A proper legal framework on public participation could help restore trust, reduce suspicion, improve transparency, and create a more structured engagement between citizens and the State.

Public Participation without a proper framework is Kenya's most dangerous Governance gap.

The Judiciary must also continue guaranteeing the safety, protection, and welfare of all law enforcement officers, judicial personnel, and citizens

during moments of public tension and demonstrations.

Similarly, the National Assembly must move beyond merely condemning violence, looting, vandalism, destruction of property, and loss of innocent lives whenever demonstrations occur. Parliament must also confront the deeper institutional concerns that repeatedly trigger public outrage and mistrust.

It can become extremely dangerous for any democracy when a majority of citizens — including the electorate itself — begins losing confidence in the three arms of government: the Legislature, the Judiciary, and the Executive.

With all due respect, the ambiguity surrounding public participation laws and procedures can no longer be ignored.

I therefore remain asking: "Who could be fooling who?" And, "Who is buying time for who?" With all due respect.

The writer is a freelance researcher, analyst, critic writer on emerging issues and trends to create awareness, educate, enlighten, empower and inspire. He can be reached on E-Mail: Kinyanjupaul2030@gmail.com

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World Bongo Day “Together, we can help ensure that wildlife continues to thrive for years to come,” Kariuki said.

Humphrey Kariuki marks World Bongo Day as Kenya's species recovery records major milestones

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyatimes

As the world marked World Bongo Day, Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy founder and conservationist Humphrey Kariuki celebrated significant progress in the recovery of the critically endangered Mountain Bongo, one of the world's rarest forest antelopes.

Kariuki said the occasion serves as a reminder of the urgent need to protect endangered species and preserve biodiversity for future generations.

“Together, we can help ensure that wildlife continues to thrive for years to come,” he said.

For Kariuki, World Bongo Day is also a moment to reflect on a conservation journey that has become one of Kenya's most ambitious wildlife recovery programmes.

“When we acquired Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy, I committed to helping restore one of Kenya's most endangered species; the Mountain Bongo. Today, we are growing their numbers and restoring from near extinction a species that belongs in our forests,” he said.

The Mountain Bongo, often referred to as the “ghost of the forest” because of its elusive nature, is endemic to Kenya's montane forests, including the Aberdare, Mount Kenya, Mau and Eburu ecosystems.

The species suffered a dramatic population decline over the decades due to habitat destruction, poaching, disease outbreaks and human encroachment.

Conservationists estimate that fewer than 100 Mountain Bongos remain in the wild today, making it one of the world's most endangered antelope species.

At the heart of the recovery effort is the Mawingu Mountain Bongo Sanctuary, located within the Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy.

The sanctuary provides specialized breeding support,



Humphrey Kariuki with one of the Bongo in his Conservancy. | Photo: Courtesy.

veterinary care, ecological monitoring and scientific management aimed at rebuilding healthy populations of the species.

According to Kariuki, one of the most significant milestones was achieved in January 2026 when the conservancy recorded its 100th Mountain Bongo birth.

“Each calf represents years of dedication from our conservation teams, veterinarians, researchers and partners. Together, we are growing a population that is helping secure the future of this remarkable species,” he said.

The achievement underscores years of investment in conservation infrastructure, expertise and international partnerships designed to save the species from extinction.

A major boost to the programme came in April this year when Kenya received four male Mountain Bongos repatriated from the Czech Republic as part of a global conservation collaboration aimed at strengthening the species' genetic diversity. The animals arrived at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport aboard a KLM cargo flight before being transferred to Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy.

The four males had been under the care of Zoo Dvůr Králové in the Czech Republic, which has played a central role in international Mountain Bongo breeding programmes for decades.

Their return followed years of planning under Kenya's National Recovery and Action Plan for the Mountain Bongo.

The repatriation was particularly significant because conservationists have identified genetic diversity as a critical factor in rebuilding sustainable populations. Experts say introducing new bloodlines helps reduce the risks associated with inbreeding and improves reproductive success among captive populations.

Kariuki noted that the newly imported males are expected to strengthen breeding efforts at the conservancy and contribute to a healthier, more resilient population.

“A healthy future for the Mountain Bongo depends on strong genetic diversity,” he said.

The Mountain Bongo conservation story stretches back decades. In the 1970s and 1980s, several animals were moved to Europe and North America as populations in Kenya declined sharply.

Today, many of the bongos in international conservation breeding programmes are descendants of those original animals.

The recent repatriations are therefore being viewed as a symbolic return home for a species that nearly disappeared from its native forests.

The Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy currently hosts more than 100 Mountain Bongos and has become the centrepiece of Kenya's national recovery strategy.

The conservancy has already begun reintroducing some animals into protected forest habitats, with conservationists hopeful that wild populations will gradually recover over the coming decades.

Beyond breeding and reintroduction, Kariuki said conservation efforts continue to focus on habitat protection, scientific research and prepar-

ing animals for survival in the wild.

“Every day, we continue protecting the Mountain Bongo's habitat, supporting research, strengthening breeding programmes and preparing them for life in Kenya's forests,” he said.

As World Bongo Day shines a spotlight on one of Africa's most endangered mammals, conservationists say the progress achieved at Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy demonstrates what sustained investment, science and international cooperation can accomplish.

For Kariuki and the teams working behind the scenes, the birth of every calf and the return of every animal represent another step toward ensuring that the Mountain Bongo once again thrives in Kenya's forests.

The story incorporates background on the species, the recent repatriation from the Czech Republic, and the broader conservation significance.

