



**Kalonzo vows police reforms, backs victims of alleged abductions**  
 Wiper Party leader Kalonzo Musyoka has pledged sweeping reforms to the country's security sector if the opposition forms the next government

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**Kindiki: Government fast-tracking new Cooperatives law to improve governance, modernise the sector**  
 The government is fast-tracking the passage and enactment of the new Cooperatives Bill that will modernize the sector

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Voice of the People

# The Mt. Kenya Times

Daily ePAPER

**Goons!** From nightclubs in Westlands to a Kisii political convoy, hired gangs are now striking with near impunity — and Kenyans want to know who is paying them

# Goons everywhere

Armed gangs have struck at least four times in the past ten days across three counties, attacking a political convoy in Kisii, blocking Thika Superhighway, robbing patrons at a Westlands restaurant, and reviving fears sparked by a June raid on a Nairobi cathedral, in a pattern of violence that has outpaced the government's promised crack-down.

The most serious of the recent incidents occurred on Friday, July 3, at Keumbu on the Kisii-Keroka road, where a group of youths armed with clubs and stones blocked the convoy of the Linda Mwananchi political movement as it travelled to a rally in Keroka. Several vehicles were damaged, including that of former Chief Justice David Maraga, now a presidential aspirant with the United Green Movement Party, whose windscreen was smashed. A number of supporters were injured and treated in hospitals in Kisii and Nyamira.

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CCTV footage of Armed gangs robbing patrons at a Westlands restaurant

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# Kenya marks 104th Ushirika Day with renewed focus on cooperative growth

BY DMS

@themtkenyatimes

*Some of the moments as captured in pictures*

Kenya marked the 104th Ushirika Day celebrations at Uhuru Park, Nairobi, with renewed calls for stronger cooperative societies as key drivers of economic growth, financial inclusion, and grassroots development.

The national event brought together government officials, cooperative leaders, SACCO members, development partners, farmers, youth, women, and stakeholders from across the country to celebrate the achievements of the cooperative movement and chart its future.

Speaking during the celebrations at Uhuru Park, Nairobi, Deputy President Kithure Kindiki reaffirmed the government's commitment to reforming and modernizing the cooperative sector through a new Cooperatives Bill, which is expected to strengthen governance, improve transparency, and accelerate digital transformation.

He noted that cooperatives remain central to the country's Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda by supporting



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**Editor's Desk**

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## NEWS IN BRIEF



Principal Secretary for Labour and Skills Development Shadrack Mwandime has urged youth, especially those who did not qualify for university, to enroll in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions and the National Industrial Training Authority (NITA) to acquire marketable skills for employment and entrepreneurship. Speaking in Changamwe during the issuance of NG-CDF bursary cheques worth Sh2.9 million to 800 Form Four students, Mwandime said the government is creating local and overseas job opportunities for skilled youth. Changamwe MP Omar Mwinyi encouraged discipline among students and urged parents to support education and TVET enrolment, while Uasin Gishu Senator Jackson Mandago called on parents to take greater responsibility in raising and guiding their children.



Business operators in Diani are experiencing increased activity following the influx of visitors attending The BAG Festival in Kwale County. Accommodation providers, restaurants and transport operators reported a surge in demand as guests arrived from Nairobi, Mombasa and other parts of the country. Airbnb hosts said bookings were fully occupied, while restaurants increased stock to meet higher customer numbers. Taxi operators also recorded more transport requests as visitors moved between hotels, beaches and festival venues. Visitors said they were combining the festival with sightseeing and shopping, benefiting local businesses. Traders and tourism stakeholders noted that such events boost domestic tourism, create business opportunities and support the local economy beyond peak holiday seasons.



Newly installed Rotary Club of Meru President Mary Asumpta Gacheri has pledged to prioritise maternal health and cancer awareness during her 2026/2027 tenure through community outreach, awareness campaigns, medical screening camps and partnerships with health professionals. Speaking during her installation, Gacheri said the club will focus on early cancer detection and preventive healthcare, noting that Meru has a high burden of cancer cases. She also pledged to promote maternal health by supporting expectant mothers through awareness programmes and training, particularly targeting vulnerable teenage mothers. Outgoing President Verah Mwendwa called for partnerships to address maternal health and cancer, while maternal health specialist Dr. Consenta Gatumi pledged to support the club's initiatives through joint awareness and prevention campaigns.



