



Nyeri and Makueni ranked the most transparent counties in budget management survey
Nyeri and Makueni counties have been ranked the top most transparent county governments in Kenya in the latest County Budget Transparency Survey (CBTS). Page 11



Kenya Power moves to bring more EV users onto special tariff as sector revenue surges
Kenya Power has launched a nationwide exercise to identify and transition electric vehicle (EV) users who are not currently billed under the utility's dedicated e-mobility tariff, as electricity demand from the fast-growing sector continues to rise. Page 12

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The Mt. Kenya Times

Daily ePAPER

Forest A plan to carve up Imenti Forest for a state lodge and golf course has ignited a political firestorm in Meru

Hands off our forest

Plans to excise 50 acres from Meru's Imenti Forest to build a state lodge, golf course, and airstrip have exploded into one of the Mt Kenya region's most charged political controversies, pitting the government against environmentalists, opposition leaders, and the very communities the project is meant to serve.

Governor Isaac Mutuma revealed that President William Ruto directed the Ministry of Forestry to identify the land during a State House meeting with Meru leaders. The Green Belt Movement swiftly demanded answers, warning that converting a gazetted forest into luxury developments "undermines public trust."

Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, ex-Agriculture CS Mithika Linturi, Jubilee's Fred Matiang'i, and PNU's Peter Munya have all condemned the plan. Ecologists warn the forest is a critical water tower sustaining agriculture across Meru and Tharaka Nithi counties.

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Rigathi Gachagua, Mithika Linturi and Meru leaders when they condemned the plan to hive the forest

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SCAN TO REGISTER

Kenya, South Africa seal six trade agreements as Ruto pushes deeper economic ties

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatimes

Some of the moments as captured in pictures

President William Ruto, alongside South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, witnessed the signing of six bilateral trade agreements at the Union Buildings in Pretoria, marking a renewed push to strengthen economic and diplomatic relations between the two countries.

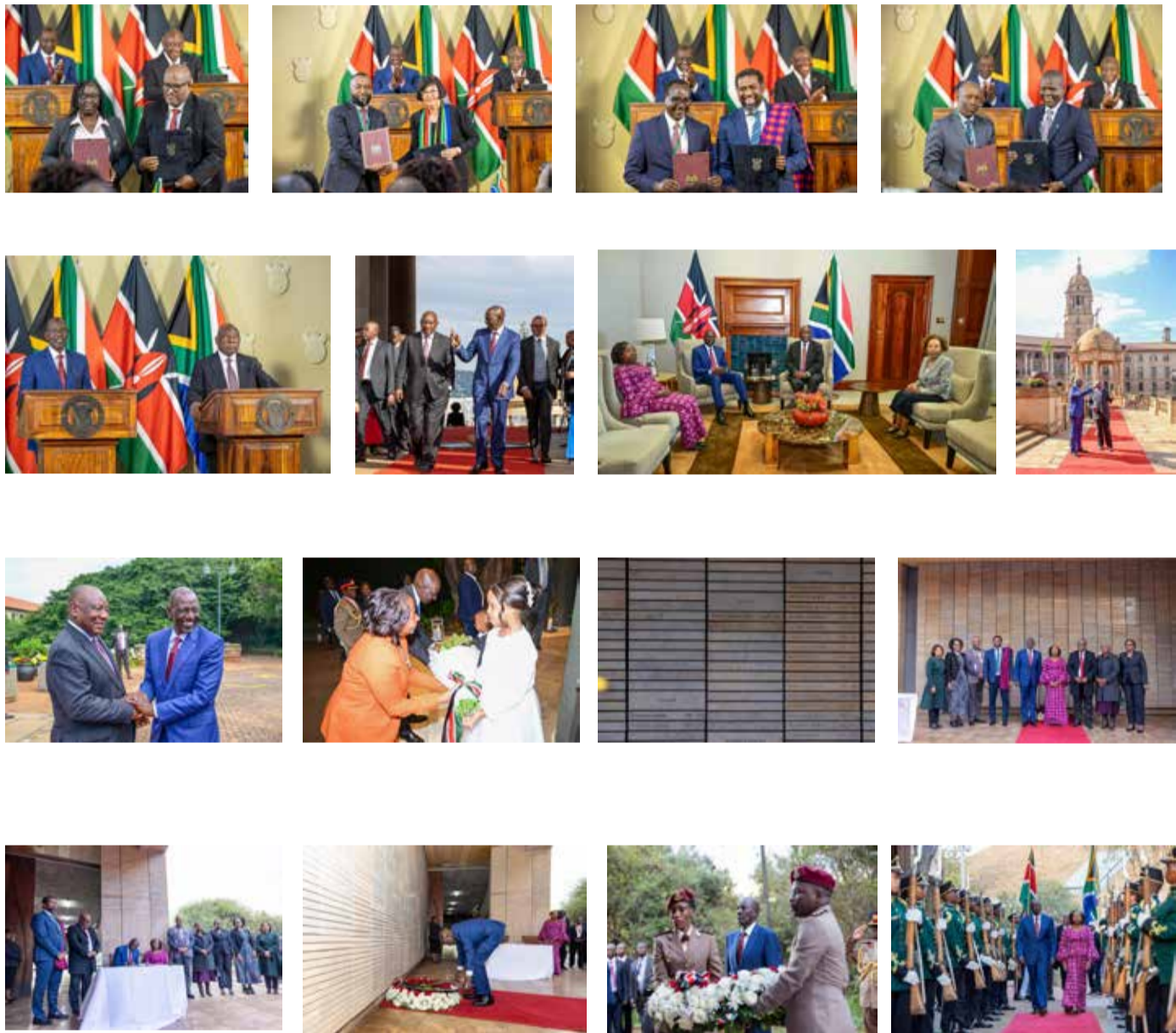
The agreements cover cooperation in shipping and maritime affairs, gender equality and women's empowerment, technical and vocational education and training (TVET), as well as arts, culture, heritage, sports and recreation. The deals are intended to deepen collaboration between the two nations while building on more than three decades of diplomatic ties.

President Ruto said the partnership reflects a shared commitment to expand trade and investment opportunities within the framework of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), aimed at boosting intra-African trade, widening markets, and promoting inclusive economic growth across the continent.

Kenya and South Africa already maintain strong commercial relations, with South African firms investing in sectors such as retail, banking, telecommunications, and manufacturing in Kenya, creating jobs and contributing to economic growth. Both leaders emphasized the need to further unlock industrial potential and enhance value addition across key sectors.

During his two-day State Visit, President Ruto, accompanied by First Lady Rachel Ruto, also visited the Freedom Park Memorial Museum in Pretoria, where he laid wreaths in honour of South Africa's struggle heroes and heroines who fought for freedom and dignity. The visit underscores the longstanding solidarity between the two nations and their commitment to strengthening people-to-people ties, regional integration, and shared prosperity.

Both governments pledged continued cooperation on regional stability and economic transformation.



The Mt. Kenya Times

Editor's Desk



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NEWS IN BRIEF



The United Democratic Alliance (UDA) Secretary General, Hassan Omar Hassan yesterday met Members of Parliament from the Rift Valley region to discuss strengthening the party's grassroots structures and preparations for the next General Election. The MPs, led by National Assembly Deputy Speaker Gladys Boss Shollei, agreed to work with the party in developing grassroots programmes across the region. Hassan assured the legislators of the party's full support and emphasized UDA's neutrality in the upcoming elections, stating that it has no preferred candidates. He reaffirmed President William Ruto's commitment to free and fair party nominations, stressing fairness and impartiality as key pillars of UDA's internal democracy. The MPs also pledged to mobilize support for President Ruto's re-election campaign nationwide.



Western Kenya is witnessing a rise in cancer cases, placing increasing pressure on healthcare facilities. St. Gallen Oncology Network in Kakamega records about 150 cancer cases monthly, including 50 new diagnoses and 100 patients undergoing ongoing treatment. According to Clinical Oncologist Dr. Calvin Omondi (pictured), the facility serves patients from across the region and offers chemotherapy and hormonal treatment. The most common cancers among men are esophageal, prostate and stomach cancer, while breast, cervical and esophageal cancers are prevalent among women. Dr. Omondi attributed the growing burden to factors such as family history, tobacco use, lifestyle habits and late diagnosis. He highlighted limited radiotherapy services and long referral delays, urging regular screening, early detection and increased investment in cancer awareness, treatment facilities and patient support.

Residents of Kitui County are expressing concern over the rising cost of living following the recent increase in fuel prices, which has triggered higher prices for basic food commodities. A spot check by the Kenya News Agency at several local markets revealed significant price hikes in essential household items. At Kalundu Market in Kitui Town, a bunch of spinach and kales that sold for Sh20 last month now costs Sh30. The price of tomatoes has also increased from Sh80 to Sh120 per kilogram. Traders and consumers say the rising transport and operating costs linked to fuel prices are making food increasingly unaffordable for many households.



The national broadcaster, Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) has officially secured the free-to-air (FTA) broadcast rights for the 2026 FIFA World Cup. This will ensure millions of Kenyan football fans enjoy live coverage of the world's biggest sporting event without subscription barriers. The 2026 edition of the tournament will be historic, jointly hosted by the United States, Canada, and Mexico, and expanded to 48 teams for the first time. It will run from June 11 to July 19.



Garissa County leaders have raised alarm over escalating insecurity in Garissa Town, marked by armed robberies, fatal stabbings, gang rapes and attacks by criminal gangs and rogue boda boda operators. The crisis has forced businesses to close early and left residents living in fear. Following a fatal stabbing that claimed the life of an American tourist, Governor Nathif Jama convened a crisis meeting with security officials and community leaders. He criticized security agencies for failing to arrest known suspects and blamed some parents for shielding delinquent children from justice. Deputy County Commissioner Sebastian Okiring pledged a crackdown on criminals hiding within the boda boda, tuk-tuk and taxi sectors, while leaders proposed stronger policing, positive parenting programmes and enhanced community-security collaboration.



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Ebola Many Kenyans are against the establishment of such a centre in our country

Government urged to consider Kenyans views on establishment of Ebola centre

BY Bernard Munyao
@themkenyatimes

Kiharu Member of Parliament Ndindi Nyoro has castigated plans to establish an Ebola research and response centre in Kenya by the American government.

The legislator observed that most Kenyans are uncomfortable with the proposal due to the risks associated with the deadly disease.

Speaking yesterday at Mugoiri Secondary School during a students' career fair attended by learners from Kahuro Sub-county, Nyoro said the country should exercise caution and avoid exposing its citizens to unnecessary health risks.

The MP argued that facilities dealing with Ebola should preferably be located in countries where the disease is endemic or where outbreaks have historically occurred.

"Many Kenyans are against the establishment of such a centre in our country. Ebola is a dangerous disease and we need to be very careful not to allow it into Kenya," he said.

Nyoro expressed concern that Kenya may not be adequately prepared to handle a major Ebola outbreak should one occur.

He noted that while the country has made significant progress in strengthening its healthcare system, managing highly infectious diseases such as Ebola would require extensive preparedness and resources.



Kiharu MP Ndindi Nyoro interacts with students from various secondary schools of Kahuro Sub County. | Photo: Bernard Munyao.

His remarks come amid public debate over reports that the Kenyan government is considering collaboration with the United States government on the establishment of an Ebola-related facility in the country.

The proposal has sparked mixed reactions, with supporters citing the need for advanced disease surveillance and research, while critics have raised concerns about safety and public health risks. Ebola is a severe and often fatal viral disease that primarily affects humans and other primates.

According to global health agencies, outbreaks have largely occurred in parts of Central and West Africa with fatality rates varying depending on the strain and the effectiveness of medical intervention.

Beyond health matters, Nyoro also used the forum to address economic and ed-

ucation issues revealing that he had submitted proposals to the National Assembly's Finance Committee aimed at reducing fuel prices and easing the cost of living for Kenyans.

The legislator said lowering fuel costs would have a ripple effect on the economy by reducing transportation and production expenses, ultimately benefiting households across the country.

He also called for increased government funding for education, particularly through enhanced school capitation.

Nyoro noted that many public schools continue to face financial challenges due to inadequate funding affecting the quality of learning.

"Education remains one of the most important investments a country can make. More resources should be allocated to support schools and ensure learners receive quality education," he stated.

The MP further highlighted efforts being undertaken in Kiharu Constituency through the Masomo Bora programme, which seeks to increase the number of students from day secondary schools joining universities.

According to Nyoro, the initiative aims to triple university enrolment among learners from day schools by providing both academic support and financial assistance.

As part of the programme, students from Kiharu day secondary schools who secure university admission will receive KSh10,000 from the National Government Constituencies Development Fund (NG-CDF) to help with fees.

Each beneficiary will also receive an additional KSh5,000 as pocket money to ease their transition into higher learning institutions.

Nyoro said the programme is designed to ensure that students from humble backgrounds are not locked out of university education due to financial constraints.

He encouraged learners to work hard in their studies and take advantage of the opportunities available to them through education support initiatives in the constituency.

The career fair brought together students, teachers and education stakeholders, with speakers encouraging learners to make informed career choices and remain focused on their academic goals.

Kenya eyes London model for Nairobi police unit



Murkomen and Sakaja hold talks in London as Kenya benchmarks global urban policing models for a new metropolitan security unit

BY MKT REPORTER
@themkenyatimes

Kenya's plan to establish a dedicated Nairobi Metropolitan Police Unit (NMPU) moved a step closer on Thursday after senior government officials held high-level talks with British counterparts in London, seeking to draw lessons from one of the world's most experienced urban policing systems.

Nairobi Governor Johnson Sakaja and Interior Cabinet Secretary Kipchumba Murkomen, accompanied by Deputy Inspector General of Police Gilbert Masengeli and other senior security officials, met UK Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood, Minister of State for Policing and Crime Sarah Jones, and the leadership of the City of London Police.

"We explored collaboration in the establishment of the Nairobi Metropolitan Police

Unit, drawing on the experience of the UK's policing institutions in urban policing, public safety and crime prevention," Sakaja said.

Murkomen described the engagement as a natural extension of the Kenya-UK Strategic Partnership Framework, adding that Britain's "decades of operational excellence" offered a valuable template for Nairobi's evolving security needs.

The London visit follows a similar study mission to New York City, where the delegation benchmarked the New York Police Department. Rome and Tokyo are also scheduled stops in the international benchmarking exercise.

Once established, the NMPU is expected to strengthen public order and tackle emerging criminal threats across one of Africa's fastest-growing cities.

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Dairy industry Today, as founder and managing director of Tanolope Consultancy Limited, Gathii is helping shape the future of dairy development

From science to strategy: How Alex Gathii Gitonga is transforming Africa's dairy industry

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyatimes

When Alex Gathii Gitonga speaks about dairy farming, he rarely begins with cows.

Instead, he talks about systems.

He talks about data, technology, nutrition, markets, investment, policy, and people. He talks about connecting farmers to knowledge, businesses to opportunities, and science to practical solutions.

For a man who has spent much of his career working in the dairy sector, it is an unusual perspective. Yet it is precisely this approach that has made him one of Africa's most respected dairy strategists and innovation leaders.

Today, as founder and managing director of Tanolope Consultancy Limited, Gathii is helping shape the future of dairy development across the continent, championing a model that seeks to make dairy farming more productive, profitable, and sustainable.

His journey began at the University of Nairobi, where he studied Food Science and Technology. While many of his peers pursued careers in food manufacturing and laboratory sciences, Gathii found himself increasingly drawn to agriculture and the opportunities it presented for economic transformation.

As he interacted with farmers and agribusinesses, he noticed a recurring pattern.

Many dairy farmers worked tirelessly but struggled to maximize returns from their enterprises. Productivity challenges, poor feeding practices, inadequate record-keeping, limited access to markets, and a lack of timely technical support often stood in the way of growth.

The problem, Gathii realized, was not a lack of effort.

"It was a systems problem," he would later conclude.

Rather than viewing dairy farming as a standalone activity, he began examining the entire value chain—from feed production and animal nutrition to milk marketing, financing, policy, and technology adoption.

That perspective would eventually shape his career.

Over the years, Gathii built a reputation as a strategist capable of bridging the gap between scientific

knowledge and practical implementation. Farmers appreciated his ability to simplify complex concepts, while investors and agribusiness leaders valued his understanding of both the technical and commercial aspects of dairy production.

Those experiences led him to establish Tanolope Consultancy Limited, a specialized dairy advisory and enterprise development firm.

The company was founded on a simple idea: that African dairy farmers and agribusinesses could achieve far greater success if they had access to better information, stronger management systems, and modern technologies.

Since then, Gathii has worked with farmers, processors, investors, development organizations, and institutions across the continent, helping them improve productivity and strengthen their operations.

Colleagues describe him as a systems thinker who rarely focuses on a single problem in isolation.

When examining low milk production, for example, he looks beyond the animals themselves. He considers feed quality, nutrition, genetics, management practices, business strategy, labor efficiency, and market conditions.

For Gathii, sustainable solutions emerge when all parts of the system work together.

His advocacy for data-driven dairy management has become one of the defining features of his work.

Long before digital agriculture became a popular topic, Gathii was encouraging producers to embrace record-keeping, performance measurement, benchmarking, and evidence-based decision-making.

He believed that farmers should not rely solely on instinct when making management decisions.

Instead, they should use data to understand what is working, identify inefficiencies, and make informed investments.

That philosophy has become increasingly relevant as African agriculture undergoes rapid technological change.

Recognizing the opportunities presented by digital innovation, Gathii became involved in developing solutions aimed at improving access to information and advisory services within the dairy sector.

Among these initiatives is TanoDairy, a platform designed to con-



Mr Alex Gathii Gitonga - Cow signal trainer and MD Tanolope Consultancy Ltd. | Photo: Courtesy.

nect dairy stakeholders with knowledge, analytics, advisory support, and market opportunities.

The goal, according to Gathii, is not merely to digitize agriculture but to make valuable information accessible to the people who need it most.

For many farmers, timely advice can mean the difference between profit and loss.

Technology, he argues, should serve as a bridge rather than a barrier.

Beyond consulting and innovation, Gathii has become a familiar figure in training halls, workshops, conferences, and field demonstrations across Africa.

Over the years, he has trained and mentored thousands of farmers, farm managers, extension officers, investors, and agribusiness professionals.

His sessions often focus on practical solutions that can be implemented immediately, helping participants improve farm performance and business outcomes.

Those who have worked with him say his strength lies in translating scientific concepts into actionable strategies.

Whether discussing animal nutrition, dairy economics, feed management, milk quality, or business

planning, he emphasizes practical application over theory.

His influence extends beyond farms and boardrooms.

Gathii has also contributed to discussions on livestock feeds, dairy standards, veterinary services, agricultural competitiveness, and broader sector development initiatives.

As governments and development organizations seek ways to strengthen food security and agricultural resilience, his insights are increasingly sought in policy and industry forums.

Yet despite the recognition he has received, Gathii remains focused on a much larger objective.

He believes Africa possesses the resources, talent, and market potential needed to become a global dairy powerhouse.

Achieving that vision, however, will require a new approach; one that combines science, technology, entrepreneurship, and human capital development.

It is a challenge he has dedicated his career to addressing.

His long-term ambition is bold: helping build a dairy sector capable of significantly increasing milk production while lowering production

costs, improving farmer incomes, and strengthening food security across the continent.

For Gathii, the future of dairy is not simply about producing more milk.

It is about creating opportunities.

Opportunities for farmers to earn better incomes.

Opportunities for young people to build careers in agribusiness.

Opportunities for investors to support agricultural growth.

And opportunities for African countries to strengthen their economies through a thriving agricultural sector.

As the continent grapples with the twin challenges of feeding a growing population and creating sustainable livelihoods, leaders like Gathii are helping shape the conversation around what comes next.

His story reflects a growing recognition that agriculture is no longer defined solely by land and livestock. Increasingly, it is being driven by knowledge, innovation, and strategic leadership.

And for Gathii, that transformation is only beginning.

He can be reached on +254 723 331 611

Green Belt Movement warns against plans to develop Imenti forest



BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatiimes

The Green Belt Movement (GBM) has strongly condemned a scheme to carve up sections of Meru's Imenti Forest for the construction of an airstrip, golf course and State Lodge, warning that the plans threaten one of Kenya's most important forest ecosystems.

In a statement issued yesterday, the environmental organization expressed alarm over reports that senior government officials are pursuing projects that could lead to the destruction and fragmentation of parts of the forest, which serves as a critical water catchment area and biodiversity reservoir.

The group revealed that on May 6, 2026, the Principal Secretary for Forestry, Gitonga Mugambi, granted concurrence to the Chief Conservator of Forests following a request for a Special User Licence to facilitate construction of a 17.5-kilometre Meru Bypass under the Horn of Africa Gateway Development Project. The road project, funded by the World Bank's International Development Association, would require the use of 2.75 hectares of Imenti Forest.

However, GBM argued that recent developments indicate a broader agenda beyond road infrastructure. The organization cited reports of the Forestry PS, Meru Governor Mutuma M'Ethgingia and Kenya Forest Service officials touring Kambakia Forest, a section of Imenti Forest, to identify potential sites for the proposed airstrip, golf

course and State Lodge.

"The justification being advanced is familiar. We are told these projects will unlock investment, boost tourism and accelerate economic growth," the organization said.

"Forests are not vacant land waiting for powerful people to dream up luxury projects."

GBM warned that the plans appear to validate concerns raised during debates over amendments to Section 56(2) of the Forest Conservation and Management Act, which expanded the Kenya Forest Service's authority to issue easements and wayleaves in public forests. Environmental defenders had opposed the changes, arguing they could open protected forests to commercial interests.

The organization questioned how the proposed developments would contribute to conservation, describing them as luxury projects with no place in a protected public forest.

Calling the initiative "environmental thuggery dressed up as economic progress," GBM demanded full disclosure of all plans relating to Imenti and Kambakia forests and urged authorities to halt any allocation, licensing or conversion of forest land.

The movement also appealed to Parliament, the National Land Commission, development partners and the public to resist any actions that could undermine the integrity of Kenya's public forests, pledging to stand with communities and environmental defenders in protecting the ecosystem.



Patrick Analo Akivaga

EACC recovers KSh65 million in cash during raid on Nairobi County official's home

BY MKT REPORTER

@themtkenyatiimes

The Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) yesterday conducted a search operation at the residence of Patrick Analo Akivaga, the Chief Officer for Urban Development and Planning at Nairobi City County Government, as part of ongoing investigations into alleged corruption and economic crimes.

According to the anti-graft agency, the operation targeted Mr. Akivaga over allegations of conflict of interest, abuse of office, bribery, and possession of unexplained wealth. Investigators suspect that the county official has been receiving millions of shillings through cash transactions and M-Pesa deposits, leading to the accumulation of assets believed to be disproportionate to his known sources of income.

The EACC described the search as successful, revealing substantial evidence that could support

the ongoing investigations. Among the most significant recoveries was a total of KSh65.3 million in cash found at the suspect's residence in Syokimau, Machakos County, and inside the boot of his motor vehicle.

The recovered amount included KSh51.3 million in Kenyan currency and 113,000 US dollars, estimated at approximately KSh14 million.

In addition to the cash, investigators seized several title deeds, motor vehicle logbooks, laptops, mobile phones, iPads, electronic accessories, land and motor vehicle sale agreements, approval plans from Nairobi County Government, and other documents considered relevant to the probe.

The Commission stated that the evidence collected during the operation will be subjected to further analysis as investigators seek to establish the source of the funds and determine whether the assets were acquired through legitimate means.

EACC Chief Executive Officer Abdi A. Mohamud said the investigations are ongoing and that the findings will guide the next course of action.

He noted that the Commission will pursue appropriate legal measures, including prosecution where sufficient evidence is established and the recovery of any unexplained wealth or proceeds of corruption. The latest operation underscores the Commission's intensified efforts to combat corruption and illicit enrichment within public institutions.

It also highlights growing scrutiny of public officials whose lifestyles and assets appear inconsistent with their declared income.

The EACC has urged members of the public to continue supporting anti-corruption efforts by reporting suspected cases of graft and abuse of office.

Investigations into the matter remain active.

Forest The stakes, ecologists warn, are far higher than politics. Imenti Forest is not simply green scenery on the edge of Meru town

Hands off our forest

A plan to carve up Imenti Forest for a state lodge and golf course has ignited a political firestorm in Meru — and raised far graver questions about what the county stands to lose

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyatimes

Plans to excise 50 acres from Imenti Forest in Meru County to build a state lodge, golf course, and airstrip have drawn fierce opposition from politicians, environmentalists, and community groups, turning what began as a presidential development pledge into one of the most combustible political controversies in the Mt Kenya region this year.

The plan surfaced after Meru Governor Isaac Mutuma revealed that President William Ruto had issued a directive to the Ministry of Forestry to identify land for the state lodge and golf course during a meeting with Meru leaders at State House, Nairobi. Governor Mutuma, accompanied by his deputy Linda Kiome-Gitonga, Forestry Principal Secretary Gitonga Mugambi, and North Imenti MP Rahim Dawood, subsequently toured the proposed site within Imenti Forest, a few kilometres from Meru town. The governor framed the project as a catalyst for city status ambitions and a boost to the region's tourism and agricultural profile. But the backlash was swift and unsparring.

The Green Belt Movement wrote to Principal Secretary Mugambi seeking urgent clarification, warning that any proposal to convert a gazetted public forest into luxury developments “undermines public trust.” The movement cited the Forest Conservation and Management Act and the Constitution, insisting that any change to forest boundaries must involve full public participation and rigorous environmental safeguards.

The opposition moved in quickly. Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, whose Democracy for the Citizens Party (DCP) has been aggressively contesting political ground in Meru ahead of the 2027 elections, claimed that land grabs in the county were systemic, alleging that 300 acres had been taken illegally as part of a broader pattern of dispossession. Former Agriculture Cabinet Secretary Mithika Linturi, now the DCP's organising secretary and a key figure in the opposition coalition, echoed those concerns, while

former Interior CS Fred Matiang'i — the Jubilee party's preferred presidential candidate — used a joint press briefing with PNU leader Peter Munya to condemn what he described as a culture of state arrogance and the misuse of public resources. Matiang'i had earlier warned that politics driven by “kiburi” — arrogance — and contempt for citizens' voices was pulling the country in the wrong direction.

Governor Mutuma's response to critics was pointed. He stood firmly behind the project, insisting the developments were necessary to unlock Meru's economic potential, and showed little appetite for engaging the environmental objections being raised. The governor's position drew its own criticism — from residents who felt their concerns were being dismissed and from conservationists who argued that a man of the cloth, as Mutuma is, should be the last person presiding over the destruction of a gazetted forest.

The stakes, ecologists warn, are far higher than politics. Imenti Forest is not simply green scenery on the edge of Meru town. Illegal logging and other human activities in the Upper Imenti, Lower Imenti, and Nyambene Hills forests have already been blamed for a measurable reduction in water levels in rivers and reservoirs across the region. The forest is, in the language of hydrologists, a water tower — a critical catchment system that feeds rivers supplying both Meru and Tharaka Nithi counties.

The broader Mt Kenya catchment area, of which Imenti is an integral part, is home to 4.5 million people, provides water for roughly half the population, and generates most of the country's hydroelectric power. Tharaka Nithi Governor Onesmus Muthomi Njuki once noted that of the 17 permanent rivers that used to flow through his county, only 10 semi-permanent ones remained — a sobering statistic that speaks directly to what is already being lost through incremental forest degradation.

The economic implications for Meru are not abstract. The county's economy is anchored in agriculture — miraa, tea, dairy, and horticulture — all of which are intimately depen-



Fred Matiang'i with PNU leader Peter Munya

dent on reliable water supply and stable rainfall patterns. Ecologists are unambiguous: disrupt the forest cover that regulates cloud formation and groundwater recharge, and you disrupt the rains. Disrupt the rains, and you disrupt the harvest. In a county where hundreds of thousands of farming families live on what the land provides, that is not a theoretical risk — it is an economic sentence.

Conservationists point out that Kenya is already losing tens of thousands of hectares to deforestation annually — approximately 84,716 hectares lost and 14,934 hectares degraded every year, according to the Forest Status Report 2024. Excising another 50 acres from a gazetted forest, they argue, sets a dangerous precedent at a moment when the country can least afford one.

Greenpeace Africa was blunt in its assessment: from Karura to the Mau, from the Aberdares to Ngong Road, Kenyans have repeatedly fought to protect forests from encroachment disguised as progress. Imenti, the organisation warned, risks becoming the latest entry on that grim list.

The political arithmetic in Meru is, meanwhile, growing more compli-

cated by the week. Peter Munya and Mithika Linturi — both eyeing the Meru governorship in 2027 — have found themselves on the same opposition side but engaged in an increasingly bitter rivalry over who controls the opposition narrative in the county. That rivalry risks fracturing the very coalition that might otherwise mount the most effective check on the state lodge project.

For now, the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry has not formally confirmed whether any approvals have been granted,

and the Green Belt Movement's demand for a written response within seven days has passed without a definitive public answer.

What is clear is this: Imenti Forest has stood for generations as the quiet, unglamorous guarantor of life in Meru and Tharaka Nithi — feeding rivers, anchoring rainfall, and sustaining the farms that feed families across two counties. A state lodge, however grand, will not do the same. You cannot replace a water tower with a golf course.



Meru Governor Isaac Mutuma

Kirinyaga Through public participation forums, residents requested community centres that could serve as accessible spaces for empowerment

Waiguru's Social Halls transform community life across Kirinyaga county

BY MKT Correspondent
@themtkenyatimes

The County Government of Kirinyaga has constructed 11 modern social halls aimed at improving community life by providing residents with dignified and accessible spaces for social gatherings, public meetings, cultural activities and civic engagement.

The initiative, spearheaded by Governor Anne Waiguru, seeks to address a longstanding challenge where residents were forced to hold funerals, weddings, public meetings and other social functions along roadsides or in overcrowded homes due to a lack

of suitable public spaces.

Governor Waiguru said the social halls form part of the county's broader investment in social infrastructure, which she described as a critical but often overlooked pillar of community empowerment and cohesion. According to the governor, the facilities are helping strengthen public participation and creating organized environments where residents can engage in development discussions and community activities.

"Through public participation forums, residents requested community centres that could serve as accessible spaces for empowerment, civic engagement, learning and

cultural activities," she said.

The project is particularly significant in densely populated areas of Mwea, where limited land availability has made it difficult for communities to organize gatherings. Besides the social halls, the county has also invested in boda boda sheds and other social amenities aimed at supporting local development.

County Executive Committee Member for Sports, Culture and Social Services Dennis Musyimi said five social halls located in Mathangauta, Kiangdegwa, Kiriko, Kiorugari and Ndindiruku are already complete and operational, while six others in Githogondo, Matandara, Kangu, Ki-



One of the Social Halls.

munye, Mwietheri and Kirimara are nearing completion.

Musyimi noted that the facilities are being used for more than social events. They are hosting mental health support programmes, digital literacy training, crisis response activities and cross-cultural dialogue forums. Modern ablution blocks have also been incorporated into the facilities to enhance convenience for users.

Residents have welcomed the project, saying it has significantly improved community interactions and reduced the cost of organizing meetings and ceremonies. At Githogondo Social Hall, residents said the facility has ended years of hardship caused by the lack of a suitable meeting place.

Local elder and caretaker Josephine Wanjiku Kariuki said community members previously endured difficult

conditions, often standing by roadsides during funerals and meetings. Others, including trader Florence Murage and resident Susan Wangari, said the halls have become important venues for women's groups, youth programmes and economic empowerment activities, while helping residents save money previously spent on hiring meeting venues.

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Survey Nyeri and Makueni counties have been ranked the top most transparent county governments in Kenya in the latest County Budget Transparency Survey

Nyeri and Makueni ranked the most transparent counties in budget management survey

BY WMW

@themkenyatimes

Nyeri and Makueni counties have been ranked the top most transparent county governments in Kenya in the latest County Budget Transparency Survey (CBTS).

The survey, conducted by Bajeti Hub, a Kenyan non-profit organization that promotes transparency, accountability and citizen participation in public budgeting, placed Makueni County first, followed by Nyeri, Nakuru, Busia and West Pokot in the top five positions nationally.

The findings were unveiled during the launch of the County Budget Transparency Survey 2025.

Nyeri Governor Dr. Mutahi Kahiga welcomed the recognition, describing it as a testament to the county's commitment to openness, accountability and prudent use of public resources. The county earned four prestigious awards, reinforcing its reputation as one of the country's leading devolved units in public financial management.

It received accolades for producing the most comprehensive Annual Development Plan (ADP), the most comprehensive County Budget Review and Outlook Paper (CBROP), emerging as the second most transparent county in Kenya and attaining the highest score in the timely publication of budget documents.

According to the survey findings, Nyeri published seven out of the ten key budget documents required by law within the stipulated timelines and scored 88 out of 100 points on the availability of budget information to the public.

The report also highlighted the county's consistency in making critical budget documents accessible to residents, a practice that has strength-

ened public oversight and accountability.

"Nyeri County has remained consistent in making key budget documents publicly accessible, demonstrating a strong commitment to transparency and citizen engagement," the report noted.

The survey further showed significant progress in public participation within the county.

Nyeri's score in this category rose sharply from 22 out of 100 in the previous assessment to 59 out of 100 this year, indicating improved efforts by the county government to involve residents in planning and budgeting processes.

Governor Kahiga said the improvement reflects deliberate efforts by the administration to ensure wananchi have a meaningful voice in shaping development priorities.

"We are encouraged by the progress made in public participation because development can only be sustainable when citizens are actively involved in decisions that affect their lives," he said.

The County Budget Transparency Survey is regarded as one of Kenya's most comprehensive assessments of county governments' compliance with legal requirements on budget transparency.

The exercise evaluates the availability, accessibility and comprehensiveness of key budget documents that counties are required to publish throughout the budget cycle.

Bajeti Hub said the initiative seeks to promote open, inclusive and equitable public budgeting while ensuring citizens have access to information necessary for effective participation and oversight.

Nationally, the survey has documented steady improvement in county budget transparency over recent years, with counties publishing more budget documents and

improving the quality of information provided to the public.

Bajeti Hub noted that transparency is critical in enhancing accountability, strengthening public trust and improving service delivery.

Governor Kahiga attributed Nyeri's latest success to the collective efforts of county officials, stakeholders and residents.

"I commend our County Treasury and Economic Planning team, county staff, stakeholders and the people of Nyeri for their collective contribution to this achievement. This recognition belongs to all of us and affirms that our efforts to build a transparent and accountable government are yielding tangible results," he said.

The latest recognition adds to a growing list of awards earned by the county under Kahiga's administration.

In 2023, the governor received the Leadership and Governance Award during the Diaspora One Voice Consortium Expo Gala in Washington, D.C.

Nyeri has also received recognition for excellence in the timely payment of employees' pensions and the clearance of pending debts.

Additionally, the county's finance team was ranked first nationally by the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) for adherence to procurement laws and regulations.

Observers say the county's consistent performance in transparency and financial management has positioned it among the best-governed devolved units in the country, particularly at a time when public scrutiny of county expenditure remains high.

Governor Kahiga said the county government would continue strengthening accountability mechanisms and ensuring that public resources

are utilized efficiently to improve the lives of residents.

"These achievements reaffirm our resolve to build a county government that is transparent, accountable and responsive to the needs of its people. We will continue working tirelessly to ensure that every public resource is utilized effectively for the benefit of the residents of Nyeri County," he said.

The recognition comes as county governments across Kenya face increasing pressure from citizens, oversight institutions and civil society organizations to demonstrate prudent management of public funds and improve public participation in budgeting and development planning.



Nyeri Governor receiving a certificate.



Nyeri CEC for Finance Robert Thuo during the ceremony.



Nyeri Governor Dr Mutahi Kahiga addressing the awarding ceremony. | Photo: Courtesy.

Electric vehicle The utility projects revenues from EV-related electricity sales could reach approximately KSh5.9 billion by 2030 as electric vehicle adoption accelerates

Kenya Power moves to bring more EV users onto special tariff as sector revenue surges

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyatimes

Kenya Power has launched a nationwide exercise to identify and transition electric vehicle (EV) users who are not currently billed under the utility's dedicated e-mobility tariff, as electricity demand from the fast-growing sector continues to rise.

The utility said the move is aimed at ensuring all customers using electricity for EV charging benefit from the specialized tariff while enabling the company to better track energy consumption trends in the emerging electric mobility market.

Under the e-mobility tariff, EV users pay KSh16 per unit during peak hours and KSh8 per unit during off-peak periods, rates designed to support the adoption of cleaner transport technologies and encourage charging during periods of lower electricity demand.

According to Kenya Power, electricity sales to the e-mobility sector generated cumulative revenues of KSh382 million between July 2023 and April 2026. Monthly revenues have expanded dramatically over the period, rising from KSh873,907 in July 2023 to a record KSh35.25 million in February 2026.

The utility projects revenues from EV-related electricity sales could reach approximately KSh5.9 billion by 2030 as electric vehicle adoption accelerates across the country.

Kenya Power Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Dr. Joseph Siror said the company remains committed to supporting the development of Kenya's electric mobility ecosystem.

"Three years ago, Kenya Power successfully lobbied

for a special electricity tariff to serve the e-mobility industry. Our commitment is to create awareness, support the market and drive the adoption of e-mobility in the country," he said.

Siror noted that the transition to electric mobility should extend beyond private vehicle owners to include public transport operators, motorcycle and three-wheeler users, logistics companies, county governments, small businesses and ordinary citizens seeking affordable and environmentally friendly transport alternatives.

The Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority (EPRA) approved the dedicated e-mobility tariff in 2023 following a request by Kenya Power. Since then, uptake has grown steadily, with 331 customers currently registered under the tariff.

The company expects the number of customers on the tariff to exceed 1,000 by the end of the current financial year as more EV users and charging operators are onboarded.

Electricity consumption linked to EV charging has also recorded substantial growth. Kenya Power reported that monthly energy sales under the tariff increased by more than 113 times over the past 34 months, growing from 13,500 kilowatt-hours (kWh) in July 2023 to approximately 1.5 million kWh.

A major milestone was reached in November 2025 when monthly electricity sales for EV charging surpassed one million units for the first time. The company says demand has consistently remained above that level since then, signalling the sector's transition into a higher-growth phase.

Regionally, Nairobi contin-

ues to dominate EV-related electricity consumption, accounting for KSh271.9 million in revenue over the review period. The Coast region generated KSh55 million, while North Eastern contributed KSh35 million and West Kenya recorded KSh11.5 million.

Industry forecasts point to continued expansion of the market. The Electric Mobility Association of Kenya (EMAK) estimates that EV charging could generate approximately KSh5.79 billion in electricity sales annually by 2030, supported by an estimated metered grid demand of 121 gigawatt-hours (GWh).

Kenya's electric vehicle fleet has grown rapidly in recent years. By the end of 2025, more than 35,000 EVs had been registered nationwide, compared to just 796 vehicles three years earlier.

The majority of the growth has been driven by electric motorcycles, which have become increasingly popular among commercial riders and delivery operators.

Stakeholders attribute the surge in adoption to a series of government-backed incentives designed to lower the cost of electric mobility. These include duty exemptions on the importation of the first 100,000 EVs, zero-rated value-added tax (VAT) on electric vehicles and lithium-ion batteries, and reduced excise duty on electric bicycles, electric motorcycles and related battery technologies.

With supportive policies remaining in place and investment in charging infrastructure continuing to expand, industry players expect Kenya's electric mobility sector to maintain strong growth momentum over the coming years.



Kenya Power staff take Energy and Petroleum CS Opiyo Wandayi through the various EV solutions that the company has adopted during the 4th Annual E-Mobility Conference hosted by Kenya Power.



Energy and Petroleum CS Opiyo Wandayi addresses delegates during the 4th Annual E-Mobility Conference hosted by Kenya Power at KICC.

Ebola From the foregoing, I tend to think that Americans probably fear Ebola more than any other known disease ...

Ebola and the American fear factor



BY Joseph Kamutu
@themtkenyatimes

The raging debate amidst the increasingly rising anger among Kenyans in regard with the setting up of an Ebola Quarantine facility in Nanyuki under the auspices of the US Government reminds me of a study tour I made in the USA in April, 1995.

Just as the one month tour was coming to an end, the dreaded Ebola disease broke out in the Congo with devastating results as I made my way back to Kenya.

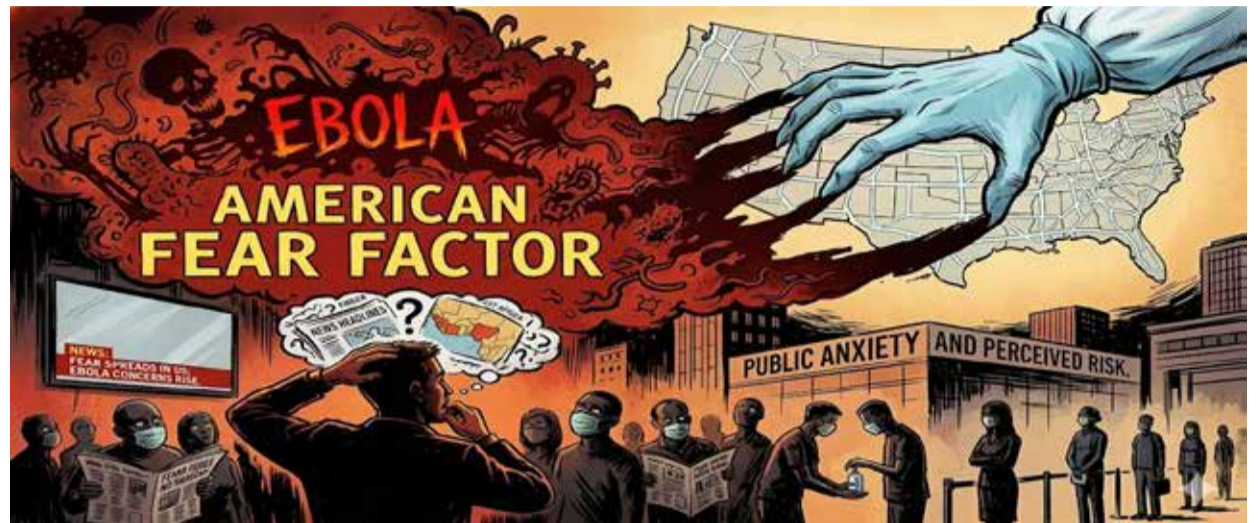
On arriving back home, I was bombarded with both Phone and Fax enquiries from the many friends I had

made during the US tour, inquiring if I had arrived home safely and if I was safe from the Ebola outbreak.

They were happy to hear I was safe, but I had to go to greater lengths to explain to them that the deadly disease had broken out in Congo which in Central Africa and not in Kenya which is in East Africa.

Incidentally, many ordinary Americans seem to have a distorted image of Africa and some of them even think that Africa is “one big country” whose capital is South Africa but now with the advent of internet, probably the perception has changed or is changing.

I recall one moment at a Chinese restaurant in Philadelphia, where a waiter, a young American Chinese on learning from me that I was from Kenya, he excitedly asked me whether I was a Maasai and if indeed I had already killed a lion “with my bare hands” to which I replied in the affirmative. The young man was so excited that he even asked me to



bare my hands for him to see and touch the “lion killer hands”. I was not only excited but equally amused during the friendly banter between myself and the young man. In fact, I always laugh whenever I recall that fond memory.

I made a second visit to the US in 2017, about 22 years later, only to discover that the wrong perceptions

by ordinary Americans about the Africa continent hadn’t changed much.

... And over 30 years later and in a strange twist of events, both Kenya and Congo find themselves in the middle of a storm of global proportions and magnitude, because of the current Ebola pandemic in Congo.

From the foregoing, I tend to think

that Americans probably fear Ebola more than any other known disease

... In retrospect, when all is said and done, the truth of the matter is that everybody in the whole world fears Ebola ...

Mr Joseph Kamutu is a Media Practitioner

The Mt. Kenya Times



Ideas don't work, without you doing the work



Start with ideas and work on them, takes you to the top.
If you work hard as an ant ,you never borrow.

Make your dreams come true,
You should work on your plans.
The busy honeybees are always remembered for their honey.

Rajesh Kanna B N

RAJESH KANNA .B N
M.Sc.,M.A.,M., PGDG&C,B.Ed., CELT.
BT Asst.
GMHSCHOOL, TIRUR.
TIRUVALLUR DISTRICT.
Tamil Nadu.
India.
Creative Writers.
Educationist.

Milestone never travels, it stays there itself
But you should step forward to travel.
Miles of the journey starts with the first step.
Nature also does it's work and brings us seasons.

The word sugar in the paper
never helps you to enjoy the taste.
Likewise ideas in your mind,
Doesn't allow you to reach success.

Moving forward is a stepping stone of success.
Staying wherever you are, never helps you to come up.

The three bricklayers



The traveler walked a little farther and asked the second bricklayer the same question:
— Brother, what are you doing?

The second worker calmly shrugged his shoulders and replied:

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

— Brother, what are you doing?

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

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

Zebanda Davlatova, daughter of Sherali

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

— Brother, what are you doing?

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

— Can't you see? From morning till night, I'm stacking these heavy, cursed bricks one on top of another. My days pass in misery.

The last page of every student's notebook



Timetables and little notes,
Random drawings and funny quotes.

Trying to draw pictures and faces
Filled with many creative traces
So many designs and structures too
Showing the imagination students grew.

The handwriting may look funny
Sometimes shaky like an old granny
But those messy pages hold memories
Touching our hearts like a gentle breeze.

C.Santhi
Graduate Teacher
G.M.G.H.S.School
Bhuvanagiri.

The last page of every student's notebook
If you look and take a closer look
That page is used as a scribbling pad
Seeing it sometimes makes teachers mad.

Testing whether a pen will write
Phone numbers written left and right

The mango mood



We stole a bite with stealthy fingers,
Though elders warned, "Just wait till lunch!"
Yet temptation bloomed like monsoon thunder
In every crunchy, spicy munch.

These days of mango ice cream—the golden magic!

Cold as moonlight after heat,
Melting softly on our laughter,
Turning summer into sweet.
Each frozen spoonful held a memory
Of carefree days that flew too fast,
Like kites that vanished past the treetops,
Leaving echoes of the past.

The mango trees stood like old guardians,
Heavy with their amber gold,
While childhood ran through homestead pathways
Barefoot, breathless, bright and bold.
We chased the wind, we climbed the branches,
We filled our shirts with stolen pride,
And every mango held a sunshine
No passing age can truly hide.

Now years have drifted like fallen petals,
As life's journey moved by, added new recipes like
Mango pachadi

Still one ripe mango's scent can bring
The rush of those forgotten summers
Back upon its golden wing.

For mangoes are not merely fruits
They are seasons wrapped in light,
A taste of love, a hymn of childhood,
A summer heart forever bright.

Nandini AnandKumar
Educator,Writer,Motivator Freelancer
In service of Education

When summer knocked on childhood doors
With feet of gold and sunlit gleam,
The air itself turned sweet with mangoes,
As though we wandered through a dream.

The courtyard wore a fragrant laughter,
Green leaves danced in dusty light,
And baskets brimmed with yellow treasures
Like captured drops of sunset bright.

Oh, the mango season madness!
Sticky hands and shining cheeks,
The king of fruits upon our tables
Ruled the lazy summer weeks.

Grandmother stirred the mango curries
A symphony of sweet and spice,
Where mango melted into memories
And tender mangoes tasted nice.
Its flavours danced like childhood stories—
A little sour, salty, sweet,
Just like the days of growing slowly
With sunburnt joy beneath our feet.

Grandmother made the instant mango pickle,the
kadumanga and uppu manga
Fiery as the noon-day sun,
Its tangy scent through kitchen windows
Called every eager little one.

Be not afraid of slowness



Be happy about your steadiness
Be afraid of standing still
Regressive always kill
A single step ahead towards your goal
Satisfies your inner soul

Simple, slow but dynamic in life
Never needs an aggressive strife
Calm and be careful to set a sail on your path
Trying your best to continue successfully without
withheld wrath

PROCEED WITH CONFIDENCE
"YOURSELF", THE GREATEST EVIDENCE
N. SIVASANKARI

B. T
ASSISTANT IN ENGLISH GMGBHSS PERAIYUR
MADURAI DISTRICT TAMILNADU

Closed doors are considered bliss sometimes



On happy occasions feel glad.
Accepting what you receive brings goodness.

Closed doors are signs of wonder,
If we miss something, it's not our blunder.
Hoping for great things you'll see wonders.
What's meant for you will never miss you.

Having a sense of satisfaction
For whatever we receive, is good.
If God is willing, the doors will open for sure,
God is in control: never fear.

We can't always expect greatness,
Sometimes bad times makes us sad.

Mrs Jael Beulah,
Graduate Teacher,
Creative Writers Group,
GHSS, Kilpalur,
Tiruvannamalai.
Tamil Nadu.

Development “As water remains a top priority in our development agenda, I look forward to supporting this important forum,” Kihika said

Nakuru eyes Green Bonds, PPPs to fund water infrastructure upgrades

BY Suleiman Mbatiah
@themkenyaintimes

The County Government of Nakuru is exploring alternative financing mechanisms to bridge funding gaps and accelerate investments in water infrastructure as it seeks to reduce water losses, expand coverage, and improve service delivery across the county.

Governor Susan Kihika said the county is engaging development partners, investors, and water sector institutions to identify sustainable financing models capable of supporting rising demand for water services in both urban and rural areas.

She made the remarks during a meeting in Naivasha between county officials and representatives of the Water Service Providers Association ahead of the Non-Revenue Water Conference scheduled for June 30 to July 3.

“As water remains a top priority in our development

agenda, I look forward to supporting this important forum,” she said, adding that her administration would broaden the range of financing options available to the water sector.

Nakuru is among Kenya’s fastest-growing counties, driven by rapid urbanization, industrial expansion, and population growth. The increasing demand for water and sanitation services has placed pressure on existing infrastructure, prompting county leaders to seek new funding sources beyond traditional government allocations.

According to the latest sector performance reports by the Water Services Regulatory Board (WASREB), non-revenue water remains one of the biggest challenges facing utilities nationwide, with about 44 to 45 per cent of treated water produced by service providers failing to generate revenue because it is lost through leakages, illegal connections, metering inaccuracies, and other operational inefficiencies. The losses translate into billions of shil-

lings in foregone revenue annually and significantly constrain investments in network expansion and maintenance.

She noted that improved financing is essential for expanding water coverage, modernizing infrastructure, and strengthening operational efficiency amid growing economic activity across Nakuru. Stakeholders attending the upcoming conference are expected to examine innovative approaches to reducing non-revenue water, a problem that continues to undermine the financial sustainability of water utilities across the country. Kenya’s water sector regulator estimates that nearly half of treated water produced by utilities is either lost or unaccounted for before it reaches paying customers.

Non-revenue water refers to treated water that is lost before reaching consumers due to physical leakages, water theft, illegal connections, faulty meters, and billing inefficiencies. High levels of water loss reduce revenues available for maintenance and

expansion, forcing utilities to operate with constrained resources. WASREB has identified NRW reduction as one of the most effective ways for utilities to improve financial sustainability and service reliability.

The governor said the county is exploring Public-Private Partnerships, Green Bonds, and other investment instruments that could help mobilize capital for long-term infrastructure development and system modernization.

Green bonds are debt instruments through which governments or organizations raise funds from investors to finance projects that deliver environmental or climate-related benefits. In the water sector, such financing can support projects aimed at water conservation, climate resilience, wastewater management, and the rehabilitation of aging infrastructure.

“I will engage with partners on sustainable financing strategies and other investment mechanisms aimed at improving water service delivery,”



Governor Susan Kihika and other stakeholders during the meeting.

she pledged, arguing that reducing water losses while attracting long-term investment would help secure reliable water access for all residents.

The financing push aligns with the Nakuru County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) 2023-2027, which identifies water access, environmental sustainability, climate resilience, and improved sanitation as key priorities for economic growth and public health.

Nationally, the government has also intensified efforts to curb non-revenue water through regulatory reforms, technology adoption, and infrastructure upgrades. The Ministry of Water, Sanitation

and Irrigation has repeatedly cited NRW reduction as a critical pathway to increasing water availability without necessarily developing new water sources.

Industry representatives are expected to use the Naivasha conference to assess emerging technologies, policy reforms, financing models, and investment opportunities that could help utilities reduce losses, improve operational efficiency, strengthen revenue collection, and enhance the long-term sustainability of water service provision across Kenya.



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TVET PS Dr. Esther Muoria said the partnership aligns with the government's commitment to expanding technical and vocational training opportunities

Government partners with local administrators to expand TVET Training for youth

The initiative comes at a time when the government is placing greater emphasis on technical and vocational training as a key driver of industrial growth, productivity, job creation, and economic transformation.

every young Kenyan who wishes to acquire a skill has access to quality training and a pathway to a better future.



TVET Principal Secretary Dr. Esther Muoria, with the National Government Administration Officers (NGAO) during the launch of the initiative of expanding TVET program for youth at Kisii National Polytechnic. | Photo: Elizabeth Angira



TVET Principal Secretary Dr. Esther Muoria, with other officials during the launch of the initiative of expanding TVET program for youth at Kisii National Polytechnic. | Photo: Elizabeth Angira

BY Elizabeth Angira

@themkenyatimes

The State Department for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) has collaborated with the National Government Administration Officers (NGAO) in a major initiative aimed at increasing access to skills training for young people across the country, including those in Kisii and Nyamira counties.

The programme forms part of the government's broader strategy to tackle youth unemployment by equipping young Kenyans with practical and market-driven skills that can enhance their employability and entrepreneurial potential. Speaking during the launch of the initiative at Kisii National Polytechnic, TVET Principal Secretary Dr. Esther Muoria said the partnership aligns with the government's commitment to expanding technical and vocational training opportunities and ensuring that no youth is left behind in the country's development agenda.

Dr. Muoria noted that the programme will primarily target young people who are out of school, unemployed, or underemployed. Through collaboration with chiefs, assistant chiefs, and other local ad-

ministrators, the government aims to identify and recruit eligible youth at the grassroots level and connect them with training opportunities in near-by TVET institutions.

"We are working closely with chiefs, assistant chiefs and other local leaders to identify young people who are neither in school nor working. Every young person has talent and potential, and our institutions will help nurture and develop those abilities into productive skills," said Dr. Muoria.

Under the initiative, beneficiaries will be enrolled in various TVET institutions where they will receive hands-on training in courses such as carpentry, plumbing, welding, electrical installation, masonry, fashion and design, agribusiness, and other technical fields that are increasingly in demand both locally and internationally.

The Principal Secretary emphasized that the government is strengthening competency-based education and training to ensure graduates leave institutions with practical skills that directly respond to labour market needs.

She said the shift towards competency-based training is intended to produce graduates who are ready for employment, self-employment, or entrepreneurship immediately

after completing their studies.



The Ministry of Education has in recent years intensified efforts to boost enrolment in TVET institutions as part of a wider plan to bridge Kenya's skills gap and create sustainable employment opportunities for millions of young people.

To further enhance the effectiveness of the programme, industry players and recruiters will also be involved in training and mentorship activities. Their participation will help trainees understand emerging market trends, identify available job opportunities, and align their skills with industry demands.

"This project is about giving hope to our youth. It is about preparing them for the workforce, supporting industries with skilled manpower and contributing to national development," Dr. Muoria said.

She added that the collaboration between TVET institutions and NGAO officers will play a crucial role in reaching vulnerable youth, particularly those living in rural and marginalized areas who often miss out on education and employment opportunities.

Dr. Muoria reaffirmed the government's commitment to rolling out the initiative across all counties, noting that the ultimate goal is to ensure

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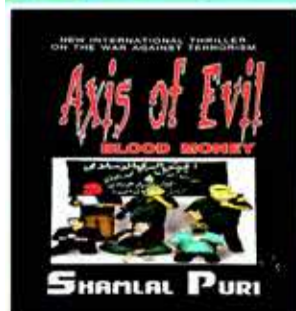
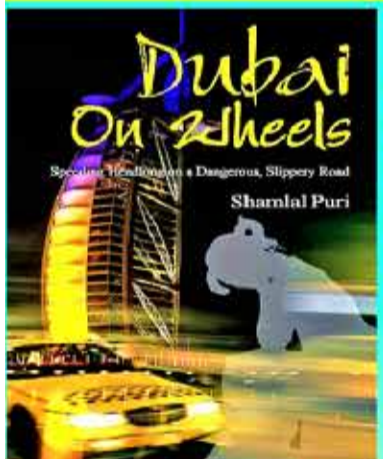
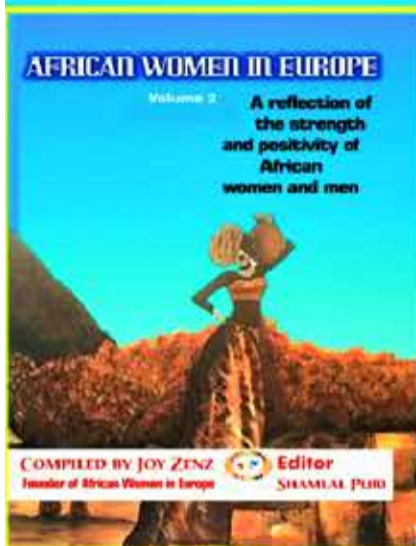
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Business Central to the private sector's current woes is an intensifying price environment that has severely limited commercial breathing room

Kenya's Private Sector Downturn

Steep cost burdens and disruptions push Kenyan private sector into deepest downturn in two years

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyatimes

The pulse of Kenya's private sector weakened sharply in May 2026 as an aggressive combination of escalating operational costs, dampened consumer spending, and localized logistical disruptions dragged business activity down at the fastest pace seen in nearly two years. Faced with dwindling order books and shrinking margins, companies across the country scaled back their production, curbed their input procurement, and initiated layoffs for the first time since the opening weeks of 2025. The worrying multi-sector contraction has highlighted the compounding economic pressures bearing down on both corporate balance sheets and household budgets midway through the second quarter of the year.

According to the latest Stanbic Bank Kenya Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) report, the headline index tumbled to 46.6 in May, down markedly from the 49.4 registered in April. Because any reading below the 50.0 threshold denotes a structural deterioration in business conditions, the current figure exposes an accelerating downturn. In fact, it represents the lowest health reading for the domestic private sector since July 2024, reflecting a marketplace where business momentum is increasingly choking under inflationary strains.

Escalating Costs and Shrinking Demand

Central to the private sector's current woes is an intensifying price environment that has severely limited commercial breathing room. Total input costs for Kenyan businesses rose at their sharpest rate since November 2023, driven primarily by an aggressive spike in purchase prices. Companies across the geographical and sectoral spectrum reported paying significantly more for essential overheads, specifically pointing to food, fuel, and broader transportation adjustments. Market participants also indicated that ongoing geopolitical instability and conflict in the Middle East have directly exacerbated these international supply chain and energy cost pressures, leaving local firms to absorb the fi-



Stanbic Bank

ancial shockwaves.

Concurrently, corporate payroll liabilities continued their upward march, marking 17 consecutive months of rising staff costs. While the rate of wage inflation remained marginal in May—with 99% of surveyed business owners reporting no nominal change in their monthly salary bills—the persistent accumulation of baseline expenses has left firms with little choice but to pass the burden down the line. Consequently, output charges were increased at their sharpest pace in two-and-a-half years, with businesses in all five monitored sectors lifting their sticker prices in a defensive bid to guard their eroding profit margins.

Predictably, this aggressive transfer of costs back to the open market triggered immediate customer resistance. Faced with rising consumer inflation and depleted purchasing power, clients aggressively tightened their operational budgets and deferred planned spending. This widespread hesitancy caused new orders to contract for the third consecutive month, sliding at the fastest clip recorded since mid-2025.

Reflecting on these underlying mechanics, Christopher Legilisho, Economist at Standard Bank, observed that the May dataset paints a clear picture of a private sector wres-

ting with internal and external roadblocks. Inventory purchases slowed, shifting away from their recent expansive trend, because companies are increasingly forced to manage weak sales, fragile cash flows, and suffocating cost structures. Consumer resistance to open spending, alongside these rising operational costs, directly underpinned the contraction in new orders and overall factory output. Furthermore, these sharp declines were heavily compounded by a week-long disruption to regional business activity stemming from nationwide protests by transportation sector players, which severely constrained the physical movement of goods, workers, and consumers alike.

Sectoral Divergence and Labor Market Fallout

The pain of the economic slowdown was felt unevenly across the landscape. Sector-specific data revealed that the construction and services industries bore the brunt of the May downturn, with both sectors recording steep drops in both raw output and new work intakes. Conversely, the manufacturing sector stood out as a resilient exception, emerging as the sole corner of the economy to sustain expansion in production lev-

els. Agriculture along with wholesale and retail also found pockets of growth in their specific sub-channels of new business intakes, contrasting against the sharp retreats seen in real estate and building projects.

The resulting lack of aggregate new work quickly relieved pressure on existing corporate capacity, causing outstanding backlogs of business to deplete for the third month running. With fewer active orders to fulfill, firms chose to redirect their existing staff resources toward clearing out legacy backlogs rather than maintaining large workforces.

This dynamic ultimately broke a long-standing trend of job security within the Kenyan economy. Private firms signaled a renewed decline in their total staff numbers during May, bringing an abrupt end to a 15-month streak of continuous employment creation that had run since the start of 2025. Fortunately, the pace of overall retrenchment remained marginal, primarily affecting casual and temporary contract staff whose agreements were either cut short or left unrenewed as a cost-saving measure. Headcount reductions were most visible within the agricultural and retail brackets, though these losses were slightly cushioned by isolated employment additions within manufacturing and construction

firms looking to stabilize long-term capacity.

Budgetary pressures similarly choked off corporate purchasing strategies. Quantity of purchases fell for the first time in eight months as procurement managers deliberately scaled back input buying to protect cash reserves. This cautious approach brought inventory accumulation to a sudden halt, leaving pre-production stocks broadly unchanged across the board. In an interesting twist, suppliers continued to deliver goods at a faster rate, extending a positive trend of improving vendor performance that began in February 2025. Surveyed companies noted that suppliers were actively speeding up their delivery lead times in a competitive bid to secure prompt cash payments, retain vital clients, and navigate the broader drop-off in aggregate raw material demand.

Long-term Optimism Overrides Immediate Headwinds

“Despite the current environment of subdued business momentum and tight operating parameters, the underlying sentiment among Kenyan entrepreneurs points to a resilient medium-term horizon.”

Despite the reality of the current slowdown, Kenyan business leaders have remarkably refused to succumb to pessimism regarding the future. The survey's Future Output Index showed that business confidence actually strengthened halfway through the second quarter, climbing to its highest statistical level since February 2023. Corporate optimism regarding the 12-month outlook remains broad-based across all sectors, fueled by a collective focus on structural expansion and recovery. Executives widely reported that their growth expectations are tied to aggressive upcoming marketing campaigns, planned financial investments into product diversification, and a concerted push to scale up their digital and online commerce footprints to bypass local distribution bottlenecks.

While the path forward is undeniably complicated by sticky fuel prices, transport logistics issues, and high production costs, the fundamental foundations of Kenyan commerce remain adaptive. Whether this long-term corporate optimism will successfully translate into an absolute economic turnaround in the months ahead depends entirely on the stabilization of domestic operating costs and a meaningful recovery in everyday consumer demand.

Business KEPSA's partnership with Danish Chamber of Commerce is a strong affirmation of Kenya's position as a gateway to East Africa and a trusted destination for investment

Danish Chamber of Commerce enters a strategic partnership with KEPSA in Kenya



Sarah Jordan Torp (seated left) from the Danish Chamber of Commerce and Dr Jackson Koimbori, Head of KEPSA Consult and Senior Circular Economy & Climate Change Coordinator (seated right), signing a partnership agreement on behalf of the Danish Chamber of Commerce (DCC) and the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), respectively. The partnership agreement is designed to strengthen commercial relations and facilitate investment flows between Denmark and Kenya.

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyatimes

The Danish Chamber of Commerce (DCC) and the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) signed a strategic cooperation agreement in Nairobi on Tuesday, opening a formal corridor between Danish industry and one of Africa's most dynamic business ecosystems.

The agreement, inked at KEPSA's headquarters on June 3, was witnessed by representatives from Danish Business and the Danish Embassy in Kenya — a detail that underscores the diplomatic weight both sides attach to the partnership. For Copenhagen, it is a calculated push into growth markets that European businesses have long circled but rarely penetrated with depth. For Nairobi, it is fresh validation of Kenya's standing as the commercial nerve centre of East Africa.

KEPSA is no small interlocutor. The alliance is the apex body of Kenya's private sector, drawing together more than 80 industry and business associations that collectively represent upwards of two million businesses across the

country. Its reach extends into the corridors of government, where it shapes public policy, mediates between business and the state, and advocates for the conditions that allow enterprise to thrive. For Danish companies navigating an unfamiliar regulatory and cultural landscape, that kind of institutional muscle is invaluable.

"KEPSA's partnership with the Danish Chamber of Commerce is a strong affirmation of Kenya's position as a gateway to East Africa and a trusted destination for investment and enterprise," said Carole Kariuki, CEO of KEPSA. "By connecting Danish businesses with our vibrant private sector ecosystem, we are not only strengthening pathways for trade and sustainable investments, but also for job creation, innovation, and market expansion across East Africa."

The practical architecture of the agreement is broad. It encompasses business delegations, matchmaking between Danish and Kenyan firms, trade facilitation, sustainable value chain development, and enhanced access to local partnerships. Job creation features prominently — a signal that

both parties are keen to frame the arrangement not merely as a commercial transaction, but as a contribution to shared economic development.

DCC Vice-President Jakob Ellemann-Jensen, who attended the signing, was candid about what draws Danish companies to Kenya at this particular moment. "Kenya is one of the most interesting growth markets in Africa right now," he said. "Especially within green energy, digitalisation, life science and logistics. Through the cooperation with KEPSA, Danish companies will gain a stronger local platform and access to an established business ecosystem in East Africa."

Those four sectors are not chosen at random. East Africa is urbanising rapidly, its energy deficit remains vast, and its digital infrastructure — mobile money, fintech, agri-tech — has become a reference point globally. Danish companies with expertise in wind energy, pharmaceutical supply chains, cold-storage logistics and enterprise software are, on paper, well-positioned to meet needs that the region has struggled to satisfy domestically.

The agreement also draws

"We see great potential in building stronger bridges between Danish companies and East African markets," Ellemann-Jensen added. "It is not only about trade, but also about long-term partnerships, investments and shared growth."

The timing is deliberate. East Africa is among the fastest-growing regions in the world, playing an increasingly significant role in global value chains spanning green energy, food production, logistics, and artificial intelligence. Meanwhile, Danish companies, like their European counterparts, are under pressure to diversify their international footprint beyond traditional markets in Europe and North Ameri-

ca. Africa, long peripheral in Danish corporate strategy, is moving to the centre.

Whether the partnership delivers on its ambition will depend on execution — on whether business delegations translate into signed contracts, whether matchmaking produces lasting joint ventures, and whether both sides sustain the engagement beyond the honeymoon of a signing ceremony.

But the foundation, at least, has been laid in the right city.

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Maleyo Whenever the DRC faces major public health challenges, China has consistently extended timely assistance

Chinese medical expert team arrives in DR Congo to support Ebola response

BY Xinhua News Agency
@themtkenyatimes

A Chinese anti-epidemic medical expert team arrived in Kinshasa, the capital of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) for a three-month mission to support the Central African country's response to the Ebola outbreak.

Luku Maleyo Marius, a representative of the DRC Ministry of Health, welcomed the team at the airport, saying that China's dispatch of the medical experts represents timely and strong support for the Congolese government and people. Whenever the DRC faces major public health challenges, China has consistently extended timely assistance, he said, adding that he looks forward to the mission further strengthening the country's epidem-

ic prevention, control and treatment capacities, and helping bring the outbreak under control as soon as possible. Lu Ming, head of the Chinese expert team, said the team would begin work promptly in line with the Congolese side's needs and would cooperate with local medical and disease control institutions to provide support in epidemic assessment, case management, and other areas. He added that the team would work closely with the Congolese side to safeguard people's lives and health, contributing China's expertise to helping the DRC control the outbreak at an early stage. On May 15, the DRC officially confirmed its 17th Ebola outbreak since 1976. Two days later, the World Health Organization declared the outbreak a public health emergency of international concern. China's



Lu Ming (L), head of the Chinese expert team, talks with Luku Maleyo Marius, a representative of the Ministry of Health of Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), in Kinshasa, capital of the DRC, June 2, 2026. | Photo: Xinhua

National Health Commission announced on Monday the decision to send a medical expert team to support the DRC's Ebola control efforts. According to the

commission, the first group consists of five members with extensive experience in epidemic control. They will also share practical response experience tailored

to local conditions and help enhance the DRC's capacity for Ebola prevention, control and treatment.

Algeria begins construction of its section of trans-Saharan gas pipeline

Algeria has launched construction of its section of the Trans-Saharan Gas Pipeline (TSGP), marking a major step forward of one of Africa's largest energy infrastructure projects.

The announcement was made during the fifth ministerial meeting of the Steering Committee for the TSGP project, held in Algiers and attended by energy ministers from Algeria, Nigeria and Niger, among others.

Algerian Minister of State and Minister of Hydrocarbons Mohamed Arkab said he and his counterparts reaffirmed their countries' commitment to close cooperation for the project's success.

The TSGP, a 4,128-km pipeline, is designed to transport up to 30 billion cubic meters of natural gas annually from Nigeria, through Niger, to Algeria's Mediterranean coast for export to Europe

U.S. - Iran "It's very, very hard to get it ... but nevertheless, I want to get at it," Trump told reporters

Trump says U.S., Iran to jointly dig out Iran's buried nuclear material

BY Xinhua News Agency
@themtkenyatimes

U.S. President Donald Trump says that talks with Iran are going "very well" and "as of this moment," Tehran has agreed to allow U.S. personnel, in coordination with Iranian authorities, to enter Iran and recover buried nuclear material once the war ends.

"It's very, very hard to get it ... but nevertheless, I want to get at it," Trump told reporters at the White House. Despite recent strikes in the region, he said that the U.S.-Iran ceasefire taking

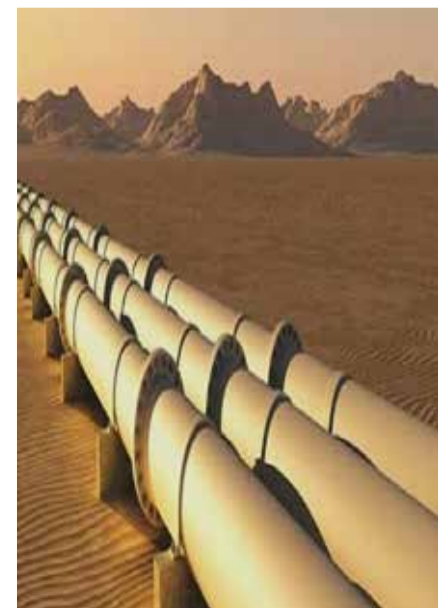
effect in early April remains in place, suggesting that it is possible an interim deal could be reached "over the weekend" as the ongoing talks are advancing. "The negotiation itself has gone very well - actually, very well - even if it happens, and it might not happen, but if it happens, it could happen like over the weekend," Trump said. "A ceasefire there is much different than a ceasefire in other parts of the world," he said. "You know, I'd say in that part of the world, a ceasefire is when you're shooting in a more moderate manner."

Meanwhile, Trump claimed that Iranian officials have "changed their mind a couple of times, but as it stands now, we will go in some time in the not-too-distant future." Iran's naval forces have targeted the "command center" on a U.S. destroyer in the Gulf of Oman in response to U.S. "violations of the regulations" of the Strait of Hormuz and its "hostile" actions against Iranian vessels, state-run IRIB TV reported Wednesday. Minutes later, the U.S. Central Command denied the claim on X.



US President Donald Trump

BY Xinhua News Agency
@themtkenyatimes



Trans-Saharan gas pipeline

Trailblazers From the Kisumu oil jetty to global humanitarian projects, Phostine Wekesa is rewriting what leadership in engineering looks like

Breaking frontiers: The engineer building infrastructure and tearing down barriers

BY David Nyaga

@themtkenyatimes

In the high-stakes world of global infrastructure, technical expertise is merely the entry ticket. Real leadership is forged at the intersection of complex problem-solving and the ability to hold your ground in unfamiliar, often hostile environments. Eng. Phostine Wekesa, a Senior Engineer and Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers (MICE), knows this better than most. Her journey from local field operations to managing multimillion-dollar international projects is not just a personal success story — it is a blueprint for what the future of engineering on this continent can look like.

Like many engineers, Wekesa's character was shaped not in a lecture theatre but in the field. An early assignment at the Kisumu Oil Jetty — involving intricate long-pipeline installations and offshore bridge construction — was her first real test. Away from the safety net of heavy supervision, she was required

“Like many engineers, Wekesa's character was shaped not in a lecture theatre but in the field. An early assignment at the Kisumu Oil Jetty — involving intricate long-pipeline installations and offshore bridge construction — was her first real test. Away from the safety net of heavy supervision, she was required to make independent technical decisions under intense pressure. When contractors disputed her design interpretations, she did not flinch. She went back to the drawings and the standards, and she held the line. “I learned that professional authority is not given,” she reflects. “It is earned through judgment.”



Phostine Wekesa

to make independent technical decisions under intense pressure. When contractors disputed her design interpretations, she did not flinch. She went back to the drawings and the standards, and she held the line. “I learned that professional authority is not given,” she reflects. “It is earned through judgment.”

That foundational toughness would prove indispensable as her career went global. Working with the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) across Asia, the Pacific, and Africa, she operated in

fragile, post-conflict, and disaster-affected settings where data is scarce, access is difficult, and the margin for error is essentially zero. It was in these environments that she developed what she calls disciplined adaptability — the ability to uphold rigorous engineering standards while remaining flexible enough to respond to conditions that no manual fully anticipates. It was also in these environments that she pursued international accreditation through the Institution of Civil Engineers, a credential she likens to a driving li-

cence: a formal recognition of competence that also quietly, powerfully, builds confidence.

Perhaps nothing illustrates her philosophy more concretely than her leadership of a \$100 million water infrastructure programme spanning multiple municipalities in a post-disaster setting. The terrain was difficult, the sites were scattered across vast distances, and the logistical challenges were relentless. She delivered it anyway — through meticulous coordination of multidisciplinary teams and an uncompro-

mitting commitment to quality. “Witnessing communities gain access to clean water close to their homes was the ultimate professional reward,” she says. For Wekesa, infrastructure is never just concrete and steel. It is dignity, delivered.

Her thinking on standards is equally nuanced. She respects international frameworks — the Eurocodes and their equivalents — but she does not treat them as gospel. Africa's climates, materials, and construction realities are distinct, and she argues forcefully that the continent needs greater regional involvement in developing localised standards rather than simply importing codes written for other contexts. It is a position that reflects both her technical depth and her understanding that engineering, at its best, is always in conversation with the community it serves.

Off the job site, Wekesa channels her energy into the Madam Engineer Initiative, a platform she leads that is dedicated to mentorship, capacity building, and empowerment for female engineers. Through outreach and peer mentorship programmes, the initiative brings hands-on engineering exposure directly to girls in high schools, nurturing the pipeline of talent that the industry so urgently needs. In her own teams — which span engineers, environmental specialists, and quantity surveyors — she leads with inclusion, shared ownership, and cultural sensitivity, qualities she regards not as soft skills but as core professional competencies.

Her story, remarkable as it is, should not remain an exception. It must become the norm. The future of global infrastructure demands leaders who understand both technical complexity and the nuanced needs of communities — and that means building an industry where women are not merely tolerated but actively recruited, mentored, sponsored, and elevated. The Institution of Engineers of Kenya, its allied partners, and the broader engineering fraternity must move beyond symbolic gestures. Authentic mentorship, structured leadership pathways, and the deliberate dismantling of financial and institutional barriers are not aspirational extras. They are professional obligations.

The infrastructure of tomorrow will not build itself. Neither will the generation of engineers we need to build it.

Eng. Phostine Wekesa is a Senior Engineer and Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers (MICE), with extensive experience in humanitarian infrastructure and international development across Africa, Asia, and the Pacific.

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Sports >> *Harambee Stars drop points in South Africa but stay unbeaten as AFCON 2027 preparations gather pace

Stars held by Lesotho in Pretoria stalemate

By Martin Weche

Harambee Stars were held to a 1-1 draw by Lesotho in an international friendly at Moripe Stadium in Pretoria, South Africa, yesterday, leaving coach Benni McCarthy's side still searching for a first win over their southern African opponents in more than three decades.

Kenya made a bright start and were rewarded in the 17th minute when Gor Mahia defender Frank Odhiambo drove a thunderous right-footed effort into the upper centre of the net, leaving Lesotho goalkeeper Sekhoane Moerane rooted to the spot. The goal capped a dominant early spell in which the Stars controlled possession and pressed their opponents back into their own half with confidence.

The lead held through to half-time, and for a moment it appeared Kenya were on course to end a 32-year wait — their last victory over Lesotho came in 1993. But the Crocodiles levelled in the 70th minute when substitute Thabo Makhele rose to head home and silence the Kenyan bench, denying McCarthy the winning start he would have wanted on a day when the margins proved painfully thin.

Despite the disappointment, the draw extended Kenya's unbeaten run, which stretches back to a 3-0 victory over Grenada in March. For a side still building cohesion and sharpening its shape, the result is not without silver lining — though McCarthy will know that friendly matches are ultimately only as valuable as the lessons extracted from them.

"We are using these matches to prepare seriously for the qualifiers," a Football Kenya Federation official said. "Every minute on the pitch counts."

The two sides meet again on Sunday at the same venue, giving Kenya an immediate opportunity



Harambee Stars were held to a 1-1 draw by Lesotho in an international friendly at Moripe Stadium in Pretoria, South Africa.

to correct what went wrong and put the result beyond doubt. For McCarthy, the rematch is less a second chance than an expectation — a moment to demonstrate that Thursday's slip was a blip, not a pattern.

The broader context is significant. Kenya, alongside Uganda and Tanzania, have already secured a place in next year's Africa Cup of Nations by virtue of co-hosting the tournament. Yet the Football Kenya Federation has opted to enter the Stars in the 2027 AFCON qualifiers regardless, a decision rooted in competitive necessity. Sitting out qualification rounds risks producing a team that arrives at its own party underprepared, robbed of the match intensity that tournament football demands.

McCarthy, the former South Africa and Celtic striker who took charge of the Stars earlier this year, has been tasked with transforming a squad of varying club pedigree into a cohesive, high-tempo unit capable of competing on the continental stage. Thursday's performance offered glimpses of that ambition — a well-worked opening goal, disciplined structure in the first half — but also a reminder of the defensive vulnerabilities that a single set-piece can ruthlessly expose.

Sunday's match at Moripe Stadium kicks off what is, in effect, a brief but critical examination period for this squad. Results in friendlies rarely define legacies, but they do define selection — and for the players on the fringes

of McCarthy's thinking, every touch, every run, and every defensive header carries the weight of a contract.

Harambee Stars cannot afford to be guests at their own tournament.

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *The 2026 Men's FIFA World Cup kicks off 11 June and will be the biggest in history — 48 teams across the United States, Canada and Mexico.

Africa's hopes at the FIFA World Cup: Morocco and Senegal leading the charge



Africa's Hopes At 2026 FIFA World Cup

By Pierre Makusha

The 2026 Men's FIFA World Cup kicks off 11 June and will be the biggest in history — 48 teams across the United States, Canada and Mexico. Africa arrives with nine direct slots plus one playoff place, its strongest representation yet and its best chance to go deeper than ever.

The tournament opens with history. Mexico vs South Africa at the iconic Estadio Azteca on 11 June. It is a repeat of the 2010 World Cup opener, when Siphwe Tshabalala's 54th-minute screamer gave Bafana Bafana a 1-1 draw and announced South Africa to the world. Sixteen years later Bafana Bafana are back, carrying Africa's flag on the opening match of this year's global football extravaganza.

Headlining Africa's charge are two nations who, on paper, are two of Africa's best representatives at this year's showpiece: Morocco, ranked 8th in the FIFA World Rankings, and Senegal, ranked 14th. The Atlas Lions and Lions of Teranga carry Africa's belief on their backs.

What makes their story heavier is that Morocco and Senegal met in the 2025 AFCON final, a decider marred by controversy with a Court of Arbitration for Sport ruling still to settle the winner. As attention turns to 2026, it is time for Africa to set aside incidents that threaten the continent's football image and unite on the world's biggest stage.

Morocco: From History Makers to Contenders

No African team has gone further than Morocco's run to the 2022 semifinals. The Atlas Lions beat Belgium 2-0, knocked out Spain on penalties, then stunned Portugal 1-0 to reach the last four before falling 2-0 to France. That run shattered the psychological barrier that an African team could not go toe to toe with football's biggest names. By 2026 Morocco arrive older, wiser and fearless under Mohammed Ouahbi, who led Morocco's U20s to World Cup glory in 2025.

With Achraf Hakimi fresh from a second UEFA Champions League title with Paris

Saint-Germain, Brahim Díaz adding creativity from Real Madrid, and Yassine Bounou giving confidence in goal, Morocco's target is clear. They open against Brazil, the five-time champions. Beat or frustrate Brazil and the message is sent: a semifinal is no longer the ceiling.

Senegal: The Lions of Teranga Roar Again

Senegal are African champions from 2021, reached the World Cup Round of 16 in 2022, and are disputed AFCON 2025 champions. They are coached by Pape Bouna Thiaw, a member of the Lions of Teranga side that reached the World Cup quarterfinals in 2002. He brings that same belief back to the dugout.

Talisman Sadio Mané leads the attack, with Eduardo Mendy providing world-class security in goal, Idrissa Gana Gueye controlling midfield, and West Ham's El Hadji Malick Diouf bringing defensive solidity and attacking flair from the left side of defense. Senegal open against Kylian Mbappé's France in a rematch heavy with history,

with the Africans having beaten France in the 2002 World Cup group stage. Senegal's edge in physicality, organization and mental fortitude will be heavily tested in a group that also includes Norway and Iraq.

Africa's Depth

Morocco and Senegal set the tone, but Africa's strength is in its numbers. Algeria return for the first time since 2014, led by Vladimir Petković, who took Switzerland to the 2018 World Cup knockout stages and Euro 2020 quarterfinals, and captained by Riyad Mahrez as the Desert Foxes return to the global stage with a glimmer of hope and in their first match face a stern test defending World Champions in Argentina.

The Democratic Republic of Congo are back at the global stage for the first time in over 50 years. They bring Chancel Mbemba's experience in defense, Aaron Wan-Bissaka's steel, Cedric Bakambu's goals, Yoane Wissa's pace and with Sebastian Desabre at the helm, the Congolese are

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SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



Prophetess Taniesha Ramsey: Empowering lives through faith, leadership, and purpose



By: Anila Bukhari
@themtkenyatimes

Prophetess Taniesha Ramsey is an internationally recognized empowerment speaker, visionary leader, entrepreneur, and dedicated woman of faith whose life's mission is to inspire individuals to discover their purpose, strengthen their faith, and transform their lives. Through her dynamic leadership, ministry work, media platforms, and business ventures, she has become a powerful voice of encouragement and empowerment for people from diverse backgrounds around the world. Her unwavering commitment to serving God and helping others achieve personal, spiritual, and professional growth has established her as a respected leader in both ministry and entrepreneurship.

As a Kingdom-driven leader, Prophetess Ramsey has devoted her life to advancing the principles of faith, purpose, and leadership. She is the Founder and Senior Pastor of Kingdom Purpose Church Inc. & Organization Kingdom Purpose Jacksonville Church, where she provides spiritual guidance, mentorship, and leadership to individuals seeking a deeper relationship with God. Her ministry is rooted in the belief that every person has a divine purpose and unique calling that can positively impact their families, communities, and the world.

In addition to her pastoral leadership, she is the founder and visionary behind Kingdom Purpose Apostolic

Center, Fire To The Nations Evangelizing & Crusades, and Kingdom of God Holy Alliance Fellowship. Through these ministries and outreach initiatives, she has dedicated herself to spreading messages of hope, faith, healing, and restoration. Her work has touched countless lives by encouraging spiritual development, empowering believers to embrace their God-given assignments, and equipping future leaders for service and ministry.

Prophetess Ramsey's influence extends beyond the walls of the church through her impactful presence in media and broadcasting. She is the host of the Millennials Ministries Radio Talk Show Podcast and The Prophetess CEO Show, platforms designed to educate, inspire, and empower listeners through faith-based conversations, leadership insights, and practical life guidance. Through these programs, she reaches audiences across different generations, sharing messages that promote spiritual growth, personal development, and entrepreneurial success.

Further expanding her media influence, Prophetess Ramsey serves as the Co-Owner of TWC 24.7 Podcast Radio Station. Through this platform, she creates opportunities for inspirational voices, community leaders, entrepreneurs, and ministry leaders to share their experiences, knowledge, and testimonies. Her commitment to uplifting others through media demonstrates her belief that communication can be a powerful tool for transformation and positive change.

Alongside her ministry and media endeavors, Prophetess Ramsey is a successful entrepreneur who exemplifies excellence in business leadership. She is the CEO of King-

dom Eatz & Treatz Catering, a thriving enterprise that reflects her passion for service, creativity, and entrepreneurship. Through this business, she demonstrates that faith and business can work hand in hand to create opportunities, provide employment, and positively impact communities.

Her entrepreneurial vision also extends into mentorship and leadership development through The Prophetess CEO Academy, where she serves as a Kingdom Coach and Mentor. Through coaching programs, training sessions, and mentorship opportunities, she helps aspiring entrepreneurs, leaders, and ministry professionals develop the confidence, skills, and strategies needed to succeed in their personal and professional journeys. Her mentorship emphasizes the importance of combining spiritual principles with practical business knowledge to create lasting success and meaningful impact.

An accomplished author, Prophetess Ramsey has written and published eight books, using the power of words to educate, encourage, and inspire readers. Her literary contributions reflect her passion for sharing wisdom, faith-based teachings, and life experiences that empower individuals to overcome challenges and pursue their dreams with confidence. Through her writing, she continues to influence and motivate readers to live purposeful and fulfilling lives.

Beyond her achievements in ministry, media, and business, Prophetess Ramsey has built a diverse professional career that showcases her commitment to lifelong learning and service. She is a licensed Master Cosmetologist, demonstrating her creativity and ex-



Prophetess Taniesha Ramsey

pertise in the beauty industry. Her dedication to helping others also extends into the financial sector, where she serves as a Life Insurance Agent and Tax Agent. These professional roles reflect her desire to support individuals and families in various aspects of life, from personal care and confidence-building to financial planning and security.

One of the most inspiring aspects of Prophetess Ramsey's journey is her role as a Mompreneur. She proudly balances the responsibilities of motherhood, ministry, business leadership, and community service while remaining committed to her personal faith and family values. Her ability to successfully manage multiple roles serves as an inspiration to women around the world who strive to pursue

their dreams while maintaining strong family foundations.

Known for her passion, authenticity, and servant leadership, Prophetess Ramsey consistently encourages others to walk boldly in their purpose and calling. She believes that every challenge presents an opportunity for growth and that faith can empower individuals to overcome obstacles and achieve extraordinary goals. Her teachings emphasize resilience, spiritual maturity, leadership development, and the importance of trusting God throughout life's journey. Throughout her career, Prophetess Taniesha Ramsey has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to empowering others through ministry, mentorship, education, media, and entrepreneurship. Her work continues to impact

countless lives by helping people discover their potential, strengthen their faith, and pursue their dreams with confidence and determination.

Today, Prophetess Ramsey stands as a remarkable example of visionary leadership, entrepreneurial excellence, and unwavering faith. Her legacy continues to grow through the lives she influences, the communities she serves, and the countless individuals she inspires to embrace their purpose, pursue their calling, and make a positive difference in the world. Through her dedication, compassion, and commitment to Kingdom principles, she remains a beacon of hope, empowerment, and transformation for generations to come.