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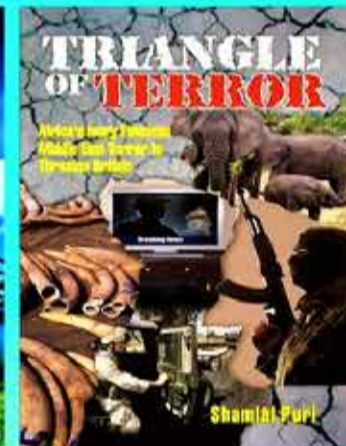
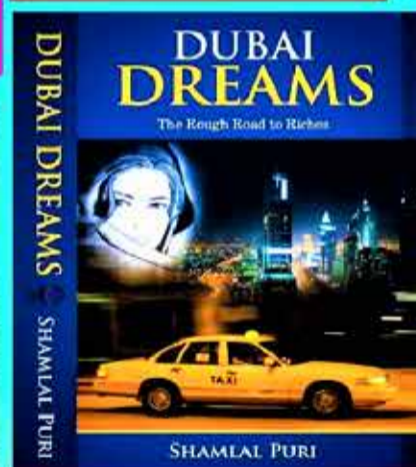
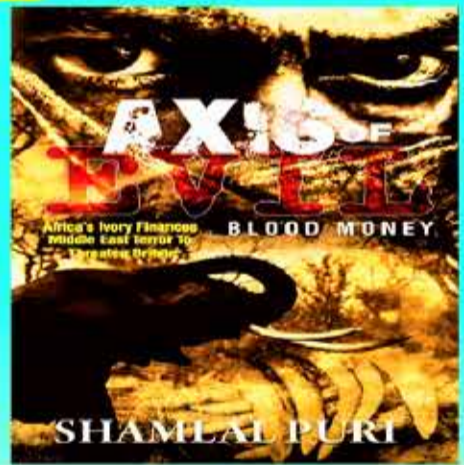
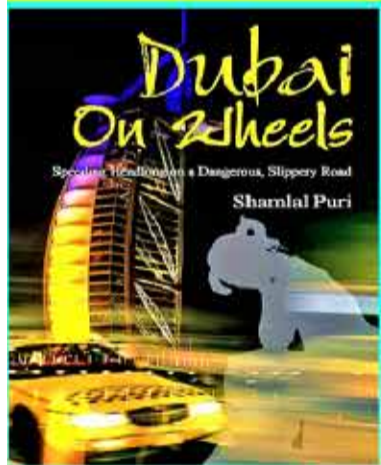
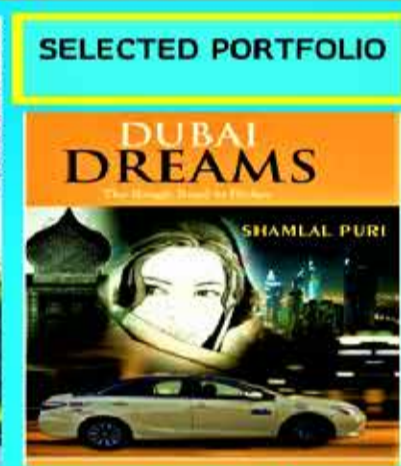
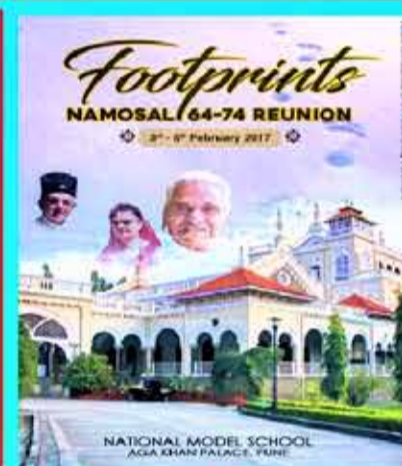
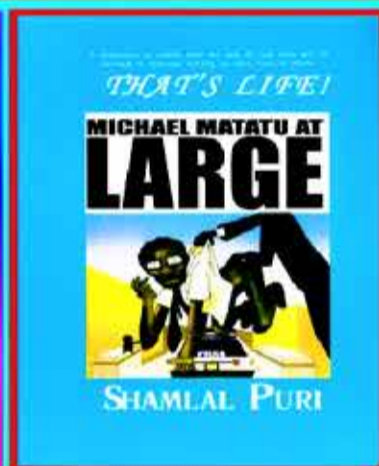
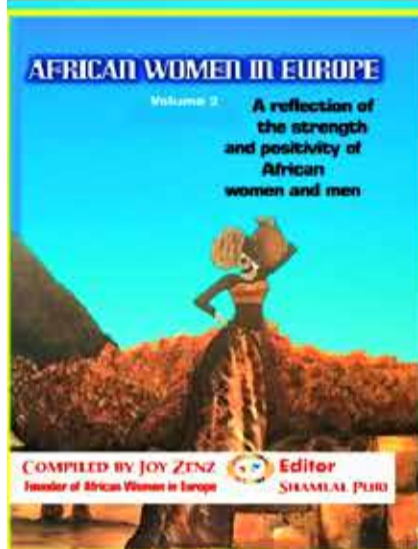
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Disaster Management Disasters produce not only physical destruction but also significant social, economic, psychological, and environmental consequence

The state's positive obligations in disaster management in the context of the protection of the right to life



BY Shafiga RAHIMLI

@themtkenyatimes

Natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, landslides, and wildfires pose direct threats to the right to life, which is recognized as the most fundamental human right in both national and international legal systems. The protection of this right requires the state not only to refrain from actions that endanger life but also to take active measures to prevent foreseeable risks, protect individuals, and intervene effectively when dangers arise. These duties are commonly described as the state's positive obligations (Boyacı Gümüşsoy, 2023). Disaster management is one of the most important fields in which these obligations are tested.