Teso South MP Mary Emase has launched a programme to construct modern flush toilets in primary schools to improve sanitation and hygiene. Implemented in partnership with the Teso South NG-CDF and other partners, each unit will cost Sh3.5 million and include flush toilets, a borehole, solar-powered water system, a 10,000-litre water tank, a menstrual hygiene management room and a biodigester. The pilot phase will cover 15 schools. Speaking in Amukura, Emase said the project will replace unsafe pit latrines and create a safer learning environment. She also received six water tanks donated by Sidian Bank to address water shortages affecting schools in the constituency.



Internal Security and National Administration Principal Secretary Dr. Raymond Omollo has announced that the expansion of Suneka Airstrip in Bonchari Constituency, Kisii County, will begin next week after the government appointed a new contractor to revive the stalled project. Speaking at a church fundraiser in Kenyoro, he said all documentation had been completed and the upgraded airstrip would boost transport, trade, tourism and regional connectivity. Dr. Omollo also urged leaders, communities and the church to work together in promoting development and peace, while encouraging parents to prioritise education. Kisii Woman Representative Dorice Aburi condemned political violence and called for firm action against those responsible for disrupting peaceful gatherings.



Wajir County has broken ground for the Baitulmaal Level 4 Not-for-Profit Hospital, a project expected to improve access to affordable, quality healthcare. Speaking on behalf of Governor Ahmed Abdullahi, Health CECM Habiba Ali said the hospital will offer inpatient and outpatient care, emergency, maternal and child health, and selected specialist services, complementing existing facilities. She noted the project builds on Baitulmaal's previous support, including cataract surgeries, maternal health training and equipment donations. Baitulmaal Kenya CEO Ugas Sheikh Mohammed said the hospital would be equipped through a partnership with the county government and attract specialist doctors for outreach services. The project aims to strengthen the county's referral system and advance Universal Health Coverage.

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**EACC** Among the key cases is the hearing of Bomet Governor Hillary Kipng'eno Barchok

## EACC lines up key corruption, public land and fraud cases for hearing across courts this week

BY EACC

@themkenyatimes

The Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) has lined up a series of high-profile corruption, economic crime and public land recovery cases for hearing in courts across the country this week, as it intensifies efforts to combat graft, recover public assets and promote accountability in public service.

Among the key cases is the hearing of Bomet Governor Hillary Kipng'eno Barchok and another accused person at the Milimani Anti-Corruption Court tomorrow where they face conflict of interest charges. The case relates to allegations that the governor received benefits amounting to KSh151.2 million from companies that conducted business with the County Government of Bomet between the 2019/2020 and 2024/2025 financial years.

Today, the Lodwar Law Court is expected to deliver judgment in the case against former Turkana County Executive Committee Member for Infrastructure, Transport and Public Works Benson Lokwang, who is charged with falsifying academic certificates allegedly used to secure public employment.

The Milimani Anti-Corruption Court will on Friday deliver judgment in a suit seeking recovery of KSh903,000 allegedly irregularly received by Catherine Mumma as allowances from the Nation-

al AIDS Control Council (NACC).

On Wednesday, the same court will rule on a suit seeking recovery of KSh7.5 million allegedly paid illegally to Michael Chesikau as a grant by the National AIDS Control Council. The court will also issue a ruling in a case involving Lilian Achieng Okumu and three others over the alleged fraudulent payment of salaries amounting to KSh679,727 by the Homa Bay County Government.

Several public land recovery cases are also scheduled for hearing during the week. Tomorrow, the Environment and Land Court in Naivasha will hear a suit seeking recovery of Naivasha Municipal Block 5/285, 5/590 and 5/291, valued at Sh1.7 billion, which the EACC alleges was illegally acquired by private individuals.

Other land recovery cases include hearings involving parcels reserved for Kenya Railways Corporation along Dennis Pritt Road in Nairobi, children's playground land in Nairobi West, public land in Eldoret Municipality, Nandi, Laikipia, Nyeri and Ruiru, as well as mentions involving land in Parklands and Kijabe.

Today, the Kapsabet Law Court will hear the case against former Nandi County employees Solomon Kirwa Magut and another, who face charges of conflict of interest, fraudulent acquisition of public property and uttering false documents. They are accused of influencing the award of



tenders worth KSh24.1 million to companies linked to them.

The Isiolo Law Court will also hear the case against former Marsabit County ward administrator Halkano Hallo Dabasso, who is charged with fraudulently acquiring public funds amounting to KSh1.9 million through salaries and allegedly forging academic certificates to obtain employment.

At the Mombasa Anti-Corruption Court on Wednesday, Tubmun Otieno Ochogo and three others will face charges of willfully failing to comply with procurement laws. The case relates to the alleged payment of KSh4.2 million by the Mombasa County Government for a training programme that investigators say never took place.

In Kerugoya, the court will hear a civil suit against Dr. Agnes Wanjiru Gatama seeking a declaration that she illegally benefited from KSh9 million paid as salary by the Kirinyaga County Assembly Service Board.

The commission has also scheduled several mentions involving recovery of allegedly misappropriated public funds. These include a KSh1.5 billion suit linked to the Programme for Rural

Outreach of Financial Innovations and Technologies (PROFIT), a KSh330.5 million claim involving advance payments to Auditel Kenya, a KSh253.3 million case involving alleged payments for non-existent procurement contracts, a KSh51.5 million case involving alleged payments for undelivered goods and services by the Garissa County Government, and a KSh38.9 million corruption proceeds recovery suit involving a Marsabit County employee.

Other criminal proceedings include the mention of a procurement fraud case in Nyeri involving an alleged irregular KSh13.5 million county branding tender awarded by the Nyandarua County Government, and a case in Voi against a former Taita Taveta County employee accused of failing to surrender imprest amounting to KSh12.4 million.

Through the cases scheduled between today and Friday, the EACC continues to pursue criminal prosecutions, recovery of public funds and repossession of illegally acquired public assets as part of its mandate to combat corruption, promote integrity and safeguard public resources.

## Kenya marks 104th Ushirika Day with renewed focus on cooperative growth



Deputy President Kithure Kindiki (c)

Contd from page 2

agriculture, manufacturing, affordable housing, micro, small and medium enterprises, and financial inclusion. He also emphasized the need to attract more young people and women into cooperative societies to ensure the movement remains vibrant and sustainable.

The celebrations highlighted the significant contribution of Kenya's more than 14 million cooperative members, whose savings and investments continue to support livelihoods, create employment, improve access to affordable credit, and strengthen communities across the country.

Stakeholders also called for

enhanced innovation, prudent management, and adoption of technology to improve service delivery and safeguard members' savings. They urged cooperative societies to embrace good governance and accountability to build public confidence and expand their contribution to national development.

This year's Ushirika Day reaffirmed the cooperative movement's enduring role as one of Kenya's most effective tools for promoting inclusive economic growth, empowering communities, and improving the welfare of millions of citizens.

Later in the evening on Saturday, CS for Cooperatives, Wycliffe Oparanya presided over the prize giving event at Safari park hotel.

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IN BUSINESS

# The Mount Kenya Times

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# Oparanya hails cooperatives for contributing to country's economic development



Cooperative and Micro Small Enterprise Development Cabinet Secretary Wycliffe Oparanya awarding some of the saccos that have been performing well. On the far right is the CAK CEO Daniel Marube.

**BY Douglas Namunane and Wangari Ndirangu**  
@themkenyatimes

Cooperatives and Micro Small Enterprise Development CS Wycliffe Oparanya has lauded the cooperative movement for its contribution to the economic development of the country.

Oparanya said saccos and cooperatives contribute immensely to the country's gross domestic product and enhance the livelihoods of people across various sectors including agriculture, education, environment and the small and medium-sized enterprises by effectively mobilizing resources.

The CS made the remarks Saturday evening during the Ushirika Day award ceremony, where he awarded over 100 best saccos for their exemplary performance.

He said the government is enacting the Cooperatives Bill No. 7 of 2024, which is currently before parliament, to strengthen governance and enhance efficiency in the management and operations of cooperatives in Kenya.

Oparanya also highlighted the Sacco Societies Act 2008, describing it as key in the transformation of the cooperative movement.

Act No. 14 of 2008 is the primary legislation governing Savings

and Credit Co-operative Societies (SACCOs) in Kenya. It established the Sacco Societies Regulatory Authority (SASRA) to license, supervise, and regulate deposit-taking and specified non-deposit-taking SACCOs to protect members' funds.

The CS commended the current cooperative leadership for streamlining issuance of dividends to members, underscoring the government's commitment to ensuring that the cooperative movement continues to safeguard members' contributions.

At the same time, Oparanya urged the leadership to incorporate women and the youth in the management and operation of saccos.

During the National Ushirika Day Celebration Gala Dinner, various saccos received the prestigious awards from the Co-operative Alliance of Kenya (CAK) in recognition of their commitment to excellence, innovation, and sound governance.

Present at the event were State Department for Cooperatives Principal Secretary Patrick Kilemi, the Cooperative Alliance of Kenya (CAK) Chairperson Macloud Malonza and CAK Chief Executive Officer Daniel Mvari Sarube, among others.



Kalonzo Musyoka addressing faithful yesterday

# Kalonzo vows police reforms, backs victims of alleged abductions

**BY MKT REPORTER**  
@themkenyatimes

Wiper Party leader Kalonzo Musyoka has pledged sweeping reforms to the country's security sector if the opposition forms the next government, while condemning alleged enforced disappearances and abductions that he said have undermined public confidence in law enforcement.

Speaking during the opening of the ATG Deliverance Chapel in Kamulu yesterday, Mr Musyoka said Kenya needed leadership founded on justice, integrity and accountability, arguing that the country's democratic gains were under threat.

The opposition leader, who was accompanied by fellow principals of the United Alternative Government-in-Waiting, including Justin Muturi, Eugene Wamalwa and Fred Matiang'i, used the church service to renew calls for accountability over cases of alleged abductions.

Quoting Proverbs 29:4 — "By justice a king gives a country stability, but those who are greedy for bribes tear it down" — Mr Musyoka said the scripture reflected the kind of

leadership Kenya urgently requires. "We are laying not only a spiritual foundation for this community but also reaffirming the values of justice, compassion and service that should guide our nation," he said.

Mr Musyoka claimed that among the congregation were individuals who had allegedly been abducted as well as relatives of people who remain missing. He said their presence underscored what he described as the human cost of enforced disappearances.

"They have come so that we can stand with them, pray with them and pray for them. Their wounds will take time to heal, and we have not forgotten those who are still missing," he said.

His remarks come amid sustained public concern and demands from civil society organisations, religious leaders and human rights groups for investigations into allegations of enforced disappearances and unlawful detentions. State agencies have repeatedly maintained that security operations are conducted within the law, while courts have on several occasions directed authorities to account for missing persons in specific cases.

Mr Musyoka said an opposition government elected after the August 2027 General Election would prioritise reforms within the National Police Service to rebuild public trust.

He argued that the actions of a few officers accused of misconduct had unfairly tarnished the reputation of the entire police service.

"Our officers should be able to walk among the citizens they serve without fear, suspicion or shame. We have many disciplined and honourable officers who serve this country with integrity, and they deserve support and respect," he said.

He called on places of worship to play a greater role in promoting justice, defending human rights and fostering national unity.

"As a nation, we must defend the dignity, rights and freedoms of every Kenyan," he said.

The service marked the official opening of the new ATG Deliverance Chapel in Kamulu and was attended by church leaders, congregants, politicians and members of the public.

**Goons!** Witnesses and video footage circulated online showed uniformed police officers standing near the attackers without intervening

# Goons everywhere

*From nightclubs in Westlands to a Kisii political convoy, hired gangs are now striking with near impunity — and Kenyans want to know who is paying them*

BY MKT REPORTERS

@themkenyatimes

Armed gangs have struck at least four times in the past ten days across three counties, attacking a political convoy in Kisii, blocking Thika Superhighway, robbing patrons at a Westlands restaurant, and reviving fears sparked by a June raid on a Nairobi cathedral, in a pattern of violence that has outpaced the government's promised crackdown.

The most serious of the recent incidents occurred on Friday, at Keumbu on the Kisii-Keroka road, where a group of youths armed with clubs and stones blocked the convoy of the Linda Mwananchi political movement as it travelled to a rally in Keroka. Several vehicles were damaged, including that of former Chief Justice David Maraga, now a presidential aspirant with the United Green Movement Party, whose windscreen was smashed. A number of supporters were injured and treated in hospitals in Kisii and Nyamira.

Witnesses and video footage circulated online showed uniformed police officers standing near the attackers without intervening, prompting Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna to say he had personally seen officers among those throwing stones and had forwarded footage to Inspector-General of Police Douglas Kanja for investigation. "Sisi tunataka siasa ambazo watu wanapata fursa ya kueneza sera zao bila kuumizwa," Sifuna said, addressing mourners in Bungoma, meaning that Kenyans deserve the chance to campaign without being hurt.

Maraga, addressing the disruption, questioned why political meetings were being met with hired gangs rather than security officers. "If we continue like this, we will not have an election in 2027," he said, calling for an end to a culture in which government is seen using goons instead of security officers.

Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, now leader of the Democracy for the Citizens Party, issued the most sweeping account of the trend in a statement yesterday, describing the country as having descended into "the new Haiti" and accusing President Ruto of assembling "his tribesmen" to recruit and deploy rogue police officers alongside crim-

inal gangs to form what he called a state-sponsored militia. Gachagