



Ruto to Belgian investors: Process Africa's minerals in Kenya, not abroad
 President William Ruto has urged European investors, particularly from Belgium and the wider Benelux region, to shift from importing Africa's raw materials for processing overseas and instead establish manufacturing in Kenya **Page 8**



High-profile corruption cases dominate court calendar this week
 Anti-corruption courts are set for a busy week as a raft of corruption, fraud, bribery, procurement and forgery cases involving former senior public officials, politicians, county leaders... **Page 12**

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Daily ePAPER

Impeached The bench issued a declaratory order finding that his constitutional rights were infringed

Gachagua's trial rights infringed

Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua has lost his bid to be reinstated to office after the High Court dismissed his petition challenging the impeachment that removed him in October 2024, but the bench simultaneously found that the Senate violated his right to a fair trial and ordered it to pay him Ksh 50 million in constitutional damages — a finding that hands Gachagua both a defeat and a weapon. The judgment, delivered yesterday by Justices Eric Ogolla, Anthony Mrima and Frida Mugambi, is a landmark ruling under Kenya's 2010 Constitution — the first of its kind to award constitutional damages arising from an impeachment process. It is also a deeply ambiguous one. The court upheld the impeachment in its entirety while simultaneously declaring that the process by which it was conducted breached a fundamental constitutional right. That tension runs through every page of the ruling and will almost certainly define the legal battles to come.

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Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua

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Rigathi Gachagua's impeachment case ruling in pictures



Editor's Desk




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NEWS IN BRIEF



Government Spokesperson Isaac Mwaura has called for a national conversation to address rising cases of indiscipline in schools following recent unrest incidents, including the tragic fire at Utumishi Girls Academy that claimed 16 students and one parent. He urged parents, teachers, religious leaders, and policymakers to examine issues of discipline, morality, role modeling, and parental responsibility. Mwaura said growing cases of school unrest, mob violence, and lawlessness reflect a broader decline in societal values and called for collective action to address challenges facing young people. He also reaffirmed government support for affected families, announcing Sh200,000 for each bereaved family, full payment of medical bills for injured students, and coverage of mortuary, transport, and other funeral-related expenses. He added that all injured students have recovered and returned home.



The Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) has arrested and arraigned Noah Kipkemboi Rotich, a clerical officer at the Uasin Gishu Lands Office, over allegations of soliciting and receiving a bribe to facilitate the subdivision of land. Investigations were launched after a complaint was lodged with the Commission, claiming Rotich had demanded money from a member of the public to speed up the process. EACC established that he solicited KSh100,000 and received part of the amount. Upon completion of investigations, the case file was forwarded to the Director of Public Prosecutions, who approved the charges. Rotich was granted a cash bail of KSh30,000 or a bond of KSh100,000.



The Taita Taveta County Government and the National Public Transport Alliance have agreed to collaborate on reforms aimed at modernising public transport and improving road safety. The initiative seeks to address challenges in the boda boda sector, which remains the main mode of transport in many parts of the county despite ongoing safety concerns. During a meeting led by NAPTA Executive Director Charles Acholi and Deputy Governor Christine Saru Kilalo, leaders emphasized the need for safer, more efficient transport systems. Planned reforms include fleet modernisation, stronger transport regulations, improved enforcement, e-mobility integration, and enhanced pedestrian infrastructure. The county will develop an implementation framework to guide policy, system upgrades, and stakeholder capacity building.



The A.C.K. Christ the King Cathedral Church in Nyahururu has launched a teaching manual designed to support the holistic growth of teenagers and help shape them into responsible and respectable members of society. The initiative comes amid rising cases of student unrest and destruction of property in schools across the country. Speaking during the launch, Rev. John Ngenye said the manual focuses on both spiritual and social development. Teenagers will be taught values such as purity, honesty, respect for authority, and good character. The program will also equip them with practical skills including gospel outreach, public speaking, leadership, and event organization, helping them grow into well-rounded individuals.



Two Form Three students, both aged 17, have been arrested in connection with a dormitory fire at Agoro Sare High School in Oyugis, Rachuonyo South Sub-county. Police said the suspects were identified by fellow students and are in custody to assist with investigations. Authorities believe the pair sneaked back into the dormitory and started the fire, which broke out at about 3:40 a.m. on Saturday during parents' visiting day. The blaze destroyed sections of Maangi Dormitory, including cubicles 04 and 06, and reduced beds, mattresses, books, and clothing to ashes. No injuries or fatalities were reported, and investigations are ongoing.



Community leaders, administrators, liquor traders, and youth in the Mt. Kenya region have launched a renewed campaign against illicit alcohol, citing its devastating impact on lives, families, and legitimate businesses. The initiative, dubbed "Operation Linda Mtumiaji wa Pombe," was unveiled alongside the launch of Fake Alcohol Disaster: Rethink Drinks, a book by alcohol safety educator Washington Njuguna. Njuguna warned that counterfeit alcohol often contains dangerous chemicals and can cause severe health complications and death. Stakeholders linked the growing consumption of illicit alcohol to economic hardships that drive consumers toward cheaper alternatives. According to industry studies, illicit alcohol accounted for 59 percent of consumption in Kenya in 2024, while the trade continues to cost the country billions of shillings in lost tax revenue annually.

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Gambling What begins as a promise of quick wealth often ends in financial ruin, family conflicts, school dropouts and despair.

Illegal gambling ruins families as Tharaka Nithi intensifies crackdown

BY Alex Njeru

@themkenyatimes

For many families across Tharaka Nithi County, illegal gambling machines have become a source of misery, draining household incomes, fueling addiction, breaking marriages and pushing vulnerable youth deeper into poverty.

What begins as a promise of quick wealth often ends in financial ruin, family conflicts, school dropouts and despair.

In response to the growing menace, Tharaka Nithi Governor Muthomi Njuki and County Commissioner David Gitonga have vowed to intensify the fight against illegal gambling businesses operating across the county.

Last week, the two leaders led a major crackdown in Chu-

In response to the growing menace, Tharaka Nithi Governor Muthomi Njuki and County Commissioner David Gitonga have vowed to intensify the fight against illegal gambling businesses operating across the county.

Last week, the two leaders led a major crackdown in Chuka Town, where 70 gambling machines, popularly known as tunondo, were confiscated from various bars. At least 20 of the machines were seized from Viena Bar alone before being publicly destroyed.

”

ka Town, where 70 gambling machines, popularly known as tunondo, were confiscated from various bars. At least 20 of the machines were seized from Viena Bar alone before being publicly destroyed.

Speaking during the burning of the machines, Governor Njuki warned that the county government would take stern action against establishments found facilitating the illegal gambling business.

“We will withdraw business licenses for all the bars or any other facility operating the illegal gambling machines,” said the governor.

Governor Njuki noted that gambling had become a serious social problem, particularly among young people and vulnerable families. He said many residents had lost substantial amounts of money while chasing unrealistic promises of instant riches.

“The gambling business has impoverished many people, including students who end up using school fees in gambling games. Families have also broken following disputes over the misuse of hard-earned resources,” he said.

County Commissioner Gitonga said the crackdown was far from over, revealing that police had already seized an additional 50 gambling machines that would also be destroyed.

“We are working closely with county government officials to ensure these illegal machines are removed from all parts of the county. Those found operating them will be arrested and arraigned in

court,” said Gitonga.

Residents welcomed the crackdown, saying the gambling machines had particularly affected young people engaged in the boda boda sector, many of whom spend their daily earnings on the machines.

Among the victims is Mrs. Lucy Karimi from Kiereni in Chuka, who narrated how gambling destroyed her family.

“My husband, Nicholas Mutembei, spent KSh 50,000 that we had saved to buy a cow on gambling games and alcohol. After losing the money, he became depressed and our family eventually broke apart,” she said.

Mrs. Karimi said the experience left her family struggling financially and emotionally, a situation she believes many other households are facing.

Governor Njuki said the destruction of the machines at Chuka bus stage was a clear demonstration of the county’s commitment to protecting residents from exploitation and addiction and serves as a warning.

“The crackdown will continue until illegal gambling is completely eradicated from our county. We cannot allow businesses that destroy families and deepen poverty to operate among us,” he said.

Authorities have urged members of the public to report premises operating the illegal machines as the county intensifies efforts to safeguard communities from the harmful effects of gambling.



Tharaka Nithi Governor Muthomi Njuki and County Commissioner Mr David Gitonga burning gambling machines in Chuka town. | Photo: Alex Njeru.



Gambling machines up in flames.

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Investment Ruto challenged members of the newly launched Kenya-Benelux Chamber of Commerce to help double the number of Benelux companies operating in Kenya

Ruto to Belgian investors: Process Africa's minerals in Kenya, not abroad

BY PCS

@themkenyatimes

President William Ruto has urged European investors, particularly from Belgium and the wider Benelux region, to shift from importing Africa's raw materials for processing overseas and instead establish manufacturing and value-addition industries in Kenya and across Africa.

Speaking during the Kenya-Belgium Business Roundtable in Brussels yesterday, where he presided over the launch of the Kenya-Benelux Chamber of Commerce, President Ruto said Africa must move beyond being a supplier of raw materials and become a hub for industrial production powered by clean energy.

"I say to Belgian manufacturers: Do not buy Africa's raw materials to add value elsewhere. Come and build with us. Process Kenya's minerals in Kenya and Africa, on clean power, and help Europe secure the supply chains it needs. Make it in Kenya. Make it in Africa. Make it clean. Sell it in Europe and to the world," he said.

The President noted that Europe's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism is reshaping global manufacturing and creating opportunities for countries with access to renewable energy. He pointed out that products manufactured in Kenya using geothermal and other clean energy sources can enter European markets with lower carbon costs while also benefiting from duty-free access under the EU-Kenya Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA).

Ruto challenged members of the newly launched Kenya-Benelux Chamber of Commerce to help double the number of Benelux companies operating in Kenya and increase bilateral trade between Kenya and Belgium from approximately \$335 million in 2024 to \$1 billion by 2030.

To achieve this target, he identified four key areas for cooperation: agribusiness and agro-processing, ports and logistics infrastructure, technology and the digital economy, and clean energy and the circular economy.

In agribusiness, he highlighted Kenya's position as a leading exporter of tea, flowers and avocados, urging investors to focus on value addition in horticulture, macadamia, avocados

and processed foods.

On logistics, he proposed a sister-port partnership between the Port of Antwerp-Bruges and the Kenya Ports Authority to improve cold-chain infrastructure, reduce post-harvest losses and enhance export competitiveness.

Ruto also called for collaboration in technology, suggesting a Konza-Leuven Silicon Bridge to develop chip-design skills while expanding partnerships in cloud computing, artificial intelligence and cybersecurity.

Highlighting Kenya's renewable energy credentials, he said more than 90 per cent of the country's electricity comes from renewable sources, with geothermal accounting for nearly 40 per cent of power generation.

The President described Kenya as a strategic gateway to Africa through the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), offering investors access to a market of 1.4 billion people worth \$3.4 trillion. He added that Kenya's preferential access to markets in the East African Community, COMESA, the European Union and the United Kingdom creates opportunities exceeding \$70 trillion in combined market value.

He further noted that Kenya remains the only East African Community member state to have ratified the EU-Kenya EPA, granting Kenyan products permanent duty-free and quota-free access to the European Union.

"That is certainly an investor can build a factory on," he said.

Ruto also highlighted Kenya's improving investment climate, noting that foreign direct investment surpassed \$3 billion for the first time in 2025, while the Nairobi Securities Exchange recorded some of Africa's strongest returns. He said the government has structured about \$40 billion worth of infrastructure projects for public-private partnerships, established a One-Stop Investment Centre, and is digitising permits to improve ease of doing business.

The President cited Kenya's youthful population of 55 million people, high financial inclusion, robust mobile money ecosystem and nationwide fibre-optic connectivity as additional advantages for investors.

On the sidelines of the visit, Ruto held talks with European Commission Executive Vice-President for Tech Sovereignty, Security and



President William Ruto launching the Kenya-Benelux Chamber of Commerce. | Photo: Courtesy.

Democracy, Henna Virkkunen. He welcomed €102 million (KSh15.3 billion) in new investments under the EU-Kenya Digital Partnership and €37 million (KSh5.55 billion) in support for the Blue Raman submarine cable extension linking Djibouti, Somalia, Kenya and Tanzania.

The two leaders also reviewed progress under the EU-Kenya EPA, under which Kenya's exports to the EU have grown by more than 20 per cent since the agreement entered into force.

Members of the Belgian business community pledged to scale up investments in Kenya to help achieve the \$1 billion trade target.

Mr Steven Pope of SIEG Trade Solutions described Kenya as a "golden opportunity" for investors, revealing plans to explore value addition in tea, a venture he said could create more than 50,000 jobs and generate between \$180 million and \$250 million in additional revenue by 2031.

Other investors, including representatives from Renasci, Sirona Technologies and the Belgian Investment Company for Developing Countries (BIO), also expressed interest in expanding investments in Kenya's agro-processing, renewable energy, technology and climate sectors.



President William Ruto with European Commission Executive Vice-President Henna Virkkunen.

Court The bench issued a declaratory order finding that his constitutional rights were infringed when the Senate declined to grant an adjournment

Gachagua's fair trial rights were infringed

The High Court upholds the impeachment but orders the Senate to pay Ksh 50 million in damages — a ruling that vindicates Gachagua on process even as it closes the door on reinstatement

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyatimes

Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua has lost his bid to be reinstated to office after the High Court dismissed his petition challenging the impeachment that removed him in October 2024, but the bench simultaneously found that the Senate violated his right to a fair trial and ordered it to pay him Ksh 50 million in constitutional damages — a finding that hands Gachagua both a defeat and a weapon.

The judgment, delivered yesterday by Justices Eric Ogolla, Anthony Mrima and Frida Mugambi, is a landmark ruling under Kenya's 2010 Constitution — the first of its kind to award constitutional damages arising from an impeachment process. It is also a deeply ambiguous one. The court upheld the impeachment in its entirety while simultaneously declaring that the process by which it was conducted breached a fundamental constitutional right. That tension runs through every page of the ruling and will almost certainly define the legal battles to come.

On the central question of reinstatement, the bench was unequivocal. Gachagua's allegations of bias against the Speaker of the National Assembly were dismissed as unsubstantiated, with the court finding that insufficient evidence had been placed before it to support the claims. The public participation process that preceded the impeachment was upheld, the bench holding that Parliament had provided adequate notice through advertisements in both English and Kiswahili newspapers and had offered citizens a genuine opportunity to engage. The approval of Deputy President Kithure Kindiki, conducted through televised and transparent proceedings, was found not to require public participation. Standing Order No. 64, which Gachagua's team had sought to have declared unconstitutional, survived judicial scrutiny. The seven-day timeline it provides, the court held, is constitutional — though Parliament was noted to be free to revise it should it choose to do so.

And yet, on the question of fair trial rights, the court broke sharply in Gachagua's favour. The bench issued a declaratory order finding that his

constitutional rights were infringed when the Senate declined to grant an adjournment despite his absence from proceedings. The Ksh 50 million award that followed was framed explicitly as both compensation and deterrence. "The court awards constitutional damages of Kenya Shillings 50 million to His Excellency Gachagua payable by the Senate to vindicate the Constitution, restore the dignity of the affected party, and deter future violations," the bench stated. It is a sentence that will be quoted for years.

The ruling also laid bare a significant gap in Kenya's constitutional architecture. Acknowledging that Article 150 lacks a comprehensive statutory framework for the removal of a Deputy President, the bench urged Parliament to enact dedicated legislation urgently, warning that the absence of such a framework leaves fundamental procedural questions unresolved and undermines both institutional certainty and public confidence. That observation stops well short of invalidating the impeachment — the court was emphatic that proceedings conducted under Articles 144 and 145 remained constitutionally sound — but it is a structural criticism of the legal environment in which the impeachment took place, and one that Gachagua's lawyers will not be slow to exploit.

On the question of timelines, the bench found that while Standing Order 78(2) prescribes a ten-day period for investigations by a special committee, neither the Constitution nor the Senate Standing Orders provide a specific timeline for impeachment proceedings in the Senate plenary. The Senate's decision to adopt a ten-day timeline for plenary proceedings was therefore characterised as a procedural choice rather than a constitutional violation — a finding that Gachagua's team contests and will likely revisit on appeal.

Gachagua has already indicated he will appeal, and the grounds his legal team is likely to advance are not difficult to anticipate. The finding that his fair trial rights were violated is the most potent instrument available to him. His lawyers will argue that a process tainted by a constitutional breach cannot be allowed to stand simply because other procedural requirements were satisfied. The in-



Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua

fringement of the right to a fair hearing, they will contend, goes to the heart of the impeachment rather than its periphery, and the Ksh 50 million award — however welcome as a symbolic vindication — is a wholly inadequate remedy for the loss of constitutional office. That argument has genuine legal force, and the Court of Appeal will be required to engage with it seriously rather than dispose of it summarily.

Gachagua's legal team is also expected to press the constitutional gap identified by the High Court itself. If Article 150 lacks the statutory framework necessary to govern the removal of a Deputy President, the argument runs, then proceedings conducted in the absence of that framework are inherently vulnerable to challenge — and the court's reluctance to draw that conclusion at first instance does not bind the appellate bench. Whether that argument succeeds will depend on how broadly the Court of Appeal is willing to read the relationship between procedural fairness and constitutional validity. It is not a straightforward question, and it deserves a considered answer.

A further ground of appeal is likely to centre on the Senate's refusal to grant an adjournment. The High Court found that this refusal violated Gachagua's fair trial rights but declined to treat the violation as fatal

to the impeachment. That reasoning — accepting the breach while preserving the outcome — is the jurisprudential heart of the ruling, and it is precisely the kind of reasoning that appellate courts are asked to scrutinise. Gachagua's lawyers will argue that a constitutional violation of that character cannot be quarantined from its consequences, and that the only remedy proportionate to the breach is the quashing of the impeachment itself.

The shortfalls in the ruling are real and worth stating plainly. The court found a violation and awarded damages but stopped short of the logical consequence that many legal observers might have expected: a finding that the violation was sufficiently serious to invalidate the impeachment entirely. The bench drew a distinction between a flawed process and an invalid one — a distinction that Gachagua's supporters regard as untenable and that his lawyers will characterise as the central error of the judgment. The Court of Appeal will now be invited to say whether that distinction holds.

Politically, Gachagua's next move is already visible. He has made no secret of his ambitions ahead of the 2027 general election, and this ruling — partial victory framed as total defeat by the government, partial defeat framed as vindication

by his camp — suits a narrative of persecution and resilience that travels well in Kenyan electoral politics. The Ksh 50 million damages finding gives him a court-endorsed grievance. The constitutional gap identified by the bench gives him a policy platform. The appeal gives him continued relevance in a political environment that moves quickly and forgets faster. Few politicians in Kenya's recent history have demonstrated a greater capacity to convert legal adversity into political capital, and there is little reason to expect that to change now.

On pension and emoluments, the court made no findings, noting that Gachagua remained at liberty to pursue those claims before an appropriate forum. Each party was directed to bear its own costs, reflecting the public interest nature of the proceedings and the complexity of the constitutional questions raised.

The ruling does not end this story. It does not even come close. It confirms that the impeachment stands for now, that the Senate acted unconstitutionally in how it conducted the process, and that the courts will be asked to reconcile those two conclusions at the next level. For Gachagua, the courtroom fight continues. So does the political one. In Kenya, the two are rarely far apart.

Agrochemicals Unsafe chemicals entering our markets through informal channels undermine public confidence, threaten export markets

Kagwe calls for global ban on hazardous agrochemicals, puts farmers at centre of reform agenda

BY WMW

@themkenyatimes

Cabinet Secretary for Agriculture and Livestock Development Mutahi Kagwe has called for urgent global action to eliminate hazardous agricultural chemicals and end what he described as a long-standing double standard that exposes farmers in developing countries to substances banned elsewhere due to health and environmental risks.

Speaking yesterday during the opening of the 2026 World Farmers' Organisation (WFO) General Assembly in Nairobi,



CS Mutahi Kagwe addressing the forum yesterday.

Kagwe urged governments, regulators, manufacturers and international organisations to harmonise global standards

governing agricultural chemicals and place farmers' welfare at the centre of agricultural policy and investment.



During the plenary session.

“The world cannot continue operating under a double standard when it comes to agricultural chemicals,” Kagwe said. “If a pesticide is considered unsafe for use in one country because it poses unacceptable risks to human health or the environment, it should not find a market elsewhere simply because farmers are poorer or regulations are weaker.”

Addressing delegates drawn from farmers' organisations, development partners, agribusiness leaders and policymakers from across the world, the Cabinet Secretary argued that the lives and health of farmers in developing countries must be valued equally.

“The life of an African farmer is not worth less than the life of a farmer in other parts of the world. The health of consumers in developing countries matters just as much as the health of consumers anywhere else in the world,” he said.

Kagwe warned that unsafe agricultural chemicals and counterfeit farm inputs continue to pose a major threat to food safety, public health, environmental sustainability and access to international markets. He called for stronger collaboration among governments, regulators, traders, manufacturers and farmers to combat the illegal trafficking, counterfeiting and misuse of agricultural inputs.

“Unsafe chemicals entering our markets through informal channels undermine public confidence, threaten export

markets and expose farming communities to unnecessary risks,” he noted.

The Cabinet Secretary emphasized that protecting farmers must go beyond increasing productivity and market access to include safeguarding their health and wellbeing.

“Food safety begins at the farm. Consumer confidence begins at the farm. Public health begins at the farm. Therefore, protecting farmers must begin with protecting their health,” he said.

Kagwe used the forum to challenge the international community to rethink agricultural development by placing farmers—not merely food systems—at the centre of global policy discussions. He observed that while global conversations on food security, climate adaptation, financing and agricultural productivity have intensified, insufficient attention has been paid to the welfare, dignity and prosperity of farmers themselves.

“The farmer has become the missing centre in discussions about agriculture. This Assembly must therefore be about more than food systems. It must be about the people who sustain those food systems,” he said.

The CS also highlighted long-standing inequalities in global agriculture, noting that farmers in developed countries continue to benefit from extensive public support while smallholder farmers in developing nations are

often expected to compete in the same markets with limited assistance. He argued that investment in farmers should be viewed as a strategic investment in economic growth, food security and national stability rather than a cost.

Kagwe further called for reforms in agricultural financing, urging financial institutions to develop products tailored to agricultural realities, including crop cycles, climatic risks and long-term investment horizons.

At the same time, he highlighted Kenya's efforts to modernise agriculture through technology and data-driven systems, citing the Kenya Integrated Agricultural Management Information System (KIAMIS) as a key tool in improving service delivery, digital subsidies, traceability and planning.

He emphasized that technology should be used to empower farmers rather than replace them and urged researchers to ensure innovations move beyond laboratories and academic journals to deliver practical solutions on farms.

As delegates begin deliberations at the WFO General Assembly, Kagwe challenged global leaders to ensure that every policy, investment and recommendation emerging from the conference is guided by one principle: putting farmers first.

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Health The MKU delegation was warmly welcomed by the school's Principal, Mrs. Veronica Kihonge, who lauded the university for investing in the future of young women

MKU fraternity inspires secondary school girls via mentorship and menstrual health awareness

BY James Wakahiu

@themtkenyatimes

In a remarkable demonstration of community engagement and mentorship, the alumni, staff and students from Mount Kenya University (MKU)'s College of Health Sciences visited Kaharo Girls High School in Murang'a County on last weekend for a career mentorship program and the celebration of World Menstrual Health Day 2026.

The team was warmly received by the school's principal, Mrs Veronica Kihonge, who welcomed the visitors. She encouraged the 700 students to take full advantage of the opportunity to learn from the diverse professionals and university students present. "We highly appreciate this initiative and its significance in shaping the academic and career aspirations of our learners," she added.

The MKU delegation was warmly welcomed by the school's Principal, Mrs. Veronica Kihonge, who lauded the university for investing in the future of young women through mentorship and education. She encouraged the students to seize the opportunity to interact with professionals from diverse fields and learn from their experiences.

The initiative brought together professionals, university students, and educators with a common goal: empowering young girls to pursue their dreams while promoting health, dignity and confidence.

The students of Kaharo Girls enthusiastically welcomed the MKU delegation. Excitement filled the school as each member of the visiting team introduced themselves,

shared their academic backgrounds, and highlighted their respective courses and career journeys. This interaction provided the students with valuable exposure to various professions and educational pathways.

The keynote address was delivered by the Director of Alumni Relations, Ms. Virginia Kinankau, who challenged the students to pursue their dreams with determination and purpose. Using the acronym 'Dream', she encouraged the learners to be diligent and disciplined (D), reach for excellence (R), embrace opportunities (E), adopt a positive attitude and make a difference in the school and in communities they live in.

She emphasized that success is achieved through hard work, resilience and a commitment to continuous growth and learning. The students also participated in an intensive career guidance session where they received valuable insights into various career options, academic requirements, and career pathways. "Your dreams are valid, but they require commitment, discipline, and action. Every great achievement begins with a decision to believe in yourself and pursue your goals relentlessly," she told the students.

The interactive discussions enabled the learners to gain a deeper understanding of the opportunities available to them and the steps they can take to achieve their career goals. The interaction offered students a rare opportunity to explore different career paths and gain a clearer understanding of the educational requirements needed to achieve their aspirations.

The learners also participated in an engaging career

guidance session where professionals and university students shared practical advice on academic choices, career pathways, and the opportunities available in different fields. The interactive discussions provided valuable guidance as the students begin making decisions about their future careers.

In recognition of World Menstrual Health Day 2026, the girls were taken through a comprehensive menstrual health and period safety session. The facilitators emphasized the importance of proper hygiene practices, good nutrition and self-care during menstruation.

Facilitators addressed topics often surrounded by stigma, including menstruation, menstrual hygiene, period management, and emotional well-being. Medical student Kahagi Morris challenged the girls to become champions of menstrual health within their communities.

"We talked menstrual health, menstrual hygiene, periods, period shame all the monthly conversations that are often whispered about. We broke them down without fear or shame," he said.

"I wanted the girls to see a future where they understand their bodies, embrace their periods with confidence, and protect both their menstrual health and mental well-being. When you educate one girl, she goes on to educate her sister, her friend, and eventually her entire community," Kahagi noted.

The students were also encouraged to embrace their periods with confidence, dignity, and without shame, while understanding that menstrual health is a normal and important aspect of overall well-being. The students were



Students from Kaharo Girls High School, Murang'a county, cheer their guests from MKU College of Health Sciences after a mentorship forum on careers and menstrual health awareness at the school last weekend | Photo: Courtesy.

encouraged to view menstruation as a normal and healthy part of life and to practice proper hygiene, nutrition, and self-care. The session also emphasized the importance of breaking societal taboos surrounding menstrual health and creating supportive environments for girls.

The highlight of the day came when all 700 students received two packets of sanitary towels each. The generous donation was received with immense gratitude and appre-

ciation by both the students and staff of Kaharo Girls. "The contribution will go a long way in supporting menstrual hygiene management and ensuring that the girls can continue their education with confidence and dignity," said the Principal.

The outreach activity underscored MKU's commitment to community service, mentorship, and empowering young people through education, health awareness, and practical support. The event left a

lasting impact on the students and strengthened the partnership between the university and the local community.

Through such mentorship, health education, and meaningful community partnerships, MKU continues to empower the next generation one student, one dream, and one community at a time.



Students from Kaharo Girls High School, Murang'a county, cheer their guests from MKU College of Health Sciences after a mentorship forum on careers and menstrual health awareness at the school last weekend. The 700 girls also received free packets of sanitary pads on celebration of World Menstrual Day. | Photo: Courtesy.

Corruption Among the notable cases is the one involving Mzalendo Kibunjia and Seven Others, in which former officials of the National Museums of Kenya

High-profile corruption cases dominate court calendar this week

BY MKT Correspondent
@themtkenyatimes

Anti-corruption courts are set for a busy week as a raft of corruption, fraud, bribery, procurement and forgery cases involving former senior public officials, politicians, county leaders and employees of state institutions come up for hearing, mention and rulings.

According to the schedule released by the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP), the matters lined up this week reflect the broad scope of ongoing efforts to combat corruption and economic crimes in the public sector.

Among the notable cases is the one involving Mzalendo Kibunjia and Seven Others, in which former officials of the National Museums of Kenya are accused of corruption and the fraudulent acquisition of public property.

The case is scheduled for hearing tomorrow and Thursday.

The anti-corruption courts will also hear the case where Wycliffe Wafula Wangamati and 18 others are facing accusations of procurement irregularities against the former Governor of Bungoma County and other accused persons. The hearing was set for yesterday.

Another closely watched case is where former Kasa-



Wycliffe Wangamati

rani MP, Elizabeth Ongoro and nine others are accused of embezzlement of public funds and procurement irregularities. The hearing was set to start yesterday, through to tomorrow.

In a separate matter, senior officials of the Kenya Wildlife Service are facing procurement-related charges where William Waweru and David Mutwiwa's case is scheduled for hearing today and Thursday.

The courts will also continue hearing the long-running case

of Nacem Shah and others, in which former employees of Imperial Bank (K) Limited and private companies are accused of stealing and money laundering.

The matter was listed for yesterday.

Cases involving the use of forged academic certificates to secure public employment continue to feature prominently in the anti-corruption court system.

A ruling is expected on Friday in which Norah Nyanjera Momanyi is accused of using a forged academic document to obtain employment as an Office Assistant at the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS).

On Thursday, the court is expected to deliver a ruling where Dorothy Jepkoech Kiptoo has a case involving allegations of forged academic documents were used to secure employment as a Secretarial Assistant II and later an Audit Associate II at the Office of the Auditor General. Several other forgery-related

cases linked to employment at Nairobi City Water and Sewerage Company Limited are also scheduled this week. A case in which Daniel Kiigi Waweru is accused of using a forged academic document to secure employment as a Registry Clerk, will come up for mention tomorrow to confirm the status of plea-bargaining negotiations.

On Thursday, the court will consider the case of Michael Kilonzo Mualuko, who allegedly used a forged academic certificate to secure employment as a Data Clean Up Clerk, with directions expected on ongoing plea-bargaining discussions.

The court is today also scheduled to mention a case where George Kirichu Wainaina for pre-trial directions. Wainaina is accused of using a forged academic document to secure employment at Nairobi City Water and Sewerage Company Limited. Another accused person, Moseto Okari Mabera, who allegedly obtained employment as a Wastewater Operator using a forged certificate, will also appear in court today for reallocation of the matter.

On Thursday, Liza Amara Anyoso is expected in court to confirm the status of plea-bargaining negotiations in a case where she is accused of using forged academic documents to secure employment as a Data Clean Up and Registry Clerk at Nairobi City Water and Sewerage Company. The same day, Mercy Ofuwa Akinyi will appear for pre-trial directions in a case involving allegations that she used forged academic documents to secure employment as an Office Assistant at the Office of the Auditor General.

Bribery-related cases are also on the court calendar this week.

Paul Kamau Mbugua, a police officer accused of bribery offences, is scheduled to appear tomorrow for directions. Meanwhile, Kennedy Matangawe and Two others, who face charges of receiving a bribe and personation was set to proceed to a defence hearing yesterday.

Elsewhere, the anti-corruption court will hear the case of Ibrahim Ngamau Wangari alias Gakubi Muthui, who is accused of impersonating an investigator attached to the



Mzalendo Kibunjia



James Gakuya

Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission. The hearing is scheduled for Thursday.

Another matter drawing public interest is where Embakasi North MP James Mwangi Gakuya and 12 others linked to the constituency's National Government Constituencies Development Fund are accused of embezzlement of public funds. The case was set for mention yesterday.

The court will also mention where Peter Owera, a Member of County Assembly accused of using forged academic documents to establish whether he remains unwell and able to

proceed with the case.

The series of hearings, rulings and mentions scheduled throughout the week highlights the sustained focus by prosecutors and investigative agencies on corruption-related offences, procurement malpractice, abuse of public office and the use of fraudulent academic credentials within government institutions. As the matters proceed through the courts, they are expected to provide a significant test of the country's ongoing efforts to strengthen accountability, integrity and transparency in public service.



KTDA The court directed that KTDA Holdings Limited and its leadership refrain from taking any adverse action against Mr. Thomas Mwiraria Murithi

Court halts KTDA from interfering with employee's contract

BY WMW

@themkenyaintimes

The Employment and Labour Relations Court (ELRC) has issued temporary orders restraining Kenya Tea Development Agency (KTDA) Holdings Limited from terminating or interfering with the employment of one of its employees who has accused the tea giant of systematic workplace exclusion and discrimination.

In orders issued yesterday, by Lady Justice Jemimah Wanza Keli, the court directed that KTDA Holdings Limited and its leadership refrain from taking any adverse action against Mr. Thomas Mwiraria Murithi pending the hearing of an application scheduled for June 23, 2026.

The court further ordered the respondents to file their responses within seven days, setting the stage for what is shaping up to be a significant constitutional and labour rights dispute involving disability inclusion in the workplace.

Mr. Murithi, a journalist, scholar and registered person with disability, has petitioned the court alleging that despite remaining on KTDA's payroll under a valid employment

contract running until April 2028, he has been systematically isolated from the organisation's operations.

According to court documents, the petitioner claims he was removed from internal communication platforms, excluded from official email distribution systems, omitted from the company's organisational structure, denied work assignments and locked out of meetings and workplace processes necessary for the performance of his duties.

The petition states that although no disciplinary proceedings were instituted against him and no termination notice was issued, he was effectively rendered professionally inactive while continuing to receive his salary.

"The cumulative effect of these actions was to isolate the petitioner from the functional operations of the respondent while simultaneously retaining him on the payroll," the court filings state.

Mr. Murithi argues that the alleged exclusion has caused severe emotional distress, psychological anguish and reputational harm, forcing him to seek therapy.

At the centre of the dispute is the claim that the actions taken against

him amount to violations of several constitutional protections, including the rights to equality and freedom from discrimination, human dignity, fair labour practices, fair administrative action and the rights of persons with disabilities.

The petition invokes Articles 27, 28, 41, 47 and 54 of the Constitution, as well as provisions of the Employment Act and the Persons with Disabilities Act, 2025.

The petitioner contends that the exclusionary treatment was not merely an employment dispute but a constitutional matter involving the dignity and inclusion of persons with disabilities in the workplace.

Among the respondents named in the suit are KTDA Holdings Limited, its Acting Group Chief Executive Officer and the Board of Directors of KTDA Holdings Limited.

Several organisations have also been listed as interested parties, including the National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD), United Disabled Persons of Kenya (UDPK), Kituo Cha Sheria, Katiba Institute, the Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC), the Media Council of Kenya (MCK) and the Public Relations Society of Kenya



Kenya Tea Development Agency (KTDA)

(PRSK).

In the substantive petition, drawn by Kiprop and Hilda advocates, Mr. Murithi seeks a series of declarations and orders, including a finding that his constitutional rights were violated, reinstatement to all workplace communication and operational systems, restoration of his duties, and compensation for alleged emotional and psychological harm.

He is also seeking aggravated and exemplary damages, arguing that the respondents acted with full knowledge of his disability status and their legal obligations under the Constitution and disability rights legislation.

Legal observers say the case could have far-reaching implications for how Kenyan courts interpret work-

place exclusion, constructive marginalisation and disability rights in employment settings.

The petition raises questions about whether an employer can lawfully retain an employee on its payroll while allegedly excluding them from meaningful participation in workplace activities and decision-making processes.

The matter is expected to come up for inter partes hearing before the Employment and Labour Relations Court on June 23.

Until then, KTDA and its leadership remain bound by the court's interim orders prohibiting any interference with the petitioner's employment contract.

The Mt. Kenya Times



A moment of patience



To lifelong hidden pyres.

Sometimes silence is the shield
That wisdom softly weaves,
For calm restraint in troubled hours
Brings peace the spirit needs.

When others shake your inner calm
And provoke the heart to flame,
Let patience be your guiding light
Instead of letting anger reign

When anger storms like thunderclouds
Across the restless mind,
Pause before the lightning strikes,
Let storming thoughts grow still and fade.

For words once hurled like sharpened darts
Can wound the tender soul,
And arrows shot in reckless wrath
Can never be controlled.

A tongue inflamed by fleeting rage
May burn like scorching fire,
Turning moments born of hurt

For anger fades like passing storms
That vanish from the sky,
But regret lingers silently
With guilt that does not die.

So pause when fury grips your soul,
Let patience be your guide,
One moment held in quiet strength
Can save a hundred echoes of grief.

Nandini AnandKumar
Educator,Writer,Motivator, Freelancer

Everything is easy if you are crazy



Your desire will be possible to you.

The bird believes its wings
So it can easily fly over the sky.
With your hopes and trusts
You are more blessed with positive things.

Rajesh Kanna B N

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

Creative Writers.
Educationist.

Everything is easy if you are crazy.
Nothing is easy if you are lazy.

Doing something more interestingly
You never feel tired.
With your involvement and interest.
You can make everything easy.

If you believe in your task, it will be rewarded .
Definitely it brings something to be awarded.
The determination in your mind.

Concrete jungle where dreams are made of



where every dream whispers your name.
The streets moved fast, yet time stood still,
every corner carried a different thrill.

From Brooklyn to Manhattan,
Yellow taxis rush like waves in the sea,
while the city quietly awakened something in me.

People walked with stories hidden in their eyes,
A dream to go to NYC beneath towering building
"Statue of Liberty" that touched the skies.
And in that endless rush of sound and glow,
I found a version of myself I didn't yet know.

Aashni Chugh
Tagore International School
East of Kailash ,New Delhi

We all have a human tendency
to chase something we know is impossible to
achieve.

For me, it was going to New York, a city where the
nightlife feels like a dream to believe.

A concrete jungle of lights and fame,

A happy soul is the best shield for a cruel world



Sometimes you have to reflect on your own dues,
And rectify mistakes through life's different
views.

You must wear a bright smile all the while,
And carry happiness like the flowing Nile.

Someone may leave your heart broken, Hurting
you knowingly or unknowingly, often. To face this
cruel world without losing your role, You must
happily shield your kind and gentle soul.

N.DEEPALAKSHMI
CREATIVE WRITER
B T.ASST IN ENGLISH
GHSS-SATHUVACHARI
VELLORE, TAMILNADU
INDIA

The world is full of mysteries,
From them, you search for sweet pastries.
You need to cover life with cream,
Spreading sweetness like a pleasant dream.

We are all actors on the stage of life,
Whether we accept it or face the strife.
Among the mixed souls in this grand drama,
We must protect ourselves from sorrow and
trauma.

The future's open door



Greatness belongs to those who enter the game.

Use each moment wisely, let purpose lead the
way,
For mountains are conquered one step at a day.

When effort becomes your habit and faith your
guide,
No storm can stop the strength you carry inside.

Master the present with courage and discipline
today
and the future will not merely welcome youit will
proudly belong to you.

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

The future does not arrive with wings of gold,
It is built from the choices we make and hold.

Every sunrise places a gift in our hand,
A chance to rise higher, to dream and to stand.

The seeds we sow in today's silent ground,
Become tomorrow's victories, mighty and
profound.

Do not wait for destiny to write your name,

The magic of the brain



Help the growing brain stand tall.

"Think Big" whispers a shining ray,
"I Can" lights the hopeful way.
Ideas bloom, then Action starts,
Results appear through willing hearts.

Fear may knock and doubt may stay,
But positive thoughts can clear the way.
The brain's true magic comes to be,
When we believe in possibility.

So learn, explore, and never refrain,
For success begins within the brain!

A newborn child begins so small,
Yet holds a wonder beyond us all.
Tiny neurons start to grow,
Building pathways as years flow.

Every thought and lesson learned,
Lights new connections brightly earned.
Books and dreams, both great and small,

V. JAYANTHI
Graduate teacher
Creative Writer
PUMS Konganancherry
Chengalpattu district
Tamil Nadu India

Probe Accompanied by a team of lawyers, Ngaruiya said the allegations had sparked public concern and left him fearing for his safety

Gospel singer Ngaruiya Junior demands probe over alleged threat-to-life claims

BY Felix Njenga
@themkenyatimes

Gospel musician Ngaruiya Junior has formally sought the intervention of the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI) following claims by former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua that there was an alleged plot to eliminate him.

The singer presented a formal complaint yesterday at the DCI headquarters on Kiambu Road, urging investigators to establish the credibility of remarks reportedly made by Gachagua during a televised interview.

Accompanied by a team of lawyers, Ngaruiya said the allegations had sparked public concern and left him fearing for his safety. He maintained that the claims could not be



Gospel musician Ngaruiya Junior addressing the media yesterday.

ignored given their implications on his personal security and public confidence in state institutions.

Addressing journalists after submitting the complaint, the

musician said he wanted authorities to urgently determine whether there was any genuine threat against him and take appropriate action based on their findings.

“If the information shared publicly is accurate, then security agencies should move swiftly to protect my life and investigate those behind the alleged plot. If the claims are

untrue, the public deserves clarity to prevent fear and speculation,” he said.

In the complaint, Ngaruiya asked the DCI to summon Gachagua to provide a statement and furnish any evidence or intelligence he may have regarding the alleged threat.

The musician further appealed for enhanced security, arguing that the public nature of the allegations had exposed him to potential danger. He called on the government to guarantee his safety as investigations proceed.

His legal team, led by advocate Ezra Kiplangat, cited constitutional provisions safeguarding the right to life and personal security. The lawyers argued that allegations concerning threats to an individual’s life are matters of national importance and should be investigated thoroughly and impartially.

According to the lawyers, the Constitution obligates state agencies to act whenever claims emerge suggesting that a citizen’s life may be in danger.

The legal team also challenged Gachagua to cooperate with investigators by recording a statement within seven days and disclosing any information supporting his as-

sertions.

They noted that the remarks were allegedly made during a television discussion touching on the reported acid attack and subsequent death of political activist Wandeto.

Ngaruiya’s petition has now placed the matter before the country’s top investigative agency, which is expected to assess whether the claims point to a legitimate security threat or constitute unsubstantiated allegations.

Copies of the complaint were also forwarded to the Inspector General of Police and the Director of Public Prosecutions, highlighting the seriousness with which the matter is being pursued.

The case is likely to attract significant public and political interest as investigators seek to establish the facts surrounding the controversial remarks and determine whether further legal or security action is warranted.

By Monday evening, the former Deputy President had not publicly responded to the complaint.



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ECDE Koina said the legislation was developed to address historical challenges that hindered access to quality early childhood education

New Kiambu law guarantees funding and support for ECDE learners



Kiambu Township Ward MCA Francis Koina with Kiambu Governor Kimani Wamatangi during the enactment of County ECDE bill into law.

BY Felix Njenga
@themkenyatimes

Early childhood learners in Kiambu County are poised to benefit from sustained educational and nutritional support following the enactment of the Kiambu County Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) Act, a law aimed at institutionalizing key reforms in the sector.

Governor Kimani Wamatangi signed the legislation into law, marking a significant milestone in the county's efforts to strengthen foundational education and ensure continuity of programmes that have transformed ECDE centres in recent years.

The Act, sponsored by Kiambu Town Ward MCA and County Assembly Deputy Majority Leader Wanjiru Francis Koina, provides a legal framework for the management and financing of ECDE centres, safeguarding investments made in infrastructure, learning materials, feeding programmes, and human resources.

Speaking after the enactment

of the law, Koina said the legislation was developed to address historical challenges that hindered access to quality early childhood education.

She noted that many children previously learned in inadequate facilities, while families often struggled to provide essential school requirements. The result, she said, was poor learning conditions that affected children's motivation and academic development.

According to the MCA, the county government has invested heavily in upgrading ECDE facilities, with more than 500 modern classrooms either completed or nearing completion across Kiambu.

The new classrooms have been equipped with learning resources and facilities designed to create a conducive environment for young learners during their formative years.

Koina emphasized that the newly enacted law will require future county governments to continue supporting ECDE programmes through annual budget allocations.

"The objective is to ensure that what has already been

achieved is protected and maintained for future generations," she said.

One of the key provisions of the Act is the introduction of capitation funding for ECDE learners. The funding will support the provision of books, writing materials, and other educational resources while also strengthening school feeding programmes.

Under the initiative, learners will continue benefiting from daily porridge, milk, and eggs, programmes that county leaders say contribute significantly to attendance, concentration, and overall child development.

The MCA noted that the legislation promotes equity by ensuring that every learner receives similar support regardless of whether they attend school in urban or rural areas.

Governor Wamatangi said the law secures reforms introduced by his administration and protects them from being discontinued by future governments.

He said the legislation guarantees the continuation of quality learning environments, free learning materi-



Governor Kimani Wamatangi hands a signed ECDE bill into law to county assembly speaker Charles Thiong'o while members of the county assembly looks on.

als, feeding programmes, and proper management of ECDE personnel.

"The law ensures that the gains made in the ECDE sector become permanent and continue benefiting children

across the county," the governor said.

The governor also assented to the Kiambu County Agroecology Development Act, 2025, which seeks to promote environmentally sustainable farm-

ing practices and strengthen food security initiatives.

The legislation addresses challenges such as climate change, soil degradation, declining agricultural productivity, and environmental conservation.

Additionally, Wamatangi approved the County Supplementary Budget Two for the 2025/2026 financial year, which reallocates resources to priority projects and programmes aimed at improving service delivery and accelerating development.

The enactment of the ECDE Act has been hailed as a major achievement for the county's education sector, with stakeholders expressing optimism that it will provide a stable foundation for quality learning and improved outcomes for young children across Kiambu.

Education experts say the move positions Kiambu as one of the counties leading efforts to strengthen early childhood education through long-term policy and legal reforms.




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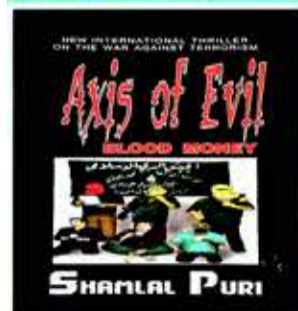
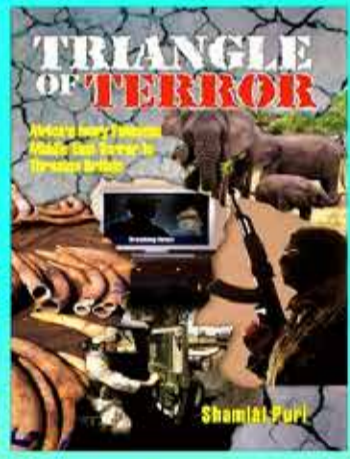
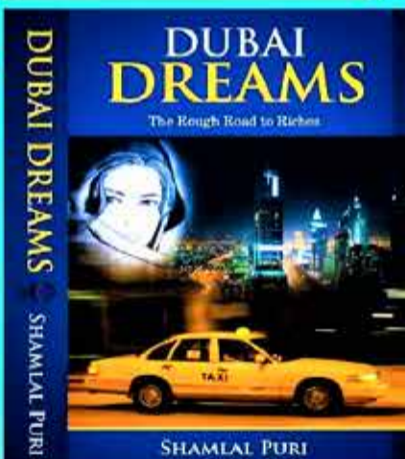
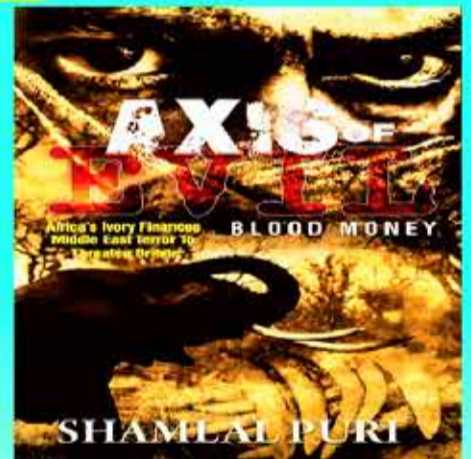
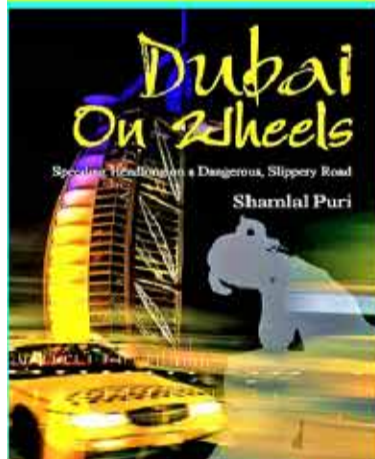
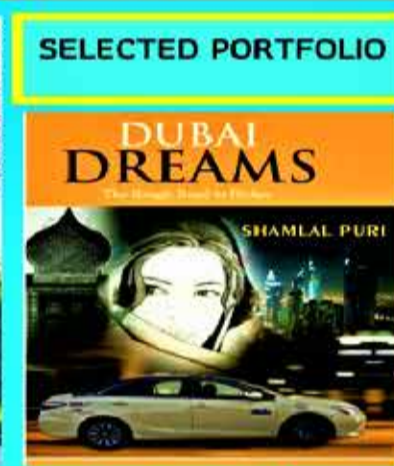
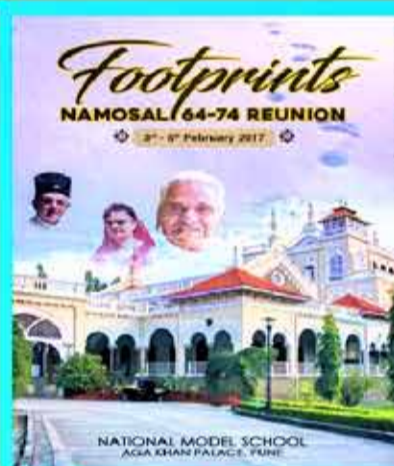
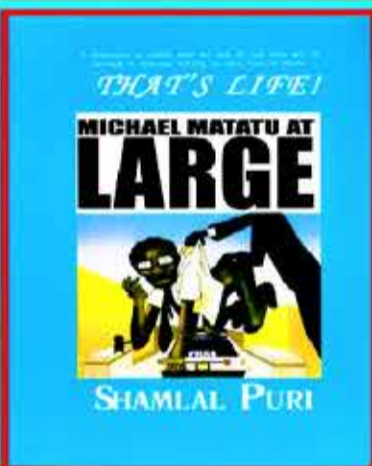
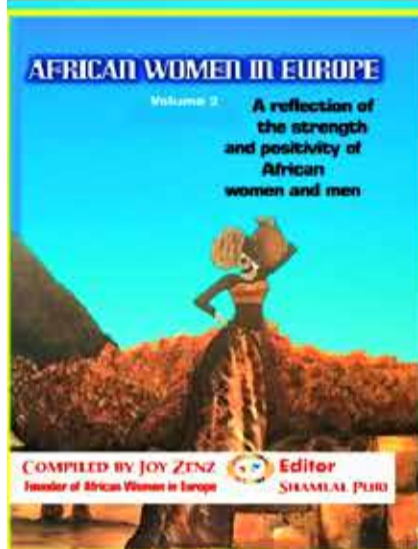
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Pope Defence budgets are rising across several continents. Long-range weapons systems are being supplied to active war zones

Pope declares weapons cannot lead to lasting peace as Vatican urges global disarmament

Pope Leo XIV tells diplomats and faith leaders at the Vatican that rising arms spending is eroding security rather than building it, and calls for a renewed global commitment to dialogue and justice

BY Norman Mwale

@themtkenyatimes

Pope Leo XIV has delivered one of his most pointed appeals for global disarmament in recent memory, telling diplomats and faith leaders gathered at the Vatican that escalating arms spending and the proliferation of advanced weapons systems are steadily eroding the very foundations of security they are supposed to strengthen. The message was unambiguous, and it was clearly intended to be heard far beyond St Peter's Square.

Speaking during his weekly General Audience, the Pontiff warned that the logic of deterrence has trapped nations in a cycle of fear, pulling vast resources away from the fight against poverty, the provision of healthcare and the urgent work of climate action. "Peace is not the absence of war," he said, his voice carrying across a square packed with pilgrims, many of them holding banners calling for an end to arms transfers. "It is the presence of justice, of solidarity, of the recognition that every human life has dignity. Weapons cannot lead to lasting peace. They can only delay conflict or make it more devastating."

It was language that felt deliberately chosen. The Pope has spoken on disarmament before, but rarely with such directness, and rarely at a moment when the geopolitical backdrop makes the words feel quite so urgent. Defence budgets are rising across several continents. Long-range weapons systems are being supplied to active war zones. The architecture of arms control agreements, painstakingly built over decades, is fraying in ways that alarm even seasoned diplomats. Against that backdrop, Francis chose not to speak in generalities but to name the contradiction head on. "The scandal of a world that produces instruments of death while children go hungry," he said, is one that political leaders



Pope Leo XIV

can no longer afford to ignore.

He urged those leaders to rediscover what he called the courage of negotiation — a quality, he suggested, that has become rarer and more necessary in equal measure. "True strength is shown by those who sit at the table, who listen, who choose the harder path of reconciliation," he told the crowd. It was a line that drew sustained applause, and it spoke to something that many in the audience had come specifically to hear: a moral voice willing to say plainly what cautious officialdom tends to wrap in qualifications.

Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin reinforced the message

in a briefing with journalists that followed the address. Parolin noted that the Holy See has consistently and publicly opposed both the use and the stockpiling of weapons of mass destruction, and he was at pains to make clear that the Pope's remarks were grounded in direct experience rather than abstract principle. "His Holiness is not speaking from theory but from the lived experience of the Church in conflict zones," the Cardinal said. "Our hospitals, our schools, our parishes are often the first to receive the wounded when diplomacy fails. The cost of war is paid by the poor." Parolin confirmed that the Vatican had recently written to

members of the United Nations Security Council urging a fresh round of talks on arms control and the establishment of humanitarian corridors in active conflicts — a quiet piece of diplomacy that has received little attention but underscores how seriously the Holy See is pressing its case through formal channels.

The Pope's appeal drew swift and broadly positive reaction from international bodies. UN Secretary-General António Guterres welcomed the intervention, saying that the moral clarity of the Pontiff's words served as a reminder that lasting peace must be built on law and dialogue, not on ever more sophisticated arsenals.

For humanitarian agencies working in Sudan, Ukraine and Gaza, the reaction was less measured and considerably more personal. "We see the aftermath," said Dr Amina Yusuf, regional director for a medical non-governmental organisation working across several active conflict zones. "No child I have treated asked what side fired the weapon. They only ask why it happened at all." It is the kind of testimony that strips political debate down to its human core, and it is precisely the kind of testimony that Pope Francis was invoking — even if he did not use those words himself.

There will, inevitably, be those who argue that the Pope's appeal, however sincere, sidesteps the harder questions about deterrence and the defence of democratic states against authoritarian aggression. That debate is real and it deserves to be had honestly. But Francis was not making a strategic argument on Monday. He was making a moral one, and on that ground his position is difficult to contest. The claim that a world spending ever more on weapons while millions lack clean water and basic medical care represents a profound failure of priorities is not a radical one. It is, in many respects, simply a statement of fact.

Pope Francis closed his address with a prayer for political leaders and arms manufacturers alike, asking for what he called a conversion of heart and a renewed commitment to the principles of the United Nations Charter. He called on Catholics worldwide to observe a day of fasting for peace next Friday and to advocate actively for policies that place human development above military expansion. "Let us invest in schools, not missiles; in bread, not bombs," he said, in a closing line that was brief, direct and clearly designed to travel. "The future will not be secured by what we can destroy, but by what we choose to protect."

Whether those in a position to act will listen remains, as always, the question. But the voice from St Peter's Square this week was not one easily dismissed, and the message it carried was not one that the world's leaders can claim they have not heard.

Norman Mwale is a political correspondent and international affairs writer with a focus on diplomacy, conflict and the role of multilateral institutions.

Politics Pashinyan declared victory shortly before 3am yesterday. The mood at party headquarters was jubilant, and the prime minister did not understate the moment.

Armenia's ruling party claims victory in June parliamentary election

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan secures a third term as Civil Contract wins more than half the national vote, cementing Armenia's westward shift and deepening its break with Moscow

BY Norman Mwale
@thetkenyatimes

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan has claimed a decisive election victory, extending his hold on power after his Civil Contract party secured a parliamentary majority in Sunday's poll — a result that firmly endorses Armenia's accelerating pivot away from Russia and towards Europe.

With more than 94 per cent of ballots counted, Civil Contract had taken just over 50 per cent of the vote, a commanding lead over the pro-Russian Strong Armenia party of Russian-Armenian billionaire Samvel Karapetyan, which received 23.2 per cent. The Armenia Alliance took 9.9 per cent. Exit polls had projected Civil Contract at 56.7 per cent, and preliminary results settled at 49.8 per cent — enough to secure a majority in the 9th convocation of the National Assembly. Voter turnout stood at 58.97 per cent from an eligible electorate of just under 2.5 million.

Pashinyan declared victory shortly before 3am on Monday. The mood at party headquarters was jubilant, and the prime minister did not understate the moment. "Historic," he called it — a word that, given the weight of what this election represented, was not obviously an exaggeration. For a country that has spent much of its modern existence navigating the competing demands of powerful neighbours, a clear democratic mandate for a westward course is genuinely significant.

The vote was always going to be about more than parliamentary arithmetic. Since leading the Velvet Revolution in 2018, Pashinyan has pulled Armenia steadily westward, pursuing domestic modernisation and democratic reform



Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan

while deliberately loosening the country's ties to Moscow. That shift has carried real costs — tension with Russia, a fraught peace process with Azerbaijan, and a fractured relationship with Turkey that has kept the border closed for decades. Sunday's result suggests Armenians, on balance, are willing to bear those costs. It is a significant statement from a small country that has historically found itself squeezed between competing regional powers with very different ideas about where its loyalties should lie.

The economy has also played its part in shaping the electorate's verdict. Armenia has recorded steady growth in recent years, supported in part by an influx of Russian professionals and capital following Moscow's 2022 invasion of Ukraine — an irony that has not been lost on observers. Whether that economic momentum can be sustained as Armenia moves further from Russia's orbit is an open question, but for now voters appear to have judged that the government's stewardship of the economy, alongside its broader reform agenda, merits another term.

The peace agreement with Azerbaijan remains the most

delicate item on Pashinyan's agenda. Civil Contract fell short of the two-thirds parliamentary majority that Azerbaijan has demanded as a precondition for a constitutional referendum — a condition also linked to Turkey's willingness to reopen border trade. That shortfall leaves the prime minister with a strong mandate but a narrow path, and it means the diplomatic work of the coming months will be every bit as consequential as the electoral result itself. Brokering a durable peace with Baku, while managing domestic expectations and resisting pressure from Moscow, will require a level of diplomatic agility that has tested far larger governments than Yerevan's.

Managing the relationship with Moscow will define much of the third term. Russia has watched Armenia's westward drift with barely concealed displeasure, and the strong showing of the pro-Russian Strong Armenia party — even in defeat — is a reminder that a significant portion of the electorate remains sceptical of the direction Pashinyan has chosen. That domestic tension will not dissolve with a single election result. It will need to be man-

aged carefully and honestly, with a government willing to make the case for its choices rather than simply assuming that the mandate settles the argument.

On the international stage, the picture is more encouraging. European institutions have welcomed Armenia's reform trajectory, and there is appetite in Brussels for deeper engagement if Yerevan continues to demonstrate commitment to democratic governance and the rule of law. That opens doors — for trade, for investment, and for the kind of institutional relationships that can provide long-term stability in a vola-

tile region. But doors opened must also be walked through, and that requires sustained effort well beyond the campaign season.

International observers assessed the vote positively. Chief observer for the Continental Democratic Institute, Dr Samuel Oka, described the poll as an orderly exercise that represented a meaningful step forward for Armenia's democratic consolidation, before adding a note of caution that will resonate in Yerevan. "The challenge now is governance," he said. "A strong mandate carries strong expectations."

Pashinyan enters his third term with a clear mandate, a complicated neighbourhood and no shortage of unfinished business. The direction Armenia has chosen is no longer in doubt. Whether the road ahead is navigable — and whether the government has the discipline and the diplomacy to walk it — is the question that will define the next five years.

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China-Korea Xi noted that after seven years, he is very pleased to once again visit the beautiful city of Pyongyang, and feels especially warm and familiar.

Xi calls on China, DPRK to consolidate trust, boost practical cooperation

BY Xinhua News Agency

@themtkenyatimes

Xi Jinping, general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and Chinese president, said on Monday that China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) should consolidate the foundation of political mutual trust and enhance the level of practical cooperation.

Xi made the remarks during his talks with Kim Jong Un, general secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea and president of the State Affairs of the DPRK.

Xi noted that after seven years, he is very pleased to once again visit the beautiful city of Pyongyang, and feels especially warm and familiar.

He expressed his readiness to work with Kim to take this visit as an opportunity to strengthen top-level planning and strategic guidance for China-DPRK relations in the new era, keep bilateral relations advancing with the times and achieve greater progress in bilateral ties, so as to better benefit the two countries and peoples, and make positive contributions to peace, stability, development and prosperity in the region and the world.

Stressing that China and the DPRK are both socialist countries led by communist parties, Xi said that the traditional friendship between the two countries is rooted in their shared ideals and beliefs as well as their common goals, and is backed by a profound historical foundation, a solid political basis and strong emotional bonds.

Xi noted that friendship passed down from generation to generation, a shared future and mutual support have always been the defining features of China-DPRK relations.

No matter how the international situation changes, the Chinese party and government's firm stance on highly valuing China-DPRK traditional friendship will not change, the firm support for General Secretary Kim in leading the DPRK's socialist cause will not change, and the firm commitment to safeguarding the shared interests of the two countries and preserving a favorable strategic environment will not change, Xi said.

Xi pointed out that, in the face of the profound changes unseen in a century that are accelerating across the world, the two sides should take



Xi Jinping, general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and Chinese president, holds talks with Kim Jong Un, general secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea and president of the State Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), at the Kumsusan State Guesthouse in Pyongyang, the DPRK. | Photo: Xinhua/Yan Yan.

a broad and long-term view, build on past achievements and open up a new future, draw wisdom from the development process of the relations between the two parties and the two countries, seize opportunities in the prevailing trend of human history, inject new contemporary connotations and strong impetus into the traditional friendship between China and the DPRK, and open up a brighter prospect for the socialist cause of the two countries as well as regional peace and development.

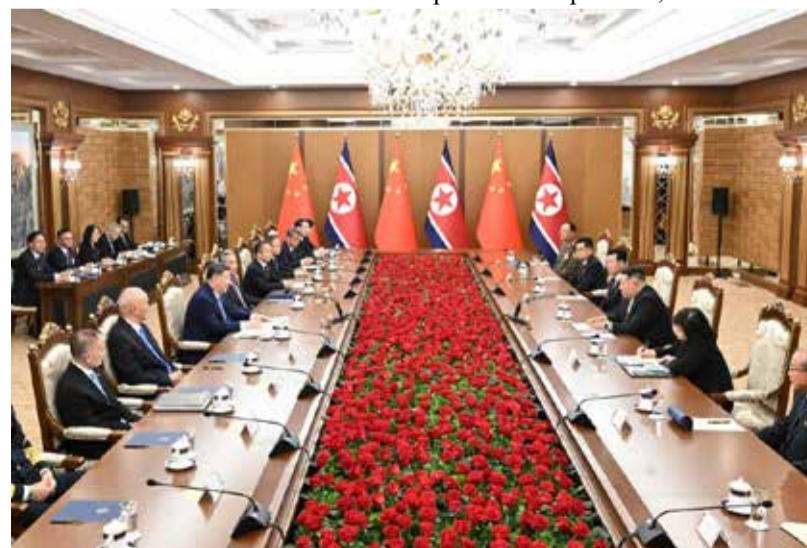
During the meeting, Xi put forward four proposals on developing China-DPRK relations.

The two sides should stay guided by the high-level exchanges and consolidate the foundation of political mutual trust, Xi said. The strategic guidance by the top leaders of both nations is the greatest strength of China-DPRK relations, he added, noting that he stands ready to maintain close strategic communication with Kim and guide China-DPRK relations to continuously reach new heights.

Noting that this year marks the 65th anniversary of the China-DPRK Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, Xi said that both sides will hold grand commem-

orative events.

The relations between the two parties play an important guiding role in the development of China-DPRK relations, Xi said, calling for further expansion and invigoration of friendly exchanges at various levels and in various fields between the two parties, as well as the deepening of exchanges of experience and mutual learning on party and state governance.



Xi Jinping, General Secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and Chinese president, holds talks with Kim Jong Un, General Secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea and president of the State Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), at the Kumsusan State Guesthouse in Pyongyang, the DPRK yesterday. | Photo: Xinhua/Yin Bogu.

stands ready to work with the DPRK to strengthen the alignment of development strategies, and expand practical cooperation in such areas as economy and trade, agriculture, construction, science and technology, as well as health care, to bring greater benefits to the two peoples, he said.

Xi called on both sides to leverage the opportunity of the full reopening of border crossings and the resumption of civil aviation flights and international passenger trains to increase people-to-people exchanges and foster mutual interaction.

The two sides should uphold the inheritance of friendship as a driving force and strengthen the bonds between their peoples, Xi said, noting that the traditional friendship between China and the DPRK, forged in blood, is a valuable shared asset of the two peoples.

China stands ready to work with the DPRK to preserve and properly manage the memorial facilities dedicated to the Chinese People's Volunteers martyrs in the DPRK, carry out distinctive programs on revolutionary traditions and youth education, and pass on the red legacy and traditional friendship between the two countries, Xi said.

China is also ready to work with the DPRK to make full use of each side's strengths and resources, enhance exchanges and cooperation in education, culture and the arts, tourism, sports, media, youth affairs, subnational engagement and sister-city relations, and ensure that the traditional friendship between China and the DPRK takes deeper root in the hearts of the two peoples, Xi said.

The Chinese president also called for upholding fairness and justice as a guiding principle to enrich the substance of strategic coordination. Xi said that, in response to the major question of where humanity is headed, he has proposed the vision of building a community with a shared future for humanity and the four global initiatives, which aim to steer global governance toward greater fairness and justice and have won broad support and positive responses from the international community, including the DPRK.

Noting that Asia is the common home where regional countries, including China and the DPRK, live and thrive, Xi said that the two countries should strengthen strategic coordination, firmly safeguard their respective sovereignty, security and development interests, and jointly uphold regional peace and development.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Are we living for ourselves or for social media?

By Madhulika Mishra

We no longer simply live our lives. We perform them. Birthdays, meals, sunsets, personal milestones — almost nothing escapes the camera before it is experienced. Social media began as a communication tool. It has quietly become the lens through which millions measure the value of their own existence.

The consequences are well documented but worth stating plainly. Likes, comments and shares have become proxies for self-worth. A post that performs well delivers satisfaction; one that draws silence can sting. Over time, the pursuit of external validation reshapes behaviour in ways most users barely notice. Moments are staged rather than savoured. Holidays are curated rather than enjoyed. Life is increasingly edited before it is lived. Comparison compounds the



problem. What users see online is not reality but a highlight reel — the successes, the celebrations, the carefully filtered best of everything. Ordinary life, measured against that standard, will always fall short. The result is a quiet, persistent dissatisfaction that accumulates in ways that are difficult to name and harder to shake.

None of this means social me-

dia is beyond redemption. It remains a formidable tool for connection, creativity and public discourse. The question is who is in control.

If an experience now feels incomplete until it is posted, that is not connection — it is dependency. Life's most meaningful moments need no audience. They need only your full attention.

When DNA reveals a different truth

Paternity testing is reshaping families and forcing society to confront uncomfortable questions about biology, identity and what fatherhood truly means

By Oliver Ogutu

A single test. A sealed envelope. A family that will never be the same again.

DNA paternity testing has become cheaper, faster and more accessible than at any point in history. What was once confined to courtrooms and medical disputes is now available by post, often taken out of curiosity or quiet suspicion. The results, when they surprise, do not arrive gently.

Men who have raised children with devotion for years are discovering they are not the biological father. Children are learning that the parent who held their hand through every milestone shares no genetic bond with them. Relationships built on decades of trust are fracturing under the weight of a revelation that no one in the



family chose to anticipate.

The legal and ethical debate that follows is genuinely complex. There are those who argue that biological truth is a right — that every child deserves to know their origins and every man deserves certainty about paternity. That argument has merit. So does its counterpoint: that fatherhood is not primarily a matter of genetics but of presence, sacrifice and love consistently

given over time.

Both things can be true simultaneously. Biology matters. So does the man who showed up every day.

What DNA cannot measure is the bond forged through years of guidance, care and quiet devotion. Science can reveal origin. It cannot define family.

The test result is not the end of the story. It is merely the beginning of a harder conversation.

Rising road accidents raise concern over road safety in Kenya

By Lydia Jerop

Kenyans are dying on roads that should be safe, and the pace of change is not matching the pace of the carnage.

A series of accidents involving matatus, boda bodas and private vehicles on major highways has renewed alarm among road users and authorities alike. Witnesses and investigators point to the same recurring causes: speeding, careless driving and open disregard for traffic rules. The names change. The circumstances vary. The root causes do not.

Road safety officials have responded with familiar appeals — drive carefully, do not overload, avoid reckless overtaking, observe the rules. The advice is sound. The problem is that it has been given before, repeat-



edly, and the accidents keep happening. Appeals alone, however well intentioned, are not a road safety strategy.

What Kenya needs is enforcement that carries real consequence. Spot checks, licence vetting and roadworthiness inspections must become routine rather than reactive. The culture of impunity that allows dangerously overloaded matatus and unlicensed boda boda riders to operate in plain sight of authorities must be confronted di-

rectly. Insurance frameworks, driver training standards and vehicle inspection regimes all require urgent review.

Every accident reported as a statistic represents a family shattered, a breadwinner lost, a future cut short. That human cost deserves more than a press statement.

The road death toll in Kenya is not inevitable. It is a policy failure, and it demands a policy response.

Mariakani substation marks a turning point in Kenya's energy future

By James Kilonzo Bwire

Kenya's electricity grid has long been its own worst enemy. Generate the power, and you still cannot always move it where it is needed.

The commissioning of the 400/220kV KETRACO Mariakani Substation in Kilifi County, presided over by President William Ruto and Energy Cabinet Secretary Opiyo Wandayi, begins to change that. By reinforcing the transmission corridor linking Nairobi to Mombasa, the facility directly addresses bottlenecks that have throttled industrial growth and frustrated consumers along the coast for years. That is not a technical footnote — it is the difference between a grid that works and one that merely exists.



The broader significance is real. Reliable transmission reduces dependence on expensive thermal generation, enables greater integration of renewable energy, and strengthens Kenya's position within the regional power trading framework. For investors, improved infrastructure reduces the uncertainty that has historically discouraged generation projects. For households and businesses along the coastal corridor, it means fewer disruptions and more

predictable supply.

None of this is self-sustaining. The substation's long-term value will depend on maintenance discipline, regulatory clarity and genuine coordination across the energy sector. Infrastructure without institutional follow-through depreciates quickly.

But the foundation is there. The question now is whether the momentum holds — because Kenya cannot afford for it not to.

SPORTS NEWS

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Sports >> **"Real Madrid represents excellence and responsibility. My commitment is to honour that history and build a team that competes, inspires and wins."* — Xabi Alonso

Real Madrid elect Xabi Alonso as head coach to pave way for new era at Bernabéu



Xabi Alonso

By: **Norman Mwale**

"Real Madrid represents excellence and responsibility. My commitment is to honour that history and build a team that competes, inspires and wins." — Xabi Alonso

Real Madrid have confirmed the appointment of Xabi Alonso as first-team head coach, ending weeks of speculation and signalling a decisive shift towards a new generation at the Santiago Bernabéu. The club announced the decision late on Monday following a board meeting in the capital, with president Florentino Pérez describing the former midfielder as "the ideal figure to lead our sporting project and to pave the way for the next chapter in the history of this institution". Alonso, 44, returns to Madrid after a remarkable tenure at Bayer Leverkusen, where he delivered the club's first Bundesliga title

and an unbeaten domestic season, earning plaudits for his tactical clarity, man-management and commitment to attacking football.

Speaking at his unveiling, Alonso said the opportunity to manage the club where he won La Liga, the Copa del Rey and the UEFA Champions League as a player was "an honour I do not take lightly". "I know what this badge demands," he told reporters. "Real Madrid represents excellence and responsibility. My commitment is to honour that history and build a team that competes, inspires and wins. We will work every day with humility and ambition." The Spaniard has signed a three-year contract and will begin work immediately, with pre-season preparations already underway at Valdebebas.

President Pérez said the appointment reflects the board's long-term vision. "Xabi understands Real Madrid from the

inside. He has the character, the intelligence and the modern footballing ideas we believe are essential to face the challenges ahead," Pérez stated. "This is not only about today. It is about paving the way for sustained success, for integrating our academy talent and for playing the kind of football our supporters expect." General director José Ángel Sánchez confirmed that Alonso will have a central role in squad planning alongside the technical department, with several contract renewals and targeted signings expected before the window closes.

Outgoing coach Carlo Ancelotti, who leaves after a decorated second spell that included two Champions League titles, offered his public backing. "Xabi was a master on the pitch and he has shown he is a master on the bench," Ancelotti said in a club statement. "He has my full support. Real Madrid is in excel-

lent hands." Club captain Dani Carvajal echoed the sentiment after training on Tuesday. "We all know Xabi. He demands the best, but he gives everything for the group. The dressing room is ready to work and to fight for him," Carvajal said.

Alonso's arrival comes as Madrid look to blend established stars with emerging talents from La Fábrica, and as the club prepares for a demanding calendar that includes La Liga, the Champions League and the expanded FIFA Club World Cup. Sporting analysts noted that his Leverkusen side was defined by positional discipline, rapid transitions and trust in youth, qualities the Bernabéu faithful have long prized. For Pérez, the message was unmistakable. "We have elected Xabi Alonso to lead, to teach and to win," he concluded. "Now, the work begins."

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *"Today was about courage, not just speed. These athletes showed the world what the human spirit can do when it refuses to quit." — Race director Sibusiso Dlamini

Australian Man and South African woman claim victory in gruelling Durban ultramarathon



Durban ultramarathon

By: **Norman Mwale**

"Today was about courage, not just speed. These athletes showed the world what the human spirit can do when it refuses to quit." — Race director Sibusiso Dlamini

An Australian runner and a South African favourite stormed to victory in Sunday's 98th edition of the Durban Ultramarathon, conquering scorching heat, punishing hills and a world-class field to lift the titles in front of a jubilant Kings Park crowd. Western Australia's Liam O'Connor broke clear in the final ten kilometres to win the men's race in 5 hours 27 minutes 14 seconds, while KwaZulu-Natal's Nandi Mthembu defended her home soil with a commanding run of 6:02:51 in the women's division, securing her second consecutive crown and the R2.5 million purse. Organisers confirmed a

record 23,000 starters lined up at dawn, with runners from 72 nations tackling the 87-kilometre course between Pietermaritzburg and Durban.

O'Connor, 31, who trains in the Perth hills, said the win was "the hardest and proudest day" of his career. "I came here knowing the history of this race and the strength of South African ultrarunning," he told reporters, draped in both the Australian and Comrades flags. "At Inchanga the legs were screaming, but I kept thinking of everyone back home who got up at midnight to watch. This is for them." The former track 10,000-metre specialist made his decisive move at Pinetown, pulling away from defending champion Siphon Ndlovu and Kenya's Daniel Kiptoo to build an unassailable lead into the stadium.

Mthembu, 29, controlled the women's race from Drummond, reeling in early leader Gerda

Steyn before half-way and extending her advantage through the Valley of a Thousand Hills. "The crowds carried me," she said, still catching her breath at the finish line. "When I heard the cheers in Cato Ridge I knew I could not let my people down. This win is for every young girl in Umlazi who thinks she cannot run further than her street." Her victory margin of nearly seven minutes underlined a performance that race director Sibusiso Dlamini called "tactically flawless and deeply courageous".

Athletics South Africa president James Moloai praised both winners and the spirit of the event. "What we witnessed today was international excellence meeting South African heart," Moloai said. "Liam O'Connor and Nandi Mthembu reminded us that ultrarunning is not only about physiology, but about character. Their victories will inspire a new generation." Australian High

Commissioner to South Africa, the Hon. Tanya Thompson, congratulated O'Connor trackside, noting that his success "strengthens the sporting ties between our nations and shows what preparation and resilience can achieve".

Medical staff reported 178 on-course treatments for dehydration and cramp, but no serious incidents, despite temperatures peaking at 31 degrees Celsius. The event also raised over R8 million for local charities, with each finisher earning a medal and a place in one of the world's oldest ultramarathons. As the sun set over the Indian Ocean, Dlamini reflected on a day that delivered drama and history. "An Australian man and a South African woman stood tallest," he said. "But every runner who crossed that line today won something. That is the magic of this race."

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SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



A journey that began with Ixlos School

One teacher's reflection on a school where character is not an afterthought but the foundation on which everything else is built



By: Sherova Orzigul
@themtkenyatimes



Worth Noting:

- Every school has its own character, but what distinguishes Ixlos is its conviction that education must begin with the person, not the syllabus. From my first days on staff, I noticed that conversations in the corridors and staffrooms were not confined to grades and targets. Teachers talked about responsibility, kindness, respect and growth. Academic achievement mattered — it mattered a great deal — but it was never treated as the only measure of a student's worth or a school's success.

- The school's guiding principle, "Character First, Education Second," is not a slogan on a wall. It is something you feel in the daily life of the institution. It is there in the way students are encouraged to support one another, in the way the school celebrates effort and integrity alongside results, and in the way young people are taught, gently but consistently, to take responsibility for their choices.



Teachers measure time differently from most people. We do not count years by calendars alone. We count them by the students we remember — the shy child who found her voice, the determined competitor who trained for months for an Olympiad, the graduate who came back simply to share good news. Those moments are the real record of what a school does and who it is.

My time at Ixlos School has deepened that understanding in ways I did not fully anticipate when I arrived.

Every school has its own character, but what distinguishes Ixlos is its conviction that education must begin with the person, not the syllabus. From my first days on staff, I noticed that conversations in the corridors and staffrooms were not confined to grades and targets. Teachers talked about responsibility, kindness, respect and growth. Academic achievement mattered — it mattered a great deal — but it was never treated as the only measure of a student's worth or a school's success.

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Some of the most vivid memories from my years here involve watching students return from international academic competitions. Traveling to Turkey, Egypt and Qatar to compete against peers from across the world was, for many of them, transformative in ways that went far beyond the results. They came back broader, more confident, more curious about the world and their place in it. Their stories became fuel for younger students who watched and quietly decided that they too could reach that far. Behind every medal or certificate lay months of discipline and perseverance — and, just as importantly, a belief instilled by teachers and classmates that the effort was worth making.

The graduates tell a similar story.

Many have gone on to strong IELTS scores and university opportunities that once felt out of reach. Yet when they return to visit — and they do return — they rarely lead with examination results. They talk about the teachers who believed in them, the friendships that shaped them, and the values they carry. That, more than any league table or award, is the measure of what Ixlos has built.

Much of that has been shaped by the leadership of Principal Maxsuma Akhrorovna Ashirmetova, whose commitment to both academic quality and human development has created a school where teachers feel genuinely supported and students feel genuinely seen. Under her guidance, the school has grown without losing the principles it was founded on — which is harder than it sounds, and rarer than it should be.

Walk through the corridors on any given afternoon and you will find students preparing presentations, debating ideas, helping one another through problems, or simply talking with the ease of people who feel they belong. These are ordinary scenes. But they reflect something that is

far from ordinary: a community held together by a shared commitment to learning, to integrity and to one another.

We hope, as educators, that our students leave with knowledge and skills. But what we hope for most is that they leave with confidence, compassion and a sense of their own purpose. At Ixlos School, that aspiration is not a distant ideal. It is the daily work.

Looking back on the school's journey, its success cannot be explained by infrastructure or programme design alone. At its core is something simpler and more enduring — sincerity, dedication and a wholehearted commitment to the young people in its care. That spirit built the school. It is the same spirit carrying it forward.

Sherova Orzigul is a Master's degree student at Webster University and an English teacher at Ixlos School. A published poet and writer, her work has appeared in national and international journals and magazines.