Disasters produce not only physical destruction but also significant social, economic, psychological, and environmental consequences. A state's ability to identify risks before disasters occur, respond effectively during emergencies, and manage recovery processes afterward directly affects the protection of human life. Failures in these areas may result in claims that the state has violated its positive obligations. Judicial precedents support this view. In *Öneryıldız v. Turkey* and *Budayeva v. Russia*, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) emphasized that states may be held responsible for violations of the right to life when they fail to take necessary preventive measures against known risks (ECtHR, 2004; ECtHR, 2008).

For Türkiye, disaster management is not merely a public policy issue but also a constitutional obligation. Article 17 of the Constitution guarantees the right to life and requires the state to protect individuals against foreseeable threats. Consequently, identifying disaster risks, enforcing building regulations, establishing early warning systems, strengthening search-and-rescue capacities, and ensuring access to shelter, food,

and healthcare after disasters are all part of the state's legal responsibilities.

Recent disasters, particularly the 2023 Kahramanmaraş earthquakes, have intensified discussions regarding the effectiveness of disaster management in Türkiye. Delays in response, coordination problems, and failures in identifying vulnerable buildings before the disaster have raised serious concerns about the fulfillment of the state's obligations to protect life (Gerdan, 2025). These developments demonstrate that disaster management is not only a technical process but also a critical area in which constitutional and international responsibilities are evaluated.

The right to life occupies a central position in both international human rights law and national constitutional systems. It protects not only the physical existence of individuals but also the conditions necessary for a dignified life. Therefore, the state's responsibility extends beyond avoiding direct interference with life and includes protecting individuals from foreseeable dangers (Karagöz, 2020). This broader responsibility is expressed through the concept of

positive obligations (Kaya, 2019).

A state may violate the right to life through either action or omission. While direct violations fall under negative obligations, positive obligations arise when authorities fail to take necessary measures despite the existence of foreseeable risks (Gözübüyük & Tan, 2017). In the context of disasters, these obligations become particularly significant because many disaster risks can be scientifically identified in advance. The state is therefore required to establish appropriate legal, administrative, and institutional frameworks to reduce such risks.

Article 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights places the protection of life among the most fundamental duties of the state. Through its jurisprudence, the ECtHR has interpreted this provision broadly, requiring states to regulate hazardous activities, establish effective oversight systems, coordinate public authorities, implement preventive measures, and conduct effective investigations following loss of life (Arslan, 2019; Özkan, 2021). As a result, the right to life has evolved into a comprehensive framework influencing all areas of public admin-

istration.

The state's positive obligations generally consist of three interconnected dimensions: prevention, protection, and intervention (Karabulut, 2021).

The obligation of prevention requires the identification and reduction of disaster risks. This includes collecting scientific data, preparing risk maps, conducting hazard analyses, and regulating urban planning accordingly (Keskin & Kılıç, 2022). Failure to enforce earthquake-resistant construction standards, permitting development in flood-prone areas, or neglecting evacuation planning may constitute violations of the right to life. The principle of foreseeability is central to this obligation: once a risk is scientifically knowable, the state is expected to act.

The obligation of protection focuses on increasing society's resilience against identified risks. Measures such as establishing early warning systems, strengthening search-and-rescue teams, training public personnel, and improving critical infrastructure are examples of this responsibility (Aydın & Ünal, 2021). When such measures are absent, disaster-related deaths may reflect not only natural events but also failures

in public administration.

The obligation of intervention applies during and immediately after disasters. It includes rapid deployment of rescue teams, emergency healthcare services, provision of shelter and food, and effective crisis coordination (Şahin & Kaya, 2018). Since delays can directly result in loss of life, the efficiency of emergency response is closely linked to the protection of the right to life.

An additional component of positive obligations is accountability. Where loss of life occurs due to negligence, inadequate supervision, or delayed intervention, the state must conduct an effective and independent investigation. Such investigations should identify causes, determine responsibility, and prevent similar failures in the future. Both ECtHR jurisprudence and national legal frameworks recognize this requirement as an essential aspect of the right to life.

Disaster management represents one of the clearest areas in which these obligations are applied in practice. Every stage of the disaster cycle is connected to the protection of life. Risk management, the first stage, requires the use of scientific information such as geotechnical studies, hazard analyses, and climate data in planning and decision-making processes (Ergünay, 2019; Özmen, 2022). Ignoring scientific findings during urban development can transform foreseeable hazards into large-scale tragedies.

The state's response capacity is equally important. Effective disaster response depends not only on the number of rescue personnel but also on communication systems, healthcare infrastructure, transportation networks, emergency logistics, and the continuity of essential services. Weaknesses in these areas may significantly increase casualties. Consequently, the organization and coordination of emergency resources constitute legal as well as administrative obligations.

The recovery and rehabilitation phase extends beyond physical reconstruction. It includes restoring access to housing, healthcare, education, and social support while strengthening resilience against future disasters (Çukurçayır & Eroğlu, 2020). Long-term rehabilitation is crucial because the consequences of disasters often continue long after the immediate emergency has ended.

In Türkiye, the frequency of earthquakes, floods, and wildfires makes the effective implementation of these obligations particularly important.



Star By working tirelessly day and night, she wrote complex independent assignments, term papers, and documentation for her classmates

A star that shone through hardships



BY Xudayberganova Diana
@themtkenyatimes

Every morning, Laylo would wake up earlier than anyone else. Long before the sun peeked over the horizon, she was already setting off on her journey to the distant institute. Being the eldest of four children, her sense of responsibility had awakened much earlier than in others.

The journey was long and exhausting. Commuting on public transport was never easy, whether during the freezing days of winter or the scorching heat of summer. Laylo's parents were simple, hardworking people. Although they rejoiced from the bottom of their hearts seeing their daughter's insatiable thirst for knowledge, they often felt disheartened by their inability to provide her



Create an image of A star that shone through hardships

with sufficient financial support and broader opportunities. The fatigue etched on her father's face and her mother's hidden sighs did not escape Laylo's notice. Yet, she never complained, nor did she resent her fate. On the contrary, this reality drove her to become even stronger.

"If the door of opportunity does not open, do not sit and wait for it—build a new door yourself!" Laylo lived by this exact rule throughout her life.

During her university years, the cost of books, educational supplies, and publishing articles in international journals stood before her like a massive wall. But Laylo never stopped. She found a way to turn her knowledge into a financial foundation:

By working tirelessly day and night, she wrote complex independent assignments, term papers, and documentation for her classmates.

Every single coin earned through

this grueling labor was channeled entirely into her own scientific articles, international conferences, and creative goals.

While her peers were resting or spending time in entertainment venues, she was in the library, building her future.

The purity of her intentions and her relentless hard work soon bore fruit. Laylo's scientific research and creative ideas received high recognition

in prestigious national and international startup competitions and grant programs. The consecutive top rankings and victories on the winner's podium were the ultimate rewards of her sleepless, painstaking nights.

Standing on grand stages, holding her awards in emotional moments, Laylo approached the microphone with tears in her eyes. She expressed her endless gratitude, naming her parents who gave her life as the primary reason for her success, followed by her dear mentors who guided her way. Her words deeply moved everyone gathered in the hall.

Today, Laylo has become the pride of not only her family, but also her teachers, relatives, and everyone who knows her—a true role model. Through her life, she proved that real success is not defined by wealth or ready-made privileges, but is earned through an invincible will and honest labor.

Xudayberganova Diana Vladimirovna

3rd-year student of Uzbek Language and Literature, Faculty of Philology, Urgench State Pedagogical Institute; Recipient of the Navoi State Scholarship.

Disaster Management Disasters produce not only physical destruction but also significant social, economic, psychological, and environmental consequence

The state's positive obligations in disaster management in the context of the protection of the right to life

Contd from page 18

The establishment of early warning systems, enforcement of building regulations, development of resilient infrastructure, and strengthening of emergency response mechanisms are all indicators of the state's commitment to protecting life. Nevertheless, recurring challenges such as coordination deficiencies, insufficient implementation of regulations, and institutional weaknesses demonstrate that significant improvements remain necessary (Gül & Balamir, 2021).

The findings discussed in this study indicate that much disaster-related harm can be prevented when positive obligations are effectively fulfilled. Weak risk assessment, inadequate



inspections, insufficient preparedness, and ineffective emergency responses increase the destructive consequences of disasters. Likewise, shortcomings in rehabilitation and accountability processes undermine

both public trust and long-term resilience.

Several recommendations emerge from this analysis. First, risk management should be strengthened through the systematic use of scientific

data. Urban planning, building inspections, and disaster preparedness policies must be based on evidence and implemented consistently. Second, emergency response capacity should be enhanced through better coordination, training, and resource allocation. Third, recovery policies should prioritize victims' needs while promoting long-term social and economic resilience. Finally, accountability mechanisms must operate transparently and independently to identify failures and encourage institutional learning.

Climate change further increases the importance of these obligations. More frequent floods, droughts, wildfires, and extreme weather events require governments to continuously update risk analyses and adapt disaster policies. Public participation is also essential. Disaster

education, drills, awareness campaigns, and effective use of warning systems strengthen society's ability to respond to emergencies and complement state efforts.

In conclusion, the state's positive obligations in disaster management are not merely technical or administrative responsibilities; they are fundamental legal duties arising from the right to life. Effective disaster management requires comprehensive action before, during, and after disasters. Prevention, protection, intervention, rehabilitation, and accountability form an integrated framework through which the right to life can be safeguarded. For Türkiye, where disaster risks remain high, strengthening these obligations is essential not only for legal compliance but also for public safety, social resilience, and state legitimacy. The protection of the right to life must therefore remain the guiding principle of all disaster management policies and practices.

Shafiga RAHIMLI

Master's Student in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Dokuz Eylül University, Izmir, Türkiye.

US - Iran The US Central Command, known as Centcom, confirmed it had conducted what it described as “self-defense strikes on Iranian radar ...

US and Iran trade air strikes near Strait of Hormuz as peace talks stall

Renewed attacks on radar sites, air bases and drones raise fears for global oil supplies as a permanent ceasefire remains out of reach

BY MKT Reporter
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The United States and Iran exchanged air strikes over the weekend near the Strait of Hormuz, with each side claiming to have destroyed military targets even as diplomatic efforts to secure a lasting peace deal continued to falter.

The US Central Command, known as Centcom, confirmed it had conducted what it described as “self-defense strikes on Iranian radar and command and control sites for drones in Goruk, Iran and Qeshm Island this weekend.” The strikes, carried out on Saturday and Sunday, were said to be a direct response to what Washington called “aggressive Iranian actions that included the shootdown of a US MQ-1 drone that was operating over international waters.” In a post on X, Centcom said American fighters also struck Iranian air defences, a ground control station and two drones that it said “posed a clear threat to ships transiting through regional waters.” No US service personnel were reported injured.

Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps hit back swiftly. The IRGC said it had struck the air base from which the American attacks were launched, targeting a communications tower on Sirri Island in the Gulf, roughly 40 miles from Iran’s southern coastline. Tehran stopped short of disclosing the precise location of its retaliatory strike but issued a pointed warning, with the IRGC stating through Iran’s semi-official Fars news agency that its response would be “completely different” if American aggression was “repeated.” The language, calibrated and deliberate, signalled that Iran was prepared to escalate beyond what has so far been a tightly managed exchange of blows.

The violence has already drawn in neighbouring states. Kuwait’s military announced it was “confronting hostile missile and drone attacks” using its air-defence systems, with-



The United States and Iran exchanged air strikes over the weekend near the Strait of Hormuz

out specifying the origin or location of the interceptions. Tehran had targeted a Kuwaiti air base the previous week in response to earlier US strikes — attacks Washington said were conducted to prevent Iranian vessels and missiles from laying mines around the critical shipping channel that connects the Persian Gulf to the Arabian Sea.

At the heart of the crisis lies one of the world’s most consequential waterways. Approximately one-fifth of global oil and liquefied natural gas shipments pass through the Strait of Hormuz under normal conditions. The current conflict has imposed what amounts to a de facto trade embargo on the channel, pushing fuel prices upward across global markets and raising alarm among energy-dependent economies from Europe to East Africa. For countries like Kenya, already navigating the pressures of a weak shilling and elevated

pump prices, any prolonged disruption to Gulf shipping carries direct and painful consequences at the fuel station and the dinner table.

The diplomatic picture remains murky. A ceasefire formally came into effect on 8 April, and President Donald Trump has repeatedly suggested that a permanent agreement was within reach. Yet no formal deal has been signed. The latest proposed framework, as reported by CBS News — the BBC’s US partner — included a 60-day cessation of hostilities, a commitment to reopen the Strait of Hormuz to commercial traffic, and a broader framework for reviving negotiations on Iran’s nuclear programme. Over the weekend, Trump was reported to have requested changes to the existing terms of the proposal. Tehran dismissed the reports as “speculation,” a word that in diplomatic parlance often signals a reluctance to be seen making con-

cessions under fire.

The cycle of strikes and counter-strikes, punctuated by public statements that simultaneously claim defensive intent and threaten escalation, has become the defining rhythm of this conflict. Analysts note that both governments face intense domestic pressures that complicate compromise: Trump cannot afford to appear weak on Iran ahead of any political reckoning at home, while Iranian leadership faces a population exhausted by economic sanctions yet deeply nationalistic in its response to foreign military action on its soil.

What distinguishes this round of hostilities from earlier US-Iran confrontations is the proximity of strikes to critical civilian and commercial infrastructure — radar stations, communication towers and drone command sites that sit within range of the world’s most strategically sensitive shipping lane. The risk of mis-

calculation, military analysts warn, is real and growing.

The DOSB’s September decision on Germany’s Olympic host city and the Iran-US standoff may seem worlds apart, but they share a common thread: the fragility of institutions when public trust, political will, and strategic interest fail to align. In the Gulf, the cost of that misalignment is measured not in lost bids but in barrels of oil, burning radar towers, and a peace deal that remains, for now, just out of reach.

Whether Washington and Tehran can find the political will to turn a fragile ceasefire into something durable may depend less on the terms of any document than on whether either side blinks before the next strike is ordered.

Ghana President John Mahama confirmed earlier this month that his government had agreed to take in nationals from other West African countries

New group of western deportees arrives in Ghana from United States

BY Norman Mwale
@themkenyaintimes

ACCRA — Another group of West African nationals deported from the United States has been sent to Ghana under a third-country removal arrangement pursued by the Trump administration, with at least one of the individuals holding US court-ordered protection from deportation to his home country, a lawyer involved in the case said on Saturday.

The exact number in the latest batch was not immediately confirmed, but Meredyth Yoon, a US-based lawyer associated with one of the deportation cases, said the group arrived in Accra on Thursday. The deportees form part of a wider policy in which Washington has sought agreements that allow it to send people to countries where they have no ties, as part of what President Donald Trump has described as a vast immigration crackdown targeting unauthorised immigrants who would typically have been permitted to remain under previous administrations.

Since last year, Ghana has been accepting West Africans temporarily before onward removal to their countries of origin, including people whom US immigration judges found would face persecution if returned home. Ghanaian authorities have previously stated that many of those transferred to Accra have already been sent back to their home countries, although lawyers in the United States say some deportees have instead been held in military detention in “cruel conditions”.

The Guinean man represented by Yoon had been granted “withholding of removal”, a legal protection that is weaker than asylum but has historically superseded a deportation order, allowing the individual to live and work in the United States. “The man had ‘withholding of removal’,” Yoon said, adding that such protection should have prevented his removal to a country where he could be at risk.

Ghana’s President John Dramani Mahama confirmed earlier this month that his government had agreed to take in nationals from other West African countries who were being deported from the US under the Trump administration’s immigration policy. Speaking to reporters, he said Ghana had accepted 14



Western deportees arrives in Ghana from United States

people in an initial group, including several Nigerians and one Gambian, under the ECOWAS protocol on free movement, which permits regional nationals to enter the country. “On humanitarian grounds, pan-African solidarity, let us accept our fellow West Africans. And let’s make the point that Ghana is your home,” Foreign Minister Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa told Channell TV late Wednesday. He added that the deportees, who are vetted before arrival, would be allowed to remain in Ghana temporarily or return to their home countries.

However, the arrangement has drawn sharp criticism from human rights lawyers and civil society groups. Oliver Barker-Vormawor, a Ghanaian lawyer who has represented 11 of the deportees in court, told the press that his clients were detained at Bundase Military Camp, an active military training base outside Accra, without access to running water, bedding or adequate health-care. “The place was not designed to keep humans,” Barker-Vormawor

said of the conditions the deportees described to him. He said women had been denied sanitary products and those who were sick were denied medical care.

Barker-Vormawor filed a lawsuit in Accra seeking to block the removal of 11 deportees to their home countries, arguing that at least eight had been granted protection by US immigration judges against deportation due to risks of torture, persecution or inhumane treatment. At a virtual hearing on Tuesday, he told the court that the group had nevertheless been deported over the weekend. “This is precisely the injury we were trying to prevent,” he said, adding that the lawsuit had become “moot” and was being withdrawn. He later told Reuters that at least six of the men were now in neighbouring Togo, while the whereabouts of the other five remained unknown. “Information suggests another 14 have arrived,” he said, though he had not confirmed the figure.

Ghanaian immigration services did not immediately respond to an AFP

request for comment on the latest arrivals. A government spokesperson, Felix Kwakye Ofosu, told RFI last week that “all deportees have left Ghana for their respective home countries”. Yet lawyers maintain that some deportees remain in detention or have been transferred to third countries without due process. Samantha Hamilton, an attorney for Asian Americans Advancing Justice, said that six people from a previous group were allegedly taken across the border to Togo under armed guard. “The deportees were forced by armed military guards to climb wire fences,” Hamilton said. “A woman in her late 50s was thrown on the back of a motorcycle and smuggled across the border.”

The Trump administration’s deportation programme has faced widespread criticism from human rights experts who cite international protections for asylum-seekers and question whether immigrants are being appropriately screened before removal. The administration has increasingly sought to send migrants

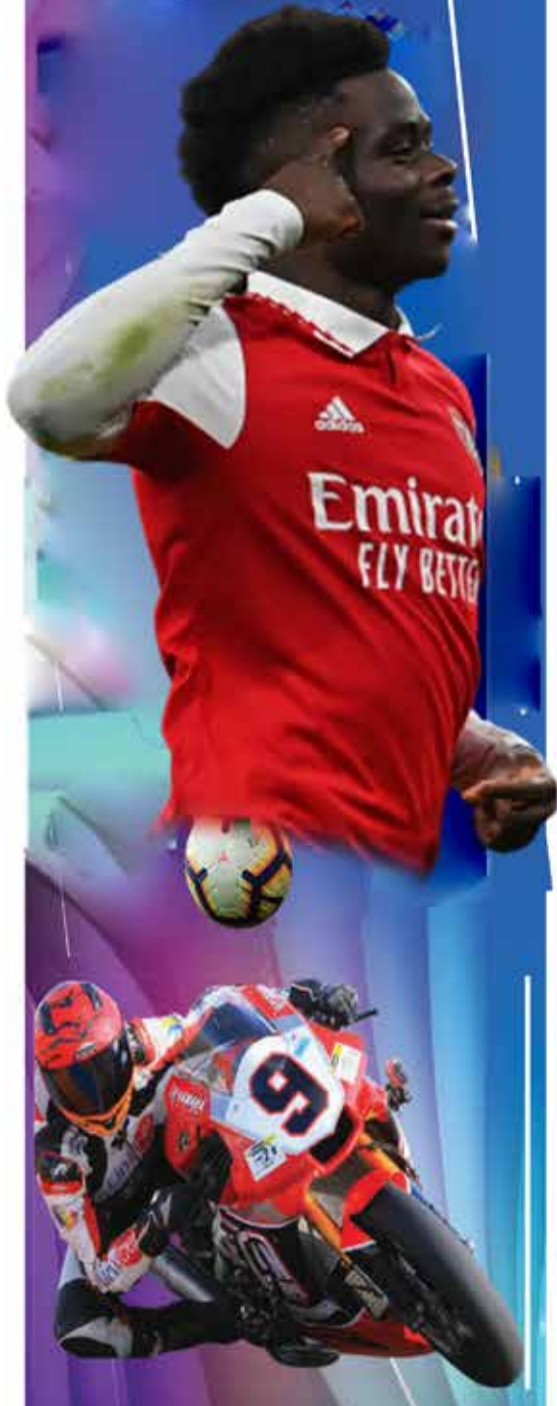
to third countries under agreements with those governments when home countries refuse or delay repatriation.

Mahama’s government has insisted that the decision to take in West African deportees did not amount to an endorsement of US immigration policy and that Ghana was “not getting anything in return”. Nevertheless, the practice has raised concerns among lawyers and rights groups who argue that Ghana is undermining national sovereignty and flouting international protocols. “Ghana and the US are accused of bargaining with lives over West African deportees,” Barker-Vormawor said, warning that individuals with US court protections were still being removed to countries where they faced harm.

For now, the latest arrivals are expected to be processed by Ghanaian authorities in line with the existing arrangement, though the lack of transparency around numbers, detention conditions and onward removals continues to fuel legal challenges and diplomatic scrutiny.

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Sports >> *Hamburg has withdrawn from the race to host the Summer Olympics — in 2036, 2040, or 2044 — after city residents voted against the bid in a referendum on Sunday

Hamburg bows out of Olympics race after voters say no — again

By MKT Reporter

Hamburg has withdrawn from the race to host the Summer Olympics — in 2036, 2040, or 2044 — after city residents voted against the bid in a referendum on Sunday, dealing a second blow to Olympic ambitions in the port city in just over a decade.

With 98 percent of ballots counted, 55 percent of voters rejected the proposal, against 45 percent in favour. Turnout stood at nearly 50 percent of eligible voters — a figure city officials had hoped would deliver a ringing mandate for the Games. Instead, it delivered a verdict that was both clear and familiar.

Hamburg mayor Peter Tschentscher confirmed shortly after the results came in that he had informed both the German Olympic Federation, known by its German acronym DOSB, and the International Olympic Committee that the bid was being withdrawn. “Many citizens who were looking forward to the Games are disappointed by the outcome of the referendum,” Tschentscher said in a statement. “I, too, deeply regret the result of the vote, but I wish to thank everyone who supported the goal of bringing the Games to Hamburg.”

The defeat is the second of its kind for the northern German city. In November 2015, Hamburg voters rejected a bid to host the 2024 Olympics by a margin of 51.4 percent to 48.6 percent — a result that at the time was seen as an anomaly rather than a pattern. Sunday’s outcome suggests otherwise. Opposition campaigners had raised concerns about the cost of hosting the Games, the displacement of residents, and the long-term burden on city infrastructure — arguments that have gained traction in a number of European cities in recent years and helped kill bids



Hamburg has withdrawn from the race to host the Summer Olympics — in 2036, 2040, or 2044.

from Oslo, Budapest, and Rome over the previous decade.

Hamburg was one of four German cities or regions competing for the right to be selected by the DOSB as the country’s official candidate. The remaining contenders — Berlin, Munich, and the sprawling Rhine-Ruhr metropolitan region — will now advance. In September, the DOSB will choose which of the three should be presented to the IOC as Germany’s formal host proposal.

The momentum appears to favour Munich. At a referendum held in October 2025, voters in the Bavarian capital backed an Olympic bid by a commanding 66.4 percent majority, with 42 percent of eligible voters participating — numbers that lend the Munich campaign both democratic legitimacy and political

weight. The Rhine-Ruhr region similarly recorded strong public support in April, with 66 percent voting in favour, though on a turnout of just 33 percent of eligible voters.

The northern city of Kiel, which had positioned itself as the sailing venue for whichever German city ultimately wins the bid, recorded 63.5 percent support in its own local vote. Berlin, notably, will not hold a public referendum at all.

Germany has a complicated relationship with the Olympics. Munich hosted the 1972 Summer Games — remembered as much for the tragedy of the Palestinian militant attack that killed 11 Israeli athletes and coaches as for the athletic spectacle — while Berlin’s hosting in 1936 remains one of the most politically freighted chapters in

Olympic history, overshadowed entirely by Adolf Hitler’s use of the Games as a platform for Nazi propaganda.

A successful bid from any of the remaining three cities would represent Germany’s first Summer Olympics in more than half a century, and the DOSB has made no secret of its desire to reclaim that moment.

For Hamburg, however, the dream is over — and this time, there is little reason to expect it will be revived.

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *South Africa's preparations for their first FIFA World Cup appearance since 2010 have been thrown into uncertainty after Bafana Bafana were forced to delay their scheduled departure for Mexico

Bafana Bafana face possible travel delay ahead of crucial world cup opener



Bafana Bafana team

By Norman Mwale

JOHANNESBURG — South Africa's preparations for their first FIFA World Cup appearance since 2010 have been thrown into uncertainty after Bafana Bafana were forced to delay their scheduled departure for Mexico due to unresolved visa complications, with the South African Football Association and the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture racing to secure documentation before the team's Group A opener against co-hosts Mexico on 11 June.

The national squad was due to leave on a chartered flight from OR Tambo International Airport in the early hours of Sunday, 31 May, to commence final altitude acclimatisation at their tournament base in Pachuca, situated 2,300 metres above sea level. However, administrative issues affecting travel documents for several players and members of the technical staff prevented the travelling party from boarding, SAFA confirmed. The association said the team remains in

camp in Johannesburg and will depart for North America as soon as the clearances are granted.

Head coach Hugo Broos, who finalised his 26-man squad earlier this month, has been unequivocal about the importance of an early arrival in Mexico. "You know you cannot play that game at high altitude if you don't have time to adapt. We will do before the World Cup," Broos said in April, when he first pressed for a direct charter to avoid the fatigue associated with commercial routing. Citing a previous journey to Pachuca that took 26 hours, he added: "I really beg SAFA and all the people who can arrange, that we go on a charter flight. The players need to arrive fresh, not exhausted. This is not a luxury; it is a requirement for us to compete."

The Department of Sport, Arts and Culture said it was "seized with the matter" and had escalated engagements with the Department of Home Affairs and the Mexican Embassy in Pretoria. A senior official in the Ministry, who spoke on condition of ano-

nymity as they were not authorised to brief the media, stated: "We are aware of the visa delays affecting Bafana Bafana and we are treating this as a matter of national importance. Government is working closely with SAFA and our diplomatic missions to ensure the team travels at the earliest opportunity. We fully understand the technical requirements coach Broos has outlined for altitude preparation and we will not allow administrative hurdles to compromise the players."

SAFA moved to allay fears that the delay would derail the team's programme. "The delay is linked to visa complications affecting members of the squad and support staff," a SAFA spokesperson said. "We are working around the clock with the relevant authorities to have this resolved. Training continues in Johannesburg, the players remain focused, and a revised travel schedule will be communicated once finalised. There is no suggestion at this stage that the opening match is in jeopardy."

This is not the first time Bafana

Bafana have encountered logistical difficulties on the road. In June 2025, the team was forced to overnight in Port Harcourt after missing a connecting flight to Uyo for a World Cup qualifier against Nigeria when the airport closed, an incident that prompted Broos to demand chartered travel for all long-haul assignments. With South Africa drawn alongside Mexico, the Czech Republic and South Korea in Group A, and a warm-up fixture against Jamaica scheduled in Mexico, the timing of the current disruption is particularly acute.

The Ministry reiterated that resolving the impasse was a priority across government. "Bafana Bafana carry the hopes of the nation as they return to the world stage for the first time since 2010," the official added. "All stakeholders are aligned and we expect movement within the next 24 hours. This is a historic moment for South African football and we will ensure the team is given every chance to succeed."

Broos, meanwhile, maintained that his focus remained on the pitch, even as the administrative process unfolds. "We have planned for months. The altitude in Pachuca is a factor we must respect," he said. "If we lose days now, we lose preparation. I trust SAFA and government will solve this quickly, because the players deserve to arrive ready to compete, not to recover from travel."

SAFA indicated that the squad would board the first available flight once documentation is in hand, with technical staff adjusting training loads in the interim to manage the uncertainty. For now, the clock is ticking on a narrow acclimatisation window that Broos has long described as non-negotiable for any realistic prospect of success at the Estadio Azteca.

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SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



De-stressing in a busy life: An often-ignored necessity

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PRACTICAL WAYS TO MANAGE STRESS



Practical Ways to Manage Stress.

Worth Noting:

- Prolonged exposure to stress has been linked to anxiety, depression, sleep disturbances, weakened immunity, cardiovascular problems, and reduced cognitive performance. Despite growing awareness of these risks, many people continue to prioritize their responsibilities over their well-being.
- One of the primary reasons for this neglect is the widespread belief that taking time to relax is unproductive. In a culture that often equates busyness with success, individuals may feel guilty for slowing down or taking breaks. As a result, self-care and stress management are frequently postponed until signs of burnout begin to appear. However, research and experience alike suggest that regular periods of rest and recovery are essential for maintaining both physical and mental health.

In today's fast-paced world, stress has become an unavoidable part of daily life. Professional commitments, academic pressures, financial responsibilities, family obligations, and the constant influx of information through digital devices have significantly increased the mental burden on individuals. While much attention is given to productivity and achievement, the importance of de-stressing often remains overlooked.

Stress, in moderate amounts, can serve as a motivator by encouraging individuals to meet deadlines and overcome challenges. However, when stress becomes chronic and unmanaged, it can have serious consequences.

Prolonged exposure to stress has been linked to anxiety, depression, sleep disturbances, weakened immunity, cardiovascular problems, and reduced cognitive performance. Despite growing awareness of these risks, many people continue to prioritize their responsibilities over their well-being.

One of the primary reasons for this

neglect is the widespread belief that taking time to relax is unproductive. In a culture that often equates busyness with success, individuals may feel guilty for slowing down or taking breaks. As a result, self-care and stress management are frequently postponed until signs of burnout begin to appear. However, research and experience alike suggest that regular periods of rest and recovery are essential for maintaining both physical and mental health.

The increasing integration of technology into everyday life has further complicated the issue. Smartphones, emails, social media platforms, and instant messaging applications have created an environment of constant connectivity. While technology offers numerous benefits, it has also blurred the boundaries between work and personal life, making it more difficult for individuals to disconnect and recharge.

The expectation of being continuously available can contribute significantly to feelings of stress and exhaustion.

Practical Ways to Manage Stress

Although stress cannot be eliminated entirely, it can be managed effectively through conscious and consistent efforts. Maintaining a healthy work-life balance, engaging in regular physical activity, ensuring adequate sleep, and taking short breaks during the day can help reduce stress levels. Limiting unnecessary screen time and establishing boundaries around work-related communication can also support mental well-being.

In addition, activities such as reading, pursuing hobbies, spending time in nature, practicing mindfulness, or connecting with family and friends can provide valuable opportunities for relaxation and emotional recovery. For individuals experiencing persistent or overwhelming stress, seeking professional support from a mental health expert can be an important and beneficial step.

Organizations and educational institutions are increasingly recognizing the importance of well-being and mental health. Many now promote wellness initiatives, flexible sched-

ules, and support systems designed to help individuals manage stress more effectively. Nevertheless, meaningful stress management ultimately depends on personal awareness and a willingness to prioritize one's own well-being.

In a society that frequently celebrates constant activity and achievement, de-stressing should not be viewed as a luxury or an occasional indulgence. Rather, it is a necessary component of a healthy, productive, and balanced life. As the demands of modern living continue to grow, individuals must recognize that taking time to care for their mental and emotional health is not a sign of weakness but a vital investment in their overall quality of life.