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MP Ndingi Nyoro

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KALRO holds a successful five-day event with impactful resolutions

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

Some of the moments as captured in pictures

The 2nd Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO) Scientific Conference and Innovation Expo concluded in Nairobi on Friday after five days of high-level discussions on transforming Kenya's agricultural sector through science, innovation and partnerships.

Held from Monday to Friday at KALRO headquarters, the event brought together more than 2,000 participants, including scientists, policymakers, farmers, youth innovators, development partners and private sector stakeholders under the theme "Innovations for Sustainable Agri-food Systems, Climate Change Resilience and Improved Livelihoods."

The conference was officially opened by the Principal Secretary for Agriculture Development, Kipronoh Ronoh, and featured contributions from KALRO Director General Dr. Patrick Ketiem, board chairman Dr Thuo Mathenge and other senior government and research officials.



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Editor's Desk




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NEWS IN BRIEF



The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) has called for a more inclusive approach to addressing youth unemployment, noting that many young people still face obstacles to securing decent jobs and economic opportunities. Speaking at a policy dialogue in Nairobi, NGEC Chief Executive Officer Dr. Purity Ngina said youth unemployment is not only an economic challenge but also a matter of equality and social justice. She urged policymakers, development partners and other stakeholders to move beyond research and implement practical solutions that benefit all young people, particularly young women, persons with disabilities and marginalized communities. Dr. Ngina emphasized that Kenya's progress should be measured by the number of youths whose lives are improved through meaningful employment, dignity and hope.



Laikipia East Deputy County Commissioner Patrick Muli has appealed to youths in Likii to avoid destructive demonstrations and instead promote peace and constructive engagement. He emphasized the importance of dialogue, restraint and peaceful means of expressing concerns in order to protect lives, businesses and public property. Muli said maintaining calm and pursuing discussions would help address issues without

causing disruption or damage. His remarks come amid growing tensions over plans to establish an Ebola quarantine facility at the Laikipia Air Base, a joint initiative between the Kenyan and United States governments. The proposed project has attracted strong opposition from local leaders and residents, raising concerns within the community.



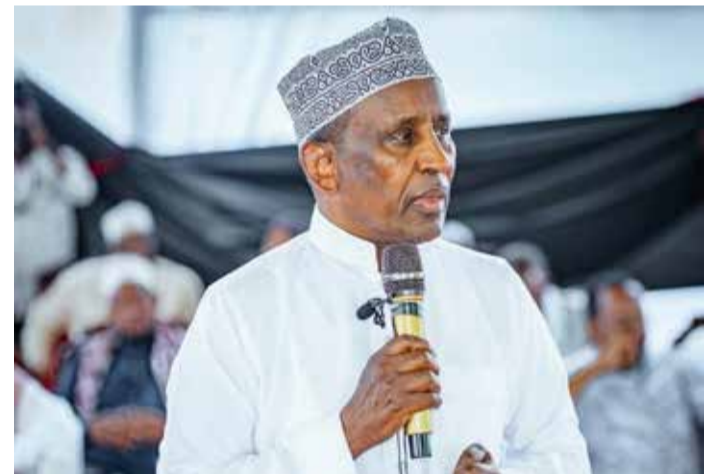
A multi-sectoral Joint Support Supervision (JSS) team has stepped up awareness campaigns on Ebola Virus Disease and five priority zoonotic diseases in Lomokori and Lochor-Alomala villages in Lokiriana Sub-County. The initiative brought together residents, health workers and community health volunteers to promote early disease detection, prevention and referral. Communities were educated on rabies, anthrax, brucellosis, trypanosomiasis and Rift Valley Fever, with emphasis on preventing transmission from animals to humans. Residents were also informed about an upcoming livestock and dog vaccination campaign.

Community members called for stronger border screening and improved water infrastructure to enhance disease preparedness. Health officials and partners emphasized the importance of collaboration, public awareness and the One Health approach in preventing and responding to disease outbreaks.



Boda boda riders in Malaba, Teso North Sub-county, have been urged to remain vigilant amid an increase in criminal activities targeting motorcycle operators. Teso North Boda Boda Riders Association Chairperson Hussein Ikomol warned that criminals are posing as passengers to attack riders and steal their motorcycles. He also noted that thieves are increasingly targeting public gatherings, including funerals, where they exploit large crowds to steal motorcycles and flee unnoticed. Ikomol made the remarks during a meeting in Malaba attended by boda boda chairpersons from across the sub-county, members of the security committee, the Akadetwai senior chief, the Malaba OCS, Nyumba Kumi representatives and officials from Mogo.

Former Garissa Governor Ali Korane has called on the Muslim community in northeastern Kenya to support President William Ruto's re-election bid, saying the region has benefited significantly from the current administration's development efforts. Speaking during a meeting with religious leaders in Garissa Town, Korane cited infrastructure projects, policy reforms and support for Islamic institutions, including madrassas and mosques, as reasons for backing the president for a second term. Korane, who served as governor from 2017 to 2022 and is seeking a comeback on a UDA ticket in next year's elections, urged residents to support both his and Ruto's campaigns. He also appealed to religious leaders to help address rising insecurity in Garissa by speaking out against crime and guiding local youth away from criminal activities.



The Migori County Government has assured residents that stalled and vandalized water projects will be restored and completed despite ongoing theft of solar panels that has disrupted several facilities. Speaking during a County Assembly oversight session, Water and Energy CECM Silas Oduor said the department had identified non-operational projects and was implementing measures to revive them. He cited the theft of solar panels at the Nyabikondo Water Project and similar incidents elsewhere as major challenges. Oduor said 54 of the 84 planned water projects for the current financial year had been completed, with more expected before year-end. The county has also expanded water pipelines, installed solar street lights, and pledged to improve access to clean water while urging residents to protect public infrastructure.



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Politics On education, Ruto said the sector budget has grown from KSh702 billion to KSh784 billion

Ruto defends Finance Bill, touts budget gains and development agenda as leaders back economic reforms

BY PCS

@themkenyaintimes

President William Ruto has commended Parliament for passing the Finance Bill, saying it exposed what he termed as falsehoods and misinformation advanced by the opposition.

He noted that leaders opposed to the Bill were challenged to point out provisions that would harm Kenyans but failed, describing their claims as propaganda and deliberate misinformation.

“That is why I urge Kenyans to reject politics driven by hatred, tribalism, lies, propaganda and division,” he said.

Speaking during the funeral service of Mama Zipporah Kosgey in Kipkoror, Nandi County, the President said the Finance Bill 2026 will support funding for national development priorities and sustain critical public services.

He said the Bill has secured revenue for the 2026/2027 Budget, including increased allocations to key sectors. He announced KSh21 billion for the Kenya Medical Supplies Agency to strengthen supply of medical commodities, KSh18 billion for fertilizer and seed subsidies, and a KSh15 billion increase in allocations to counties.

On education, Ruto said the sector budget has grown from KSh702 billion to KSh784 billion, while Higher Education Loans Board funding has increased from KSh15 billion in 2022 to KSh56 billion in



From left: PCS Musalia Mudavadi, President William Ruto and former Cabinet Minister Henry Kosgey on Friday.

the 2026/2027 financial year. He further urged Kenyans to embrace preventive healthcare, including cancer screening, noting that the Social Health Authority (SHA) now covers up to KSh800,000 per cancer patient annually. He said KSh9.5 billion has been spent in the past year treating over 43,000 cancer patients.

On county development, the President cited allocations including KSh5 billion for roads in Nandi, KSh1.8 billion for electricity connectivity, KSh1 billion for a stadium, and KSh400 million for upgrading Kapsabet County Referral Hospital. He also noted that SHA has disbursed KSh1.6 billion to Nandi hospitals in 17 months.

Ruto added that the government is investing KSh17 billion in affordable housing, modern markets, and student

hostels, including accommodation for 3,500 college and university students.

He also directed the Ministry of Interior and police to crack down on what he called the “goons menace,” accusing some politicians of sponsoring violence during protests. He warned against using demonstrations as a cover for politically motivated chaos and urged parents to take responsibility for raising their children.

Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi, Interior CS Kipchumba Murkomen, governors, senators and other leaders present praised the Finance Bill’s passage, saying it was crucial for economic growth and national stability.

Mudavadi said Ruto had represented Africa well at the G7 Summit in France, while Murkomen reiterated the

government’s tough stance on violent criminal groups. Leaders including Governors Stephen Sang, Gladys Wanga, Wisley Rotich and Jonathan Bii pledged support for the administration’s development agenda, saying the country was witnessing meaningful transformation.

Senate Majority Leader Aaron Cheruiyot and other leaders present echoed similar sentiments, accusing the opposition of failing to substantiate claims during the Finance Bill debate and instead engaging in political misinformation.

The leaders collectively reaffirmed support for the government’s economic reforms and development agenda, insisting they are key to stabilising the economy and improving service delivery across the country.

KALRO holds a successful five-day event with impactful resolutions



Dr Thuo Mathenge

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Dr. Ketiem emphasized the need for agricultural research to deliver real impact at farm level, noting that success should be measured by adoption of technologies and improved livelihoods rather than publications alone.

Dr. Mathenge also urged scientists to move closer to farmers and take innovations to the field.

Key discussions focused on climate change, food security, digital agriculture and commercialization of research outputs. Delegates noted that droughts, floods and emerging pests continue to threaten agricultural productivity, calling for urgent climate-smart interventions.

The conference also highlighted the importance of increasing investment in agricultural research, expanding

digital technologies such as AI and precision farming, and strengthening value addition and agro-processing.

Aflatoxin contamination was identified as a major food safety concern, with support for scaling up Aflasafe KE01 technology to protect public health and food systems.

Key resolutions included strengthening demand-driven research, scaling climate-smart technologies, expanding digital agriculture, improving commercialization and value addition, enhancing food safety systems, and increasing support for youth- and women-led agribusinesses.

Participants also called for stronger partnerships among government, counties, research institutions, universities and the private sector to ensure innovations reach farmers and drive national development goals.

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KALRO conference charts bold path for Kenya's food security through innovation and climate resilience

BY WMW

@themkenyatimes

Kenya must accelerate the adoption of agricultural innovations, increase investment in research, strengthen partnerships and empower farmers if it is to secure its food future in the face of climate change and emerging threats to food production.

This was the key message emerging from the 2nd Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO) Scientific Conference and Innovation Expo, which concluded in Nairobi, after five days of deliberations involving more than 2,000 local and international stakeholders.

The conference, held from Monday to Friday at KALRO headquarters, brought together scientists, policymakers, development partners, private sector leaders, farmers, universities, youth innovators, women representatives and international institutions under the theme, "Innovations for Sustainable Agri-food Systems, Climate Change Resilience and Improved Livelihoods."

Participants agreed that agricultural research and innovation remain critical to addressing food insecurity, climate change, declining soil health, emerging pests and diseases, food safety concerns and the commercialization gap that continues to hinder the uptake of scientific innovations by farmers.

KALRO Director General Dr. Patrick Ketiemi said the future of agricultural research lies not in the number of technologies released but in the impact they create among farming communities.

"The measure of our success is not how many technologies we release, but how many farmers adopt them. We must design for scale from the start and ensure our innovations reach the last mile," said Dr. Ketiemi. The conference was officially opened by the Principal Secretary in the State Department for Agriculture Development, Dr. Kipronoh Ronoh, on behalf of Agriculture Cabinet Secretary Mutahi Kagwe.

Climate change demands urgent action

Climate change emerged as the dominant concern during the conference, with delegates describing it as the greatest threat facing Kenya's

agricultural sector.

Participants noted that increasing droughts, floods, erratic rainfall patterns and emerging pests continue to undermine agricultural productivity and threaten the livelihoods of millions of smallholder farmers.

To address these challenges, the conference called for accelerated investment in climate-smart agriculture, including drought-tolerant crop varieties, resilient livestock breeds, soil and water conservation technologies, weather intelligence systems and sustainable natural resource management practices.

Delegates emphasized that strengthening resilience among smallholder farmers is essential for safeguarding Kenya's food systems and ensuring long-term food security.

The conference further urged national and county governments to substantially increase funding for agricultural research, describing research and innovation as strategic national investments rather than expenditures.

Participants called for long-term financing mechanisms, modernized scientific infrastructure, stronger public-private partnerships and greater investment in scientific talent development and mentorship.

Digital Technologies and Commercialization

The conference highlighted the transformative potential of emerging technologies in agriculture and called for their wider deployment across the country.

Among the technologies identified as critical for future agricultural growth were Artificial Intelligence (AI), precision agriculture, earth observation systems, robotics, digital extension services and agricultural data platforms.

Delegates noted that digital solutions can improve productivity, strengthen extension services, support better decision-making and expand market access for smallholder farmers.

At the same time, participants stressed the need to bridge the commercialization gap that continues to prevent many research outputs from reaching farmers and markets.

The conference observed that Kenya cannot achieve sustainable agricultural growth by continuing to export raw commodities and called

for increased agro-processing, value addition, agribusiness incubation, agricultural mechanization and improved access to finance.

Delegates emphasized that agricultural transformation requires stronger pathways connecting scientific innovations to commercial opportunities and farmer adoption.

Aflatoxin threat

One of the most pressing issues raised during the conference was the continued prevalence of aflatoxin contamination in maize and other staple foods.

Delegates expressed concern over the threat posed by aflatoxins to public health, child nutrition, livestock productivity and national food security.

The conference recognized Aflasafe KE01, developed through collaboration involving KALRO and international partners, as a proven biological control technology capable of reducing aflatoxin contamination by more than 80 per cent.

Participants recommended scaling up deployment of the technology in hotspot areas, integrating it into subsidy and e-voucher programmes, strengthening surveillance systems and undertaking nationwide public awareness campaigns.

In a notable development, KALRO Board Chairman Dr. Thuo Mathenge was appointed an Aflasafe Ambassador by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and received a certificate recognizing his role in championing food safety initiatives.

Dr Mathenge urged Kenyans to take the threat of aflatoxin seriously saying it was a poison that was behind most of cancerous cases in the country.

He challenged scientists to move beyond laboratories and research stations and engage directly with farmers.

"Our farmers are the primary stakeholders in agricultural research. Scientists must spend more time in the field understanding farmers' needs and ensuring innovations address real challenges on the ground," he said.

The conference also identified communication as a critical factor in accelerating the adoption of agricultural technologies.

Delegates called for stronger visi-



KALRO chairman Dr Thuo Mathenge addressing the delegates | Photo: Courtesy.

bility and communication strategies, including translating scientific findings into farmer-friendly formats and local languages, utilizing digital and traditional media platforms and strengthening collaboration with extension officers and county governments.

Youth, women and partnerships drive the future

Participants emphasized that young people and women are not merely beneficiaries of agricultural transformation but key drivers of change.

The conference recommended targeted investments in youth and women-led enterprises through skills development, technology transfer, access to finance, agribusiness incubation and leadership opportunities. Delegates noted that empowering these groups would create jobs, stimulate innovation and contribute significantly to food security and economic growth.

The conference also reaffirmed that no single institution can transform agriculture alone and called for stronger collaboration among government agencies, research institutions, universities, development partners, farmer organizations, financial institutions and the private sector.

At the conclusion of the conference, participants adopted resolutions aimed at strengthening demand-driven agricultural research, scaling climate-smart technologies, expanding digital agriculture, enhancing commercialization, improving food safety, promoting value addition and increasing investments in youth and women-led enterprises. Delegates pledged to continue ad-

vancing science, innovation and evidence-based policymaking as pillars of sustainable agri-food systems and committed to ensuring that agricultural innovations are translated into practical solutions that improve livelihoods, create employment and strengthen climate resilience.

As the curtains fell on the five-day event, one message resonated throughout the conference: Kenya possesses the scientific knowledge and innovative capacity needed to transform its agricultural sector, but the ultimate measure of success will be how effectively those innovations reach farmers and improve lives across the country.

The conference was also addressed by several other guests who included former chairman at the institution and the current Chancellor at Tharaka University Prof. Ratemo Michieka.



KALRO Director General Dr Patrick Ketiemi addressing the forum. | Photo: Courtesy.

Politics Political analysts have begun to ask whether Nyoro's absences are strategic or symptomatic of a broader culture of selective engagement

The man who talks but won't vote

Kiharu MP Ndindi Nyoro commands headlines and airtime but has built a troubling record of vanishing when parliament divides

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyatimes

Ndindi Nyoro, the Member of Parliament for Kiharu and one of Kenya's most recognisable political voices, has established a pattern that his constituents and political observers are finding increasingly difficult to ignore: he talks at length, but when the votes are called, he is nowhere to be found.

The contradiction sits at the heart of a growing debate about what parliamentary representation actually means in Kenya. Nyoro is a fixture on television panels, a reliable source of sharp political commentary, and a social media presence who commands attention across platforms. He speaks with confidence on matters of national importance — taxation, governance, constitutional affairs — and his words regularly make headlines. Yet the record of his participation in the House when it matters most tells a different and more troubling story.

Parliamentary attendance and voting records, which are a matter of public record under Kenya's constitutional framework, show that Nyoro has been absent during several critical divisions in the National Assembly. These are not procedural votes on minor amendments. They include votes on finance bills, motions of constitutional significance, and legislative business that directly affects the citizens of Kiharu and Kenyans at large. On each occasion, the MP was conspicuously missing from the chamber floor.

In Westminster-style parliamentary democracy, of which Kenya's system is a direct descendant, a legislator's vote is the most fundamental act of representation. It is the moment when rhetoric is tested, when allegiances are declared, and when the constituent back home can measure in the plainest possible terms whether their representative stood for them or did not. A speech given outside the chamber, however eloquent, carries no weight in the division lobby. Only the vote counts.

Political analysts have begun to ask whether Nyoro's absences are strategic or symptomatic of a broader culture of selective engagement that



Kiharu MP Ndindi Nyoro

has taken root in Kenya's legislature. "There is a difference between a politician and a legislator," said one senior political scientist at a Nairobi university, speaking on condition of anonymity. "A politician performs for the public. A legislator does the unglamorous work of showing up, deliberating, and voting. Nyoro has mastered the former. The latter remains an open question."

The absences carry particular weight given Nyoro's profile within the ruling United Democratic Alliance. As a prominent figure in the UDA, he has positioned himself as a defender of the government's legislative agenda and a loyalist of President William Ruto's administration. That positioning makes his failure to appear and vote in support of that agenda all the more difficult to explain. When the government needed numbers on the floor, Nyoro was not among them.

His supporters argue that parliamentary work extends well beyond the chamber — that constituency development, committee engagements, and public mobilisation are equally valid expressions of the legislative

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Political analysts have begun to ask whether Nyoro's absences are strategic or symptomatic of a broader culture of selective engagement that has taken root in Kenya's legislature. "There is a difference between a politician and a legislator," said one senior political scientist at a Nairobi university, speaking on condition of anonymity. "A politician performs for the public. A legislator does the unglamorous work of showing up, deliberating, and voting. Nyoro has mastered the former. The latter remains an open question."

mandate. There is merit in that argument up to a point. Constituency work is real and necessary. But it does not replace the vote. The two are not interchangeable, and no serious reading of a legislator's duties has ever suggested otherwise.

What makes the pattern particularly pointed is the contrast with Nyoro's media appetite. He does not shy away from cameras. He does not decline invitations to comment. He is available, vocal, and often combative in the public square. The absence from parliament is therefore not a product of reticence or a preference for quiet, behind-the-scenes work. It appears, rather, to be a selective withdrawal from accountability — an embrace of the visible and the performative, and a retreat from the binding and the consequential.

This matters beyond the individual. Kenya's parliament has long struggled with a culture of poor at-

tendance, quorum difficulties, and members who treat the House as an occasional inconvenience rather than the centre of their professional duty. Nyoro is not alone in this regard, but his prominence makes him a useful and important case study. When high-profile legislators normalise absence, they send a signal to the institution and to the public that the chamber is optional — that what you say about parliament matters more than what you do inside it.

The constituents of Kiharu, a constituency in Murang'a County that has historically demanded active and visible representation, deserve better than a legislator who is louder outside parliament than inside it. They sent Nyoro to Nairobi to vote on their behalf, to sit through the long hours of debate, to be present when the division bells ring. Whether he has honoured that mandate in full is a question the record invites them to ask.

Political careers in Kenya have survived worse. Nyoro is a skilled communicator and a recognisable brand, and in an environment where perception often outweighs performance, that counts for a great deal. But reputations built on media presence are fragile things. They depend on the goodwill of an audience that is increasingly informed, increasingly impatient, and increasingly capable of cross-referencing what a politician says with what a politician does.

The votes missed cannot be retrieved. The debates bypassed cannot be revisited. Each absence is a permanent entry in the record — a gap where a representative should have stood.

Kenya does not need more politicians who are brilliant on television. It needs legislators who are present when the House divides, who understand that the most important performance of their career happens not in a studio but in the chamber, on the record, where it cannot be edited, qualified, or walked back.

Until Nyoro reconciles his considerable public voice with a matching commitment to showing up and voting, the question will follow him: what is a lawmaker worth who will not make law?

Kirinyaga The initiative targets all 201 ECDE centres in the county, with learners receiving exercise books, pencils, crayons, plasticine, building blocks, curriculum design books and chalks

Waiguru intensifies support for ECDE learners with additional supplies

BY MKT Correspondent
@themkenyatimes

Kirinyaga Governor Anne Waiguru has intensified support for Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) learners across the county through provision of free learning materials, furniture and uniforms aimed at easing the financial burden on parents.

The initiative targets all 201 ECDE centres in the county, with learners receiving exer-

cise books, pencils, crayons, plasticine, building blocks, curriculum design books and chalks.

The last mile distribution also includes delivery of classroom furniture including tables, chairs, storage units and teacher desks to improve learning conditions.

The programme forms part of a wider education infrastructure upgrade under the Department of Education and Public Service, which has also all dilapidated ECDE structures replaced with mod-

ern, child-friendly classrooms designed to support early learning.

In 2024, Waiguru rolled out a countywide free ECDE uniform programme, becoming the first Governor in the country to implement such an initiative. The programme has been widely credited by teachers and parents for improving enrollment, retention and reducing household costs.

In addition, the county government has also strengthened ECDE staffing by employing trained teachers and absorb-



Some of the learners with their teachers.

ing them into the permanent and pensionable scheme. The County has constructed about 40 new ECDE classrooms and renovated 45 others, significantly improving infrastructure and access to quality learning.

So far, about 15,000 learners have benefited from free uniforms, alongside the distribution of 45,000 exercise books, 15,000 pencils and curriculum design books. The programme has also extended support to learners in special needs institutions, including the school for the deaf.

Acting County Executive Committee Member for Education and Public Service, Millicent Ngari, said the move is designed to support vulnerable families while motivating young learners at the foundation stage of education. "Apart helping reduce the burden of buying uniforms and save the money for other necessities, the program has helped parents get an extra uniform so as to reduce the wash and wear tendencies," she said.

Many of parents especially those from less privileged families 'wash and wear' wet uniforms because the only pair could not dry while others cannot.

"When a child sees a new uniform, they become excited, and that motivation helps

them work harder, stay clean and remain in school," she said.

Ngari added that ECDE remains a key priority for the county government, noting that it forms the foundation of future education outcomes.

She further noted that improved classrooms and learning materials are helping create a more conducive environment while easing pressure on parents.

At Kiandieri Primary School, where three ECDE classrooms have been renovated, 77 learners benefited from tables, chairs and learning materials.

Head teacher Jacinta Nyambura said the intervention has significantly improved learning conditions, expressing appreciation for the county's support.

"All my children now have uniforms, furniture and learning materials. This has made learning easier and more organized," she said, "Earlier, learners would sometimes lack books, but now there is enough. Parents have also been relieved, especially because many could not afford multiple sets of uniforms."

She added that the uniforms have improved cleanliness, comfort during cold weather and strengthened school identity among learners.

At Kaitheri Primary School,

105 ECDE learners have benefited from the programme.

Head teacher Nyaga Rowland said the school has seen major improvements in learning materials and infrastructure.

"We now have a proper ECDE classroom and an ablution block. The books are now in a 1:1 ratio, meaning no sharing," he said. "Previously, parents had to supplement learning materials, but that burden has now been lifted."

He added that the uniform programme has improved discipline, cleanliness and equality among learners.

At Gathuthuma Primary School in Mutira Ward, where 53 ECDE learners have benefited, parent Evans Kinyua said the initiative has eased household pressure.

"When ECDE learners are well taken care of, the future is bright," he said. "It is tough at the moment for parents. Buying uniforms every term is not easy. But now, with learning materials, uniforms and teachers in place, our work is just to bring children to school."

He added that the programme has promoted equality among learners regardless of background, allowing children to focus on education.

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Politics The Gen Z economic revolution of June 2024 was the turning point of what was slowly showing signs. This was the moment the old order broke

Astute Murang'a roaring: From economic power house to defining political power



By: Ndung'u Wainaina

The Kenya's old political power establishment is dying. A historic tide is turning. This is not transition. It is momentous political rupture. A historic moment of the country.

Many are missing to see a fundamental structural power architecture shift unfolding in plain sight.

What is rising is a completely new power architecture that no old political establishment has yet fully reckoned with. The old order primacy is being displaced. There are new power poles emerging of a new order.

The Gen Z economic revolution of June 2024 was the turning point of what was slowly showing signs. This was the moment the old order broke.

The manner of new order emergence is as consequential as its content. This is a consequential constitutional economic order emerging. It has new players. It is not the old regional and ethnic anchored order.

The Mount Kenya construct not geography significant power shift is central determinant of this new order. Demographics weight, financial capabilities and complete reconfiguring of traditional politics into issue based politics are other key factors at play.

Traditional politics and actors are not only reduced to bystanders facing a monumental scale of marginalisation as future is being negotiated. They are being vanquished.

Old order patronage sys-



Safina party presidential candidate Jimmy Wanjigi.

tem is being fundamentally altered. The system is being quietly superseded. This is more profound displacement than defeat in battle. Old system is not an architect. It is casualty.

What is emerging is not a successor pax. It is something rarer and more durable: a new political and economic order. A fundamentally different economic, security, technological, infrastructural and political system for the 21st century modernized Kenya state.

Murang'a construct, traditionally seen as economic and financial giant but politically diplomatic, is emerging most consequential anchor of this new order. From tyranny of financial muscle to defining next political power matrix.

Murang'a is quietly leading a structural and new lasting political architecture with economic freedom as core foundation.

Jimi Wanjigi, Safina Party Leader and Presidential Candidate 2027, is the keystone of this entire new architecture. He is emerging as the centre of gravity and magnetic glueing together this new economic order driven political formation.

There are other voices from Murang'a who seem to reinforce Wanjigi's economic agenda as the new politics. Young generation is also rallying behind this new order. They see hope and great future potential of their lives in it.

Murang'a has backed others. It has accumulated political

capital and goodwill. This arsenal seems the inevitable pivot to serve as the instrument to steward the country into different future political path. It is the most immediate and visible proving ground, where the transition from old order to new is being tested in real time. The pivot is not being announced with fanfare.

Former President Uhuru Kenyatta and impeached Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua are facing a moment of their political reckoning. Their old model politics are over.

They find themselves in a constitutionally sanctioned situation. This is the escapable reality. Their most likely path is quiet hedging to emerging new order rather than dramatic realignment. But the window for comfort-



It's our time. Ni wakati wetu.

able hedging is narrowing. The longer they remain identified with a receding old order, the less leverage they will carry when they eventually seek terms with the new order that is rising.

President William Ruto has completely been cancelled by Kenyans. He has lost domestic legitimacy. Every time he opens his mouth, he is shouted back as pathological liar. Mr. Ruto has no platform. The best he has is negotiate his exit rather than face political humiliation at the ballot. He should be reading the tide. Otherwise by the time it is fully visible to him, it will already be irreversible.

Kenya is simply in a situation on how history works when the tide turns. This is

not only generational shift. It is fundamental structural change. People who bet on the old order now face a reckoning whose full dimensions are only beginning to become visible.

History rewards those who read the tide correctly. The tide has turned. Only those who moves with it survive. Those who insists on standing still as the water rises perish. The biblical Noah's Ark gives vital lessons. The political rupture is waiting for no one. The floods will sweep old order to dustbin of history. It is inevitable rupture not transition.

The writer is Independent Policy Analyst

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It's our time. Ni wakati wetu.

National IDs Article 12 guarantees every citizen the rights and privileges of citizenship, including the right to a Kenyan passport and any document of registration

Kenya is not for sale: Why the illegal sale of national IDs is a threat to sovereignty



By: Gitile Naituli
@themkenyatimes

Few things define a nation more profoundly than citizenship. A country's borders may be marked on maps, its flag may fly proudly in the wind, and its anthem may stir patriotism in its people, but citizenship is the legal bond that gives meaning to nationhood. It determines who belongs, who enjoys rights and protections, and who carries the responsibilities of membership in the national community. That is why recent reports alleging that Kenyan identity cards can be illegally obtained through bribery should alarm every citizen. The reports are not merely about corruption. They go to the very heart of Kenya's sovereignty, national security, and constitutional order.

The Kenyan national identity card is perhaps the most important document a citizen possesses. It is the primary proof of citizenship and the gateway to numerous rights and opportunities. It enables a person to vote, obtain a passport, own property, access financial services, register businesses, and participate fully in public life.

If such a document can be obtained fraudulently through bribery, then we are dealing with something far more dangerous than ordinary administrative corruption. We are confronting a direct assault on the integrity of the Republic.

The Constitution of Kenya is very clear on matters of citizenship. Article 12 guarantees every citizen the rights and privileges of citizenship, including the right to a Kenyan passport and any document of registration or identification issued by the State to citizens. Implicit in this constitutional protection is the principle that such documents belong exclusively to those who lawfully qualify as citizens.

Article 14 of the Constitution further establishes who is a citizen by birth, while Articles 15 and 16 provide the legal pathways through which non-citizens may acquire citizenship through registration and address the circumstances under which citizenship may be retained. The Constitution therefore contemplates carefully regulated and legally supervised pathways to citizenship. It does not permit citizenship to be sold in dark offices to the highest bidder.

The framers of our Constitution understood that citizenship is too important to be left vulnerable to manipulation or corruption. Citizenship defines the political community itself. It determines who participates in elections, who exercises constitutional rights, and who shares in the nation's collective destiny.

When corrupt individuals turn identity documents into commercial commodities, they undermine the entire constitutional architecture. The implications for national security are grave. Identity documents are not merely pieces of plastic. They are instruments of trust. State institutions, financial systems, border agencies, and foreign governments rely on them to establish identity and nationality. If criminals, traffickers, money launderers, or terror-

ists can obtain Kenyan identity documents fraudulently, then the risks extend far beyond our borders.

A person carrying a fraudulently acquired Kenyan passport who commits serious crimes abroad will not be viewed internationally as an imposter who deceived Kenyan officials. The world will see a Kenyan passport. They will see Kenya's name. They will see the Republic of Kenya. The damage to our international reputation could be immense.

Equally serious are the implications for electoral integrity. Many Kenyans still remember political statements made in the past about "manufacturing votes." Such remarks may have been made in a political context, but they inevitably shape public perceptions. Consequently, when allegations emerge that identity documents can be obtained illegally, citizens cannot be blamed for asking difficult questions.

Confidence in democratic institutions depends entirely on public trust. Elections can only be considered credible when citizens have confidence that voter registration systems, identity databases, and citizenship records are secure and protected from manipulation. The mere perception that citizenship documents can be purchased undermines confidence in democratic processes and weakens faith in public institutions.

Article 10 of the Constitution establishes national values and principles of governance, including the rule of law, integrity, transparency, accountability, and good governance. Any public official who participates in the illegal acquisition of identity documents violates each of these consti-



National IDs

tutional values.

Article 73 goes even further by declaring that authority assigned to a State officer is a public trust that must be exercised in a manner that demonstrates integrity, objectivity, accountability, and selfless service. An official who accepts a bribe to issue a national identity document fraudulently betrays not only the law but also the constitutional trust reposed in public office.

The issue is made even more painful by its obvious injustice.

Ordinary Kenyans obey the law. They queue patiently for government services. They provide documents and satisfy legal requirements. Many young people wait months and sometimes years to obtain identity documents that

are essential to their economic and social lives. Yet allegations persist that a few corrupt individuals can simply pay bribes and walk away with documents that genuine citizens struggle to obtain. Such situations destroy public confidence in government. Citizens lose faith in institutions when they perceive that legality and patience matter less than corruption and connections.

The State therefore has both a legal and constitutional obligation to act decisively. Every allegation of fraudulent acquisition of identity documents must be investigated thoroughly and independently. Those responsible, whether brokers, public officials, or beneficiaries of the fraud, must face the full force of the law.

Equally important, Kenya should undertake regular and independent audits of citizenship and registration systems to assure citizens that national identity databases are accurate, secure, and protected from abuse.

Ultimately, citizenship is not a commodity. It is not merchandise to be auctioned. It is not a favour that can be purchased. Citizenship represents membership in the Kenyan nation and participation in our constitutional order. Kenya is not for sale. Our citizenship is not for sale. Our national security is not for sale. And our democracy must never be for sale.

The writer is scholar who comments on various topical issues



Kenyan Passport

Youth Discussions focused on strategies for increasing youth participation in leadership positions and governance structures ahead of the next General Election

Youth urged to take leadership roles in politics as ORPP holds nationwide engagement forums

BY DMS

@themkenyatimes

The Office of the Registrar of Political Parties (ORPP) has challenged young people to take a more active role in Kenya's political and governance processes, noting that despite their numerical strength, youth participation in decision-making structures remains significantly low.

The call emerged from a series of nationwide youth engagement forums organized by the ORPP, bringing together young people drawn from political parties, academic institutions and various youth organizations across 11 regions of the country.

The forums, held concurrently in different regions on Wednesday, sought to explore the relationship between the formation and purpose of political parties and the role of young people in political and electoral processes.

Discussions also focused on strategies for increasing youth participation in leadership positions and governance structures ahead of the next General Election.

Speaking during the engagements, ORPP officials emphasized that meaningful youth involvement is critical to strengthening democratic governance and ensuring that political parties remain representative of the country's demographic realities.

Participants were taken through various thematic areas, including the mandate of the ORPP, the legal framework governing political parties, and the responsibility of political parties in promoting the interests of Special Interest Groups (SIGs), including youth, women and persons with disabilities.

The forums also highlighted the growing influence of technology in modern politics. Young participants were encouraged to make positive use of social media and emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) in civic and political education, promoting constructive political discourse, enhancing public participation and strengthening democratic engagement.

Facilitators underscored the need for responsible digital citizenship, warning against the dangers of misinformation and disinformation, which have increasingly become a challenge in political communica-



ORPP officials with some of the youth. | Photo: Courtesy

tion and electoral processes.

Officials from the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC), who participated in the sessions, briefed attendees on the country's state of electoral preparedness and outlined the roles of various institutions, stakeholders and citizens in safeguarding credible electoral processes.

The youth identified several barriers that continue to hinder their effective participation in politics and governance. Among the key challenges cited were limited financial resources, inadequate representation in political party leadership structures, political violence and intimidation during election periods, widespread misinformation and disinformation, high unemployment levels, voter apathy, limited access to civic and political education, and insufficient involvement in governance and decision-making processes.

Participants observed that while young people constitute a significant

proportion of Kenya's population and registered voters, many remain excluded from key political processes due to structural, economic and social barriers.

To address these challenges, the youth proposed a range of interventions aimed at enhancing their political participation. These included joining and actively participating in political parties, embracing peaceful political engagement, utilizing legal and institutional mechanisms for dispute resolution, leveraging digital platforms responsibly, strengthening youth networks and advocacy groups, and taking advantage of leadership and capacity-building opportunities offered by government institutions, political parties and civil society organizations.

The ORPP noted that empowering young people with knowledge of political processes and governance structures is essential for nurturing a generation of informed and responsible leaders capable of shaping the

country's future.

The youth forums are part of a broader nationwide stakeholder engagement initiative being undertaken by the ORPP this week. The initiative targets various stakeholder groups, including women, persons with disabilities, faith-based organizations and political party officials.

According to the ORPP, the engagements are intended to provide inclusive platforms through which diverse voices can contribute to strengthening democratic governance and political participation within established constitutional and legal frameworks.

As Kenya continues preparations for the next electoral cycle, stakeholders have increasingly emphasized the importance of meaningful youth participation not only as voters but also as leaders, policy influencers and agents of democratic transformation.

Political analysts have long argued that Kenya's youthful population presents a significant opportunity for

democratic renewal. However, they note that realizing this potential will require sustained civic education, inclusive political party structures, economic empowerment and deliberate efforts to create safe and accessible spaces for young people to engage in governance.

The ORPP's latest initiative signals a growing recognition that the future of the country's democracy will largely depend on the extent to which young people are empowered to move from the margins of political participation to the centre of leadership and decision-making.

The shadows of dreams



As I gaze into the shadows of somewhere
I wonder what that life will truly be about,
For in this lifetime, I have gotten nowhere
As I looked for answers I can't figure out.

The puzzle pieces never came together
And gave a direction to what lies ahead,
They just blew away within the weather,
Which led me to more questions instead.

Is there even afterlife beyond the sunset,
Or is this world the only place we'll see?
If I was a gambler, I'd surly like to bet
That these shadows will unlock the key.

I guess we must all believe in something
To give reasoning as to why it all exists,

For though the darkness maybe nothing,
It's energy constantly turns and twists.

Will we all get sucked into a black hole
Or continue to escape, within the stars,
And what will the future hold on our Soul
If we're able to travel beyond planet mars.

As I gaze upon the brightened full moon
I realize its light is a reflection of the sun
And though I dream to walk upon it soon
I'm led to believe that day may not come.

But, I can't quite give up on my dreams
As the universe gives my soul it's hope
And as all these beautiful stars gleam
I decide to plummet off the edged slope.

Looking back now, I have no remorse
As I'm ready to travel the road ahead
And though I may get a bit off course
These shadows will be my homestead.

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It's your difference that makes you unique



Everyone has a unique skill.
That makes you bright in your own way.
Those who discover their hidden talents get fame
and respect.

Every person starts their first step without
knowing whether they will get success or failure.
However, they continue their work confidently and
consistently.

How many years you live does not matter. How
you live is what matters.
If you live without any creative deeds, adventure,
and goals, it is of no use to your life.
There will be nothing memorable in your history.

Your small steps and efforts lead to big victories.
They bring something special for you.
Uniqueness is your identity.
The beginning with one stone makes a building.
The stone looks very simple, but the building gives
amazement.

A seed is tiny, but it grows into a big tree.
Likewise, a child grows into a man, and a man
grows old.

Never ignore small things, because they can
become great achievements.

The base of uniqueness gives all success.
So, you should see the world from a different
sight;
it gives you a unique light.

___G.YasminSirajudheen
Secondary grade teacher
Melmalayanur block
Villupuram dt

A daughter of Himachal bringing glory through education, research, and literature: The inspiring journey of Niharika Agnihotri



Niharika Agnihotri, a young, dynamic academician, researcher, author, and literary contributor from the small village of Gondpur Jaichand, District Una, Himachal Pradesh, has emerged as an inspiration for countless students and aspiring writers. Through her dedication, hard work, and passion for knowledge and creativity, she has established a remarkable identity in the fields of education, research, and literature.

She is currently serving as an Assistant Professor and Head of the Department of Business Management at Indus International University, Bathu, Una, Himachal Pradesh. She holds an MBA with specializations in Human Resource Management and Marketing and is presently pursuing her Ph.D. in Management, continuously expanding her academic and research horizons.

In the field of research, Niharika has published numerous research papers in reputed national and international journals and has actively participated and presented papers in various national and international conferences, seminars, workshops, Faculty Development Programmes (FDPs), and webinars. Her contribution to academic excellence extends beyond research as she has also authored six academic books as a solo author, contributing valuable resources for students and scholars. She had 3 copyrights and two patents under her name.

Apart from her academic achievements, she has made a distinguished mark in the literary world. Her journey as an author began with her debut book "In the Exploration of Life, Why We Lie", followed by thought-provoking works including "Silent Wings," and "The Coming Tomorrow." She

has contributed as a co-author in more than 50 national and international anthologies, many of which have received World Record recognitions. Her writings, based on emotions, life experiences, human values, relationships, and social issues, have been appreciated by readers across various literary platforms.

Her exceptional contribution to education and literature has earned her several prestigious recognitions, including the Shiksha Ratna Samman, Bharat Kavi Ratna Award, and the Emperor of Indian Literature Award 2026. She has also received appreciation and recognition from various national and international literary organisations for her dedication to promoting literature and creative expression.

As an educator and Head of Department, Niharika has played an important role in guiding and mentoring students, organizing academic activities, encouraging research culture, and bridging the gap between theoretical learning and practical knowledge. Her students admire her not only as a teacher but also as a mentor who motivates them to believe in their abilities and pursue excellence.

Despite her achievements, she remains deeply connected to her roots and believes that every small beginning has the potential to create a great impact. Her journey from a village in Himachal Pradesh to becoming a recognised academician and author reflects the power of determination, continuous learning, and perseverance.

Her message to students and society: "Success is not measured by how high we reach but by how many lives we inspire along the way. Keep learning, stay humble, and never stop believing in your dreams."

Today, Niharika Agnihotri continues to create new milestones in the fields of education, research, and literature, carrying the values of her family, her village, and her profession with pride and inspiring many through her words, work, and achievements.

Once the forest sang with life



Now silence walks
beneath The sky.
Trees the touched the clouds above,
Falls one by one without bye.

That tiger path grows faint each year,
The elephants call fades away.
Homes are last, and hearts disappear,
As green slowly turn into grey.

Rivers that dance through fields and stone
Now whisper with the thirsty cry.
Children search for the drops of hope,
Benith the burning ,endless sky.

By:
S.Aishwarya
9th A
GGHSS, Pattukkottai

Where do you find peace?



Where do you find peace? Tell me please.
I searched everywhere, but I cannot find it with ease.
My mind is wandering endlessly to seek its place.
Let me show the way to feel it by God's grace.

Does it lie in happiness or in prosperity?
Does it lie in victory or in audacity?
Does it dwell in satisfaction or in appreciation?
How do we find this peaceful coexistence?

At last, tired of pursuing, I came to a standstill.
There within me, I felt the comfort of being myself.

That stopped my chasing and put my mind at rest.

Oh, now I have found that peace is not a place; it is our mindset.

By, Mrs. Gulzar Jahan

Education The CS expressed concern over recent incidents of unrest reported in some schools across the country

CS Migos calls for unity, dialogue and discipline in schools

BY Elizabeth Angira
@themkenyatimes

Education Cabinet Secretary Julius Migos has called on students, teachers, parents and other education stakeholders to work together in ensuring that schools remain safe, peaceful and conducive environments for learning.

Speaking during the Prize-Giving Day ceremony at Friends Gianchere Senior Secondary School in Kisii County, the CS expressed concern over recent incidents of unrest reported in some schools across the country.

He noted that while only a small number of learners are involved, such incidents have raised concern among parents, educators and the public because they undermine the core purpose of education.

Migos condemned acts of arson, destruction of school property and other forms of indiscipline, saying they have no place in institutions of learning.

He observed that such actions endanger lives, disrupt learning and destroy facilities developed through the sacrifices of parents and taxpayers. "We must remain united in ensuring that our schools remain safe, peaceful and conducive environments for learning. Whenever challenges arise, learners should choose dialogue over confrontation, consultation over conflict and responsibility over destruction," he said.

The CS reminded students that true leadership is demonstrated through wisdom, self-control and the ability to resolve differences peacefully rather than through violence or defiance.

He encouraged them to have the courage to stand for what is right even when others choose the wrong path.

Migos also lauded Friends



CS Education Julius Ogamba Migos, Gianchere Senior Secondary School Principal Dr Philip Ochoi during the award ceremony | Photo: Elizabeth Angira

Gianchere Secondary School for its remarkable growth since its establishment in 1969 by the Friends African Missionaries. The institution, which started modestly, has grown into a vibrant educational complex serving both mainstream learners and learners with hearing impairments.

He noted that the school's journey reflects vision, commitment and strong community support, while also highlighting the important role faith-based organizations continue to play in expanding access to education in Kenya.

The CS praised the school's academic progress, noting that its mean score has improved significantly from 2.8 in 2014 to over 6.2 in recent years.

He attributed the success to visionary leadership, dedicated teachers, supportive par-

ents and disciplined learners committed to academic excellence.

At the same time, he cautioned students against negative influences, particularly those spread through social media and digital platforms.

He urged learners to use technology responsibly and avoid misinformation, peer pressure and other distractions that could derail their educational goals.

To teachers, Migos expressed appreciation for their role as educators, mentors and counsellors. He encouraged them to strengthen guidance and counselling programmes and maintain open communication with students so that challenges can be addressed before they escalate.

He also challenged parents and guardians to remain actively involved in their children's education, emphasizing

that values such as honesty, respect, integrity, responsibility and self-discipline are first nurtured at home.

The CS further called upon religious leaders, sponsors, community leaders and other stakeholders to support schools in addressing challenges such as drug and substance abuse, negative peer influence and other social pressures affecting learners.

On education reforms, Migos reaffirmed the Government's commitment to the successful implementation of Competency-Based Education (CBE), saying the system is designed to equip learners with the skills, knowledge and values needed to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

He commended Friends Gianchere Secondary School for embracing technology and innovation and welcomed the school's plans to strengthen



CS Education Julius Ogamba Migos speaking during the function. | Photo: Elizabeth Angira

its ICT infrastructure.

Migos revealed that the Ministry of Education will engage the institution on its request to establish a modern ICT laboratory as part of efforts to enhance digital learning under the Competency-Based Education framework.

He said investment in technology is critical in preparing learners for opportunities in the digital age and supporting the school's ambition of becoming a centre of excellence in innovation and twenty-first-century learning.

The CS also praised the institution's achievements in sports, music and other co-curricular activities, noting that education should nurture

well-rounded learners by promoting leadership, teamwork, creativity, confidence and resilience alongside academic excellence.

Migos challenged learners to dream big, work hard and remain disciplined.

He urged them to respect their parents and teachers, avoid drugs and substance abuse, use technology responsibly and remain focused on their future.

"The future belongs to those who prepare for it, and that preparation begins with the choices you make every day," he said.



Gianchere Senior Secondary School Principal Dr Philip Ochoi during the award ceremony | Photo: Elizabeth Angira

Public service “What we hope to achieve with this is a situation where the public makes sense of the performance of the entire public service,” said Mudavadi.

Shun mediocrity in Public Service, Mudavadi urges

BY OPCS PS

@themkenyatimes

Prime Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs, Musalia Mudavadi has called for a cultural shift in the public service, urging leaders and citizens to reject mediocrity, low productivity and underperformance in service delivery.

Speaking when he joined President William Ruto at the National Productivity and Competitiveness Conference 2026 and the 2024/2025 Performance and Productivity Awards at the Kenya School of Government in Nairobi, Mudavadi said the Government is committed to deepening reforms aimed at strengthening accountability, efficiency and results in the public service.

Mudavadi challenged Kenyans to critically examine the culture of performance in the public sector, warning against normalising low productivity and rewarding underperformance.

“Let us not make peace with mediocrity,” he said. “That is a loaded statement. The question is, have we

as Kenyans made peace with laziness? Have we made peace with low productivity? Have we been rewarding non-performers? So what culture have we built?”

He said the objective of the reforms is to ensure that citizens can clearly understand and interrogate the performance of the public service at all levels.

“What we hope to achieve with this is a situation where the public makes sense of the performance of the entire public service,” said Mudavadi.

Mudavadi further questioned perceptions around promotions in the public service, insisting that advancement must be based on merit and demonstrated performance.

“We must break away from the notion that is sometimes carried that a promotion is parachuted to a particular individual. Is that promotion truly earned?” posed Mudavadi.

The Prime Cabinet Secretary said Performance Contracting remains a key reform tool in strengthening accountability, noting that Government is now moving to entrench it in law alongside productivity management.

He disclosed that a Bill to give legal backing to performance contracting

is ready and will soon be tabled in Parliament, following prolonged public participation.

“Your Excellency, one of the issues that we will do towards the end is to present the results of performance contracting that are due,” he said.

“I am a little bit concerned and nervous on this because we had talked of bringing legislation to entrench and give legal foundation to performance contracting. Our process of public participation has taken forever.”

Mudavadi said the proposed legislation will strengthen accountability by obligating all public institutions to deliver on measurable targets.

“This law is now about ready to go to Parliament,” he said.

“The next thing I hope, Mr President, we bring to you will not just be the results of performance contracting, but the legal instruments that will entrench performance contracting and productivity.”

He emphasized that the reforms are designed to move the public service to a higher level where performance is legally enforced and consistently measured.

“It is one law that will be an instru-



Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi welcoming President William Ruto at KSG on Friday. | Photo: Courtesy.

ment that obligates all of us to do what is right for the Kenyan people and to do what is right for our country,” said Mudavadi.

The event brought together senior leaders from the Executive, Judiciary and Legislature, county governments, constitutional commissions, state corporations, development

partners and other stakeholders.

President William Ruto presided over the ceremony, where top-performing public institutions were awarded for excellence in performance, productivity and wage bill management for the 2024/2025 financial year.

Teachers Kenya’s educators are raising urgent questions about declining take-home pay amid rising living costs and opaque deductions.

The mystery of the shrinking payslip: why are teachers taking home less?

BY Hadassah Karangu

@themkenyatimes

A wave of concern is sweeping through staffrooms across Kenya as teachers stare at their payslips and ask a troubling question: why is my salary getting smaller?

For many educators, payday no longer brings excitement — it brings confusion. After months of hard work in classrooms, marking books late into the evening and guiding learners through academic and personal challenges, some teachers are discovering that their take-home pay is lower than expected.

The issue has sparked heated discussions in schools, teachers’ forums and on social media. Many



Illustration of a teacher at home

educators say they understand the importance of statutory deductions, but they are calling for greater clarity on why their earnings continue to shrink while the cost of living con-

tinues to rise.

At a time when food prices, transport costs, rent and school fees remain stubbornly high, every shilling matters. A reduction in take-home

pay can have a significant impact on a teacher’s ability to support a family, pay bills and plan for the future.

Teachers are often described as the backbone of the nation — nurturing future doctors, engineers, journalists and leaders. Yet many now feel that those entrusted with shaping the country’s future are struggling to secure their own financial stability.

The growing concern is not only about money. It is also about transparency and trust. Educators want clear explanations for the deductions appearing on their payslips and assurance that their contributions are being managed responsibly. Many believe that open communication would go a long way towards reducing the uncertainty and anxiety now widespread in the profession.

Education experts warn that teacher welfare should never be an afterthought. A motivated teacher creates a productive classroom, while financial stress can quietly erode morale and performance. Investing in teachers is, ultimately, an investment in learners and in the nation’s future.

As the debate grows louder, one message is becoming impossible to ignore: teachers deserve answers. They are not merely asking where their money has gone. They are asking for fairness, transparency and recognition of the vital role they play in society.

The shrinking payslip has become more than a financial grievance. It has become a national conversation about how much a country truly values those who dedicate their lives to educating the next generation.

When teachers worry about their own survival, the nation would do well to worry about the future of its classrooms.

Farming

Report: Women dairy farmers locked out of credit despite dominating cooperative sector

BY DMS

@themkenyaintimes

Women play a central role in Kenya's dairy industry, yet thousands remain locked out of formal financial services due to systemic barriers that continue to undermine their economic empowerment, a new report has revealed.

The findings were presented during the Women in Dairy Initiative side event held alongside the World Farmers' Organisation (WFO) Annual Meeting 2026 in Nairobi, where stakeholders from the agricultural, financial and development sectors convened to discuss strategies for enhancing women's participation and leadership in the dairy value chain.

The event focused on the newly launched Women in Dairy Report, jointly developed by the Kenya National Farmers Federation (KENAFF), the U.S. Dairy Export Council (USDEC) and the African Confederation of Cooperative Savings and Credit Associations (AfriCLAN).

According to the report, women account for an overwhelming 86 per cent of dairy cooperative membership in Kenya, underscoring their critical contribution to one of the country's most important agricultural subsectors. However, despite their active participation, approximately 65 per cent of women dairy farmers remain excluded from formal credit facilities.

The report attributes the exclusion largely to limited land ownership among women and the continued reliance by financial institutions on traditional collateral requirements, such as land titles and fixed assets, which many women do not possess.

Stakeholders at the meeting described the situation as a major impediment to growth in the dairy sector, arguing that women's inability to access affordable financing limits investments in improved livestock breeds, animal health, feed production, milk processing and value addition.

"Women are the backbone of dairy production in many households, but they continue to face barriers that prevent them from fully benefiting from their work," participants noted during the discussions.

The dairy sector contributes sig-



KENAFF and some of the women in the dairy industry. | Photo: Courtesy.

nificantly to Kenya's economy, accounting for approximately four per cent of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and supporting the livelihoods of millions of smallholder farmers. Kenya is also one of Africa's leading milk producers, with small-scale farmers contributing the majority of national milk output.

Experts at the forum emphasized that strengthening women's economic participation is essential to improving productivity and ensuring the long-term sustainability of the dairy industry.

One of the key recommendations emerging from the discussions was the need for financial institutions to adopt innovative financing models that recognize alternative forms of collateral. These include livestock ownership, milk delivery records, cooperative membership records, mobile money transaction histories and other productive assets that can demonstrate a farmer's creditworthiness.

Advocates argued that such approaches would significantly expand access to credit for women farmers

while reducing dependence on land ownership as the primary determinant of financial eligibility.

The forum also explored broader issues affecting women in agriculture, including limited representation in decision-making structures, unequal access to extension services, technology gaps and cultural norms that often restrict women's control over productive resources despite their substantial contribution to farm operations.

Participants noted that while women undertake much of the daily work associated with dairy farming—including feeding, milking, animal care and marketing—they frequently have limited influence over financial decisions and ownership of farm assets.

The discussions gained additional momentum following remarks by Ms. Krysta Harden, President and Chief Executive Officer of the U.S. Dairy Export Council, who stressed the importance of investing in women as leaders, entrepreneurs and catalysts of agricultural transformation.

She noted that empowering women farmers is not only a matter of social

equity but also a strategic investment that strengthens food systems, improves household incomes and enhances rural economic development. Stakeholders further emphasized that increasing women's access to finance could help accelerate the adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices, improve resilience to climate-related shocks and enhance food security across the region.

The meeting comes at a time when governments and development partners are increasingly focusing on gender-responsive agricultural policies as part of broader efforts to achieve sustainable development goals, including poverty reduction, food security and gender equality.

Kenya has made progress in promoting women's participation in agriculture through various policy interventions, including constitutional provisions on gender equality and programmes aimed at supporting women entrepreneurs. However, stakeholders acknowledged that significant gaps remain in translating policy commitments into practical opportunities at the grassroots level.

KENAFF officials said the findings

of the report should serve as a call to action for governments, financial institutions, cooperatives and development agencies to address structural barriers that continue to disadvantage women farmers.

They argued that building resilient and competitive dairy systems will require deliberate investments that ensure women have equal access to financing, technology, training, markets and leadership opportunities.

As the dairy industry continues to evolve amid changing climatic, economic and market conditions, stakeholders agreed that empowering women farmers will be critical to unlocking the sector's full potential and driving inclusive agricultural growth.

The Women in Dairy Initiative, participants noted, represents an important step toward creating a more equitable dairy value chain in which women are not only recognized for their contributions but are also equipped with the resources and opportunities necessary to thrive.

Rights Here the idiom earns its keep: in Kenya, the chicken that escapes the cooking pot is not free, merely temporarily uncaught

The right to annoy the state: A Kenyan reckoning with dissent



By: Jerameel Kevins Owuor Odhiambo

@themkenyaintimes

In April 2017, Justice Mwita of the High Court did something quietly radical: he ruled that it is not a crime to annoy a Kenyan public officer. Section 132 of the Penal Code, which had criminalized “undermining the authority of a public officer,” was struck down as unconstitutional in the case brought by blogger Robert Alai, who had mocked President Uhuru Kenyatta’s remarks about Raila Odinga on Facebook. A year earlier, the same court had killed Section 29 of the Kenya Information and Communications Act, the notorious provision that punished anyone who used a “licensed communication system” to send a message that was merely “annoying” or “inconvenient” to another person. That case, brought by Geoffrey Andare, is the spine of this piece, because Andare’s lawyers won on a deceptively simple theory: annoyance is not a constitutional injury. A government that treats irritation as a prosecutable offence is not protecting public order; it is protecting its own comfort. These two judgments are the closest thing Kenya has to a founding myth for the modern free-speech jurisprudence, and they deserve to be read not as legal trivia but as a thesis statement.

The thesis is this: freedom of expression, properly understood, is substantially the freedom to be irritating. Not gratuitously, not maliciously, but structurally because the entire point of the right is to protect speech that someone in power would rather not hear. Nobody needs a constitutional shield to compliment the President’s road-building record or to praise a Cabinet Secretary’s spreadsheet discipline. That speech was never in danger. Article 33 of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010, exists for the inconvenient sentence, the inconvenient cartoon, the inconvenient hashtag. A right that only protects agreeable speech is not a right at all; it is a courtesy; revoca-



Activists

ble the moment courtesy becomes inconvenient to the one extending it. Kenya’s courts, to their credit, have understood this at the doctrinal level even as the executive has resisted it at the practical level and that gap, between what the judiciary has declared and what the security apparatus has done, is where this argument lives.

Consider the counter-argument, because it deserves a fair hearing before it is dismantled. Defenders of restriction and Kenya has had no shortage of them, from colonial administrators to the architects of the 2010s-era “hate speech” prosecutions argue that unrestrained expression is a luxury good, affordable only to societies with thick institutional buffers against incitement, ethnic mobilisation, and panic. Kenya, the argument goes, is not that society; it is a country whose post-election violence in 2007–2008 left over 1,100 people dead, substantially fuelled by inflammatory vernacular radio broadcasts and SMS chains. On this view, Section 132 and its cousins were not authoritarian overreach but social insurance. This is not a frivolous position. Article 33(2) of the Constitution itself carves out exceptions for propaganda for war, incitement to violence, hate speech, and advocacy

of hatred constituting ethnic incitement; Kenya’s drafters were not absolutists either. The honest rebuttal is not that limits are illegitimate. It is that “undermining the authority of a public officer” and “annoying a person” are not limits at all; they are blank cheques, vague enough to swallow the exception and devour the rule. The Andare court grasped this precisely: a law that cannot tell a citizen, in advance, what speech is forbidden is not a limitation on rights it is the abolition of rights by administrative discretion.

Here the idiom earns its keep: in Kenya, the chicken that escapes the cooking pot is not free, merely temporarily uncaught. Section 132 is dead in the law reports, but its spirit migrated. What the statute book lost, the unmarked Land Cruiser gained. Between June and December 2024 alone, the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights documented 82 cases of abduction or enforced disappearance, the overwhelming majority of them young people connected to the Gen-Z-led protests against the 2024 Finance Bill. The Law Society of Kenya separately tracked 72 such cases by the end of August that year. Twenty-six people remained missing as of November 2024, according to the KNCHR’s

own vice-chairperson, who noted with a bureaucrat’s understatement that the pattern was “taking the country back to its dark days.” When President Ruto was finally pressed on the matter at a joint press conference with Finland’s President in May 2025, he claimed all the missing had been “reunited with their families” an assertion offered without naming a single perpetrator, without a single prosecution, and without explaining who exactly had been doing the abducting if, as his own government had insisted for months, no abductions were occurring at all. This is not governance; it is gas lighting with a press pool.

It would be analytically lazy to treat 2024 as an aberration rather than a continuation. The legal architecture of suppression simply changed its instrument. Where Section 132 once supplied the charge sheet, today’s apparatus supplies the disappearance as a method that requires no charge sheet, no magistrate, no paper trail, and therefore, perversely, no court before which Andare-style reasoning can even be deployed. You cannot file a constitutional petition against a kidnapping that the state denies committing. This is the dissident’s bind, restated for the algorithmic age: the courts dismantled the law that crim-

inalized your tweet, but they cannot dismantle a balaclava. Blogger and TikTok Albert Ojwang’s death in police custody in June 2025, after his arrest reportedly connected to his online commentary, is the grim coda to this argument proof that the state’s appetite for silencing critics did not shrink when its statutory tools did; it simply went informal, and informality is much harder to litigate.

There is a temptation, understandable but mistaken, to read this as uniquely Kenyan pathology. It is not. It is the oldest trick in the authoritarian playbook, merely localized: when the front door of legal suppression is welded shut by a vigilant judiciary, the back door of extralegal suppression swings opens, because the goal was never legal coherence — it was control. Achebe understood this instinct decades before Kenya’s courts caught up to it in doctrine. In “A Man of the People,” he sketched the post-independence African strongman not as an ideologue but as a manager of appearances, a figure who learns quickly that the optics of constitutionalism can coexist comfortably with the substance of repression, provided the repression is deniable. Achebe’s satire was never really about Nigeria alone; it was a diagnosis of a structural temptation available to any post-colonial elite that inherits both the rhetoric of liberation and the instruments of the colonial state it replaced the Special Branch files, the riot batons, the habit of treating the citizen as a subject on probation.

Synthesise the doctrine and the disappearance and a sharper proposition emerges: Kenya does not currently have a free-speech law problem so much as a free-speech enforcement problem, and the two are not interchangeable failures. A law problem is fixed by litigation, and Kenya’s public interest litigators Katiba Institute, the Law Society of Kenya, ARTICLE 19 Eastern Africa have been remarkably effective at it, racking up a string of victories from Andare through Alai to the more recent Katiba Institute petition that struck down further vague Penal Code provisions in 2023. An enforcement problem, by contrast, is fixed only by accountability investigations that actually conclude, prosecutions that actually proceed, an Independent Policing Oversight Authority that actually oversees. On this score the record is closer to barren than bare. The Human Rights Watch World Report covering 2025 noted that despite KNCHR’s own confirmation that

Rights Here the idiom earns its keep: in Kenya, the chicken that escapes the cooking pot is not free, merely temporarily uncaught

The right to annoy the state: A Kenyan reckoning with dissent

Contd from page 18

police had abducted people still missing from the 2024 protests, IPOA's reporting made no mention of investigating the disappearances at all. A right vindicated in the law reports and violated in the streets is not a right that has been secured; it is a right that has been relocated to a forum the state has learned to ignore.

It is worth being precise about what "annoying the state" actually buys a republic, because the framing in the title is not merely provocative it is functionally accurate, and Kenyan constitutional history supplies the proof. The 2010 Constitution itself exists because earlier generations of "annoying" Kenyans the Saba Saba agitators of 1990, the underground publishers of the Moi years' samizdat pamphlets, the lawyers who kept filing hopeless-looking petitions against a one-party state that controlled every formal lever refused to let irritation be criminalized into silence. Mwai Kibaki's government did not hand Kenyans Article 33; it was extracted, over decades, by people whose entire civic contribution was refusing to shut up. Annoyance, in this light, is not speech's unfortunate side effect. It is frequently speech's entire civic function the irritant that forces a complacent system to respond, to justify itself, to explain on the record why a particular silence is being demanded. A government immunized against annoyance is a government immunized against correction.

None of this licenses an unqualified celebration of unlimited expression, and intellectual honesty requires saying so plainly. The same digital openness that lets a blogger expose a procurement scandal also lets a propagandist organise an ethnic mobilisation campaign with the production values of a Nairobi ad agency. Kenya's 2007 trauma



Activists

is not a relic; its underlying conditions ethnically inflected political competition, a media landscape capable of both extraordinary courage and extraordinary recklessness remain live. The answer to this tension is not to romanticize speech as costless, but to insist that the line be drawn by courts applying Article 24's proportionality test, in public, with reasons, rather than by an officer in plain clothes deciding at 2 a.m. that a particular X account has crossed an unwritten line only he can see. Predictability is the actual constitutional value at stake, not permissiveness. Andare's lawyers did not argue that annoying speech should never have consequences; they argued that citizens are entitled to know, in advance, what those consequences are and on what authority they are imposed. That is a conservative, almost technocratic demand. It has simply proven radical in application, because the alternative discretion without disclosure is so much more convenient for everyone holding power.

There is a second counter-argument that deserves engagement rather than dismissal: that focusing on ab-

ductions and statutory repeal obscures a subtler, more pervasive form of chilling effect self-censorship induced not by any single dramatic event but by the cumulative, ambient knowledge that visibility carries risk. Survey after survey of Kenyan civil society actors in 2024 and 2025 describes something closer to a low hum of anxiety than a series of discrete incidents Amnesty International's own assessment, drawn from interviews with affected activists, journalists, and lawyers, captured this as a pervasive fear that does not require an actual knock on the door to function, only the credible possibility of one. This matters because it reframes the stakes beyond the dramatic register of kidnapping and toward something more insidious: a citizenry that polices its own speech not because the law demands it the law, post-Andare, largely does not but because the state has demonstrated, through pattern rather than statute, that it retains the capacity and the willingness to make examples of those who annoy it loudly enough.

So, if the government starts targeting dissidents it leads, historically and predictably,

to one of two places, and

Kenya is currently positioned at the fork. The first path is the one most authoritarian-adjacent states eventually walk: the chilling effect compounds, civic space contracts, the abductions normalize into background noise the way extrajudicial killings in Mathare and Kayole once did, and "annoying the state" becomes a young person's idea of recklessness rather than a citizen's idea of duty. The second path is the one Kenya's own history Saba Saba, the 2010 Constitution, Andare, Alai, and a Gen-Z generation that returned to the streets in June 2025 exactly one year after the first wave of disappearances rather than being deterred by them suggests is equally plausible. Repression that operates by disappearing

people rather than by passing laws is, paradoxically, a confession of institutional weakness: it is what a state resorts to once it has lost the argument in court and can no longer win it on the merits. Kenya's courts have already delivered the verdict on whether annoyance is a crime. The remaining question, unresolved and genuinely open, is whether the rest of the state, the police, the DCI, the National Intelligence Service can be made to read the judgment, or whether it will take another generation of annoying, ungovernable, constitutionally literate citizens to make them.

The writer is a social commentator.

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China . To better serve the World Cup, Mexico City's Estadio Azteca, which staged the opening match, has undergone a full-scale renovation

Products made in China score big at 2026 World Cup meet

BY Xinhua News Agency

@themkenyatimes

While China's football fans might feel a tiny bit disappointed that their national team isn't at the 2026 FIFA World Cup, the tournament is still packed with Chinese influence, with "Made in China" products visible almost everywhere on and off the pitch.

Chinese products have long made their presence felt with football fans around the globe. As far back as 32 years ago, Chinese manufacturers were already supplying merchandise for the 1994 tournament in the United States. This time around, China's presence is more visible and far-reaching, showing up not only in athletic equipment and fan gear, but also in stadium facilities and even the cultural touches surrounding the event.

Chinese manufacturing as backbone

At this year's World Cup, many Chinese companies are keeping a low profile -- they have neither hired football stars for advertising campaigns nor staged eye-catching marketing activities. Yet, the tournament would struggle to run smoothly without their behind-the-scenes support.

Mexico, one of the tournament's three host countries, offers a case in point. To better serve the World Cup, Mexico City's Estadio Azteca, which staged the opening match, has undergone a full-scale renovation. The overhaul, which has made the stadium more spacious and modern, was carried out by companies including China Railway Construction Engineering Group Co., Ltd. Mexico City, Monterrey and Guadalajara are Mexico's three host cities. To support the World Cup, they have put into service 115 light-rail trains manufactured by CRRC Corporation Limited, a Chinese rail transit equipment supplier. In Mexico City alone, 800 new-energy shuttle buses are operating to ferry fans between key venues, with 95 percent of them made in China.

What makes Chinese products a backbone of World Cup infrastructure and operations is the country's manufacturing prowess. China has built the world's largest manufactur-



The Labubu mascots, popular furry dolls from Chinese toy company Pop Mart, perform during the opening ceremony of the 2026 FIFA World Cup at Mexico City Stadium in Mexico City, Mexico, June 11, 2026.

ing system by scale, with the most comprehensive industrial categories. With a World Cup demanding everything from venue upgrades to transport and event services, this breadth enables Chinese manufacturers to supply a wide array of customized products to meet diverse needs.

In addition to helping upgrade local infrastructure, Chinese companies are also widening their footprint at the World Cup by leveraging technological strengths to make the tournament smarter and more efficient. With the Video Assistant Referee (VAR) system playing a bigger role

as the game gets faster and more complex, there's a growing demand for high-resolution, intelligent display and computing equipment. Against this backdrop, Chinese TV maker Hisense is supplying display devices for VAR, giving referees a clearer view of on-pitch action. Chinese tech firm Lenovo is also providing equipment for 16 tournament stadiums, with its servers and AI models deployed to support FIFA's technology and operational needs.

These upgrades in the products offered by Chinese companies reflect the country's sustained commitment

to making technological innovation a top priority in its development strategy. After years of effort, China has emerged as a major global hub for innovation. The World Intellectual Property Organization's Global Innovation Index 2025 ranked China among the world's top 10 for the first time.

Fluff, flavors and fandom

At the opening ceremony, two Labubu characters in football jerseys ignited the celebrations by romping about and lifting a replica of the

World Cup trophy, sparking excitement both in the stands and across social media. The fluffy, toothy figure, from Pop Mart's The Monsters franchise, appeared at the tournament's opening ceremony as a special guest, becoming the first Chinese original intellectual property to feature in a World Cup opening celebration. With Labubu as a prime example, a growing number of Chinese brands are betting on the interaction of culture and football at one of the world's biggest sporting events. Many are Chinese beverage makers, including Luckin Coffee and Cotti Coffee, which have struck partnerships with national teams such as Spain and Argentina.

An unexpected partnership emerged between herbal tea maker Walovi, the international version of Chinese herbal tea drink Wanglaoji, and Norwegian superstar striker Erling Haaland, with a lighthearted promotional video quickly going viral on social media worldwide. The collaboration is bringing traditional herbal drinks from south China to a wider international audience, boosted by the World Cup's influence. The World Cup is also a global stage for fans to show their support, with flags, jerseys, hats and toys becoming iconic symbols of team spirit. A significant share of these fan-favorite items comes from Yiwu, the world-renowned commodity hub in east China's Zhejiang Province.

At the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, nearly 70 percent of related merchandise came from Yiwu, and that share is expected to expand this year. Local customs data showed that the city's total exports of sports products and equipment reached 2.83 billion yuan (about 415 million U.S. dollars) in the first quarter of 2026, up 12 percent year on year. The diverse and burgeoning ways Chinese companies are expanding their presence at the 2026 World Cup show that they are no longer content to gain visibility simply by spending heavily on advertising, but are increasingly taking on new roles at global sporting events, such as technology developers, content creators, service providers and more, said He Yong, chief commentator with the Yangcheng Evening News.

These brands have woven their products into nearly every part of the World Cup ecosystem, shifting from simply "being seen" to "being needed," He said. "This shift highlights the growing global recognition of Chinese manufacturing and smart technologies, and reflects China's broader achievements in economic, technological and overall strength."

Zimbabwe Cab Bill 3 introduces several contentious changes to the 2013 Constitution, the most significant being the removal of the presidential running mate clause

Parliament approves Constitution Amendment Bill No. 3 amid fierce debate

BY Norman Mwale

@themkenyatimes

“This Bill either strengthens our democracy or weakens it forever”

Zimbabwe’s Parliament has approved Constitution Amendment Bill No. 3, widely referred to as “Cab Bill 3”, after two days of heated debate that exposed deep divisions between the ruling ZANU PF and the opposition. In the final vote on Wednesday evening, ZANU PF gunnered 216 votes in support of the Bill, while opposition MPs mustered a staggering 42 votes against, comfortably giving precedence to the legislation which now awaits presidential assent to become law.

Cab Bill 3 introduces several contentious changes to the 2013 Constitution, the most significant being the removal of the presidential running mate clause, the extension of the term of office for judges of the superior courts, and the restoration of presidential power to appoint the Chief Justice, Deputy Chief Justice and Judge President of the High Court without public interviews. The outcome means the President

will now directly appoint the heads of the judiciary, subject only to confirmation by the Senate.

Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Ziyambi Ziyambi defended the Bill as necessary for alignment and stability. “This Bill corrects anomalies that have existed since 2013 and ensures that government functions without procedural gridlock,” he told MPs during the final reading. “The President, as head of state and government, must have the authority to appoint the leadership of the judiciary in consultation with the Judicial Service Commission. This is standard practice in many democracies.”

ZANU PF Chief Whip Pupurai Togarepi said the outcome reflected the will of the people expressed through Parliament. “We have delivered what the Constitution demands – a two-thirds majority,” he said. “We got 216 votes because MPs understood what is at stake. This is not about individuals. It is about giving institutions clarity and ensuring continuity. Those who oppose this are opposing constitutional order.”

The opposition was unmoved despite being outnumbered. Citizens



Zimbabwe's President Emmerson Mnangagwa

Coalition for Change spokesperson Fadzayi Mahere described the vote as “a dark day for constitutionalism”. “This Bill either strengthens our democracy or weakens it forever,” she said from outside Parliament. “By removing public interviews and concentrating appointment powers in the executive, we are rolling back the gains of 2013. An independent judiciary cannot exist when judges owe their positions solely to the President.”

CCC MP and constitutional lawyer Obert Gutu argued that the removal of the running mate clause would undermine succession planning. “The running mate provision was

designed to prevent a constitutional crisis if the President dies or resigns,” he said. “Now we return to a situation where the President can appoint a Vice-President at will. That is not constitutionalism, that is personal rule.” He noted that even with 42 opposition votes against, the scale of ZANU PF’s majority left no room for amendment.

Civic groups also condemned the outcome. Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights director Roselyn Hanzu said the changes threatened judicial independence. “The public interview process was introduced after years of calls for transparency,” she said. “To remove it now sends

the wrong signal at a time when public trust in institutions is fragile. Courts must be seen to be independent, not appointed.”

The Zimbabwe Council of Churches urged restraint and national dialogue. “Constitutional amendments should not be rushed or weaponised,” said general secretary Reverend Kenneth Mtata. “We call on the President to reflect deeply before assent, and on all Zimbabweans to remain peaceful. The Constitution belongs to the people, not to Parliament alone.”

With assent expected within days, the practical effect of Cab Bill 3 will be immediate. The President gains full discretion over the top three judicial appointments, and the position of presidential running mate is scrapped for future elections. Analysts say the amendments will reshape power dynamics ahead of the next general election and could influence perceptions of Zimbabwe’s democratic trajectory abroad.

As Parliament rose after the vote, the chamber remained split along party lines. For ZANU PF, Cab Bill 3 is constitutional repair backed by 216 votes. For the opposition and civil society, it is constitutional retreat rejected by 42 MPs. For Zimbabweans watching at home, the Bill’s true test will not be in the vote count, but in how these new powers are used and whether the institutions they affect remain trusted by the people.

Malawi High Commissioner to South Africa, Dorothy Banda, met the group on Tuesday and assured them that repatriation efforts were being accelerated

Malawians await journey home

BY Norman Mwale

@themkenyatimes

Hope sat heavy in the air outside Malawi’s consular office in Johannesburg on Wednesday morning as dozens of Malawians gathered with worn suitcases and tired eyes, waiting for confirmation of their journey home. For many, the wait has stretched into weeks. Jobs lost, visas expired, and promises unkept have turned what began as a search for opportunity into a long, uncertain vigil for repatriation.

The group is part of a larger wave of Malawians stranded across South Africa after a tightening of immigration enforcement and a slowdown in cross-border work contracts. With transport costs beyond reach and documentation incomplete, hundreds have registered for government-assisted return, yet flights and buses remain limited. The result is a



Malawians await journey home

quiet but growing humanitarian bottleneck at consular posts and transit centres.

“We left with hope. Now we just want to go home with dignity,” said Blessings Mbewe, 34, who travelled from Lilongwe to Pretoria two years ago to work in construction. “The work dried up, my permit expired, and I cannot afford the bus fare back. I miss my children. I just want to see them again.” Stories like Mbewe’s

repeat across the crowd — skilled workers, vendors, students — all caught between economic necessity and the hard reality of irregular migration.

Malawi’s High Commissioner to South Africa, Dorothy Banda, met the group on Tuesday and assured them that repatriation efforts were being accelerated. “The government of Malawi is working closely with South African authorities and the In-

ternational Organisation for Migration to ensure that no Malawian is left behind,” she said. “We recognise the frustration, but we are processing cases in batches and prioritising the most vulnerable, including women with children and those with medical needs.” Banda confirmed that two bus convoys were scheduled for next week, with more expected before month end.

Officials from IOM echoed that message. “What we are seeing is not unique to Malawi, but the scale of need here is significant,” said IOM regional spokesperson Nomsa Mthembu. “We are supporting the Malawian government with transport, documentation, and basic assistance. The key is coordination so that people return safely and with respect for their rights.” She added that reintegration support would be offered on arrival, including skills profiling to link returnees to local economic programmes.

Back home, community leaders and civil society organisations have urged authorities to treat the return not as a failure, but as an opportunity. “These are Malawians who went

out with skills and experience,” said Mzati M’bwana, chair of the Diaspora Development Forum in Blantyre. “If we plan well, their return can strengthen local enterprise. What they need now is dignity in the journey home and support when they arrive.”

For the families waiting in Malawi, the uncertainty is just as sharp. Agnes Phiri from Mzuzu has not heard from her brother in three weeks. “He calls when he can borrow a phone. He says he is safe, but he sounds tired. We pray every night that he comes home soon,” she said by telephone.

As dusk fell in Johannesburg, the group outside the consular office remained — some playing cards, others sharing bread, all watching the gate for any sign of movement. The journey home is still days away for most, but the resolve is clear. After months of waiting, Malawians are not asking for charity. They are asking for passage, for recognition, and for the chance to rebuild their lives on home soil.

SPORTS
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BREAKING NEWS

Sports >> *Mexico booked their place in the World Cup last 32 with a hard-fought 1–0 victory over South Korea at Estadio Akron, Guadalajara on Thursday night, becoming the first nation to secure knockout progression

Mexico edge South Korea 1–0 to become first team into World Cup last 32



Mexico edge South Korea 1–0 to become first team into World Cup last 32

By **Norman Mwale**

“It was a game to forget, but the result is one to remember” – Javier Aguirre

Mexico booked their place in the World Cup last 32 with a hard-fought 1–0 victory over South Korea at Estadio Akron, Guadalajara on Thursday night, becoming the first nation to secure knockout progression at the 2026 tournament. The result lifts Javier Aguirre’s side to six points atop Group A with a match to spare and guarantees their round of 32 tie will be played in Mexico City.

The match was a tense, tactical affair that produced few chances until five minutes into the second half. The breakthrough arrived in the 50th minute when Luis Romo pounced on a costly error from South Korea goalkeeper Kim Seung-gyu. After Raul Jiménez’s header was blocked

into the air, Kim collided with teammate Lee Gi-hyuk while attempting to collect the cross and spilled the ball straight into Romo’s path. The Chivas midfielder made no mistake, volleying into an unguarded net to send the home crowd into delirium.

South Korea pushed for an equaliser late on and came within inches in the 87th minute. Cho Gue-sung’s header was brilliantly saved by Raul Rangel, and when the rebound fell to Yang Hyun-jun, Rangel somehow scrambled to his feet and clawed the ball away with his fingertips to complete a stunning double save that preserved Mexico’s clean sheet. The save drew chants of “Tala! Tala!” from the Estadio Akron crowd.

“It was a very close game; we didn’t give up a single centimetre and fought for every ball as if it were our last,” Aguirre said afterwards. “It was a game where whoever made a mistake would

lose, and it was them. It was a game to forget, but the result is one to remember”.

Romo, making his World Cup debut at 31, described the goal as the biggest moment of his career. “To score on your debut, at home, and send Mexico through — it is indescribable,” he said. “We knew South Korea would be disciplined, so we had to be patient. One moment decided it.”

Captain Edson Álvarez, deployed in central defence in place of suspended César Montes, praised the squad’s resilience. “The first half was difficult, the crowd were frustrated, but we stayed together,” he said. “Raúl’s save was as important as Luis’s goal. That is how you win at World Cups.”

For South Korea, the defeat leaves them on three points with work to do in their final group match. Manager Hong Myung-bo accepted the decisive moment went against his side. “We

defended well for long periods, but one mistake at this level is punished,” he said. “Kim is a top goalkeeper and he will recover. We still believe we can qualify.”

Son Heung-min was gracious in defeat. “Mexico were clinical when it mattered,” he said. “We created half-chances but not clear ones. Football is cruel like that. Now we must be better in both boxes against South Africa.”

The victory makes Mexico the first team to reach the knockout phase and secures them top spot in Group A. With home advantage locked in for the last 32, El Tri can now focus on finishing the group stage strongly. For a nation that expects progression, Thursday night brought relief and renewed belief that composure, discipline and home support can still carry them deep into the tournament.

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *The Football Kenya Federation has confirmed registration windows and league start dates for all national men's and women's competitions.

FKF sets kick-off dates for 2026/27 football season



Gor Mahia celebrate after winning the KPL title in 2025/26 season.

By **Martin Weche**

The Football Kenya Federation's Leagues and Competitions Committee has approved the full calendar of player registration windows and kick-off dates for the 2026/27 season, giving clubs across the country a clear timeline to begin preparations for the new campaign.

The announcement, which covers all six of FKF's national competitions across both the men's and women's pyramids, provides clubs with the structured roadmap they have been awaiting since the conclusion of the previous season. Federation officials urged all participating clubs to complete registration within the stipulated windows and to ensure they meet all licensing and competition requirements ahead of their respective deadlines.

The FKF Premier League, the flagship of Kenyan club football,

will lead the charge. Player registration opens on Sunday, June 21 at 12:01am and closes on Friday, August 21 at 11:59pm, with the season itself set to kick off on Saturday, August 22. The FKF National Super League follows a week later, with registration running from June 26 to August 28 and the competition getting underway on Saturday, August 29. The FKF Division One League, the third tier of the men's game, opens its registration window on July 1 and closes on September 4, ahead of a September 12 start.

The women's game has equally been given a structured and ambitious calendar. The FKF Women's Premier League registration window runs from June 28 to August 31, with the season launching on Saturday, September 5. The FKF Women's National Super League follows, with registration open from July 1 to September 5 and competitive ac-

tion beginning on September 12. The FKF Women's Division One League rounds off the schedule, with registration from July 3 to September 11 and a September 19 kick-off.

The clarity of the calendar is a welcome development for clubs, many of which have long called for greater forward planning and administrative consistency from the federation. Early confirmation of dates allows coaching staffs to map out pre-season programmes, conduct trials, and conclude transfer business without the uncertainty that has disrupted preparation in previous seasons.

For women's clubs in particular, the staggered start dates provide breathing room to assemble squads and finalise logistics — challenges that have historically been more acute at the lower tiers of the women's game, where resources are tighter and adminis-

trative support thinner.

FKF said it would continue working closely with clubs and stakeholders to ensure a smooth and well-organised start to the season, a signal that the federation is alive to the operational demands the calendar places on teams at every level of the pyramid.

With Kenyan football seeking to rebuild its standing both domestically and on the continent, a well-run league season from the first whistle carries significance beyond the results on the pitch. Clubs, players, and supporters will be watching closely to see whether the promise of the calendar is matched by the execution on the ground.

The 2026/27 season begins in earnest on August 22.

SPORTS NEWS



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SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



Florence Mudzingwa: Transforming disability into purpose and leadership



By: Anila Bukhari
@themtkenyatimes

Florence Mudzingwa is an inspiring disability rights advocate, social entrepreneur, author, coach, and emerging global leader whose life story embodies resilience, courage, and transformation. Born with Osteogenesis Imperfecta, a condition commonly known as brittle bones, Florence has navigated a world filled with physical, social, and economic barriers. Rather than allowing these challenges to define her, she transformed them into a powerful platform for advocacy, empowerment, and social change. Today, she is a respected voice for disability inclusion and women's empowerment, inspiring individuals across Zimbabwe, Africa, and beyond.

Growing up with a physical disability presented numerous obstacles. Society often viewed disability through a lens of limitation and dependence, creating barriers that extended far beyond physical accessibility. Florence experienced firsthand the stigma, discrimination, and exclusion that many persons with disabilities encounter daily. Rather than allowing these experiences to discourage her, they strengthened her determination to challenge misconceptions, advocate for equal opportunities, and create meaningful change for others facing similar circumstances. She chose not to let adversity shape her future; instead, she became determined to build a future where inclusion, dignity, and empowerment are realities for everyone.

Driven by a vision of inclusion and empowerment, Florence founded Hope Resurrect Trust, an organization dedicated to supporting women and girls with disabilities. Through the trust, she works tirelessly to build confidence, self-esteem, leadership skills, and economic participation among women living with disabilities. Her mission is rooted in the belief that disability should never

be a barrier to personal growth, professional achievement, leadership, or financial independence.

Under her leadership, Hope Resurrect Trust has become a beacon of hope for individuals who have long been marginalized by society. The organization provides mentorship, advocacy, leadership development, skills training, and empowerment programs that enable women and girls with disabilities to recognize their potential and become active contributors within their communities. Through these initiatives, Florence has helped create safe and supportive spaces where individuals can find their voices, strengthen their independence, pursue their ambitions, and build sustainable livelihoods.

Beyond her advocacy work, Florence is deeply passionate about personal development and transformational leadership. As a certified life coach known professionally as Coach Flow, she is committed to helping individuals overcome limiting beliefs, build resilience, and unlock their full potential. Her coaching philosophy is inspired by her own journey of perseverance, faith, and self-discovery. Drawing from both lived experience and professional expertise, she empowers people to embrace their unique strengths, cultivate confidence, and pursue purposeful lives despite life's challenges. Her compassionate approach has made her an inspiring mentor for individuals seeking personal and professional growth.

Her commitment to education and leadership development has taken her onto international platforms. Florence is an Australia Awards Africa International Student from Zimbabwe and is currently pursuing a Master of Disability Practice and Leadership at Flinders University in Australia. This academic journey reflects her dedication to expanding her expertise and strengthening her ability to influence disability policy, inclusive leadership, and sustainable development on a global scale.

As both a scholar and practitioner, Florence combines academic knowledge with lived experience, making her perspective authentic, credible, and impactful. She advocates for disability-inclusive leadership mod-

els that recognize persons with disabilities not simply as beneficiaries of development but as innovators, decision-makers, entrepreneurs, and leaders capable of shaping policies and transforming communities. Her work challenges outdated perceptions while promoting meaningful representation of persons with disabilities across leadership, education, entrepreneurship, and public life.

Florence is also an accomplished author. Her book, *Love Life: The Art of Living Your Dreams*, reflects her philosophy of hope, resilience, purpose, and perseverance. Through her writing, she encourages readers to embrace life's challenges with courage, pursue their aspirations with determination, and recognize that adversity can become a catalyst for growth and transformation. Her message resonates with readers from diverse backgrounds, especially those seeking inspiration to overcome obstacles and live lives filled with purpose.

Her remarkable contributions have earned recognition both nationally and internationally. In 2024, Florence was named among Zimbabwe's 50 Most Inspirational Women by the Institute of Corporate Directors, honoring her exceptional leadership and unwavering dedication to disability inclusion and women's empowerment. The recognition celebrated both her professional accomplishments and her lasting impact on marginalized communities.

The same year, she was selected as a Vital Voices Global Visionaries Fellow, joining an influential international network of women leaders driving positive change around the world. The fellowship expanded her opportunities to collaborate with global changemakers while amplifying her voice in advancing equality, inclusive leadership, and social justice.

Florence's excellence has also been recognized through numerous awards received between 2020 and 2023 for her contributions to coaching, social entrepreneurship, leadership development, and community impact. These honors reflect not only her professional achievements but also the meaningful and lasting



Florence Mudzingwa

difference she continues to make in the lives of individuals and communities.

In 2026, Florence achieved another significant milestone when she was named Second Runner-Up in the Disability Leadership category at the Women Changing the World Global Awards. This prestigious international recognition highlighted her outstanding commitment to advancing disability inclusion, promoting women's leadership, and empowering marginalized communities. The award further affirmed her growing reputation as a global advocate committed to building a more equitable and inclusive world.

What truly distinguishes Florence Mudzingwa is her remarkable ability to transform personal adversity into collective empowerment. She consistently demonstrates that disability does not diminish human potential. Instead, she proves that with opportunity, determination, education, and supportive leadership, persons with disabilities can become innovators, entrepreneurs, advocates, and influential leaders capable of transforming society. Her journey challenges stereotypes while encouraging governments, institutions, and communities to embrace diversity,

accessibility, inclusion, and equal opportunity.

Today, Florence continues to inspire countless people through her advocacy, coaching, writing, entrepreneurship, and leadership. Whether speaking at international conferences, mentoring emerging leaders, supporting women and girls with disabilities, advancing disability rights, or pursuing academic excellence, she remains steadfast in her commitment to creating a world where every individual is valued, included, respected, and empowered regardless of physical ability.

Her journey stands as a powerful testament to resilience, purpose, and visionary leadership. Through courage, compassion, determination, and unwavering service, Florence Mudzingwa has become a symbol of hope and empowerment for people around the world. As she continues to break barriers and champion inclusion, her legacy reminds us that true leadership is defined not by the absence of challenges but by the courage to overcome them while creating opportunities for others to rise alongside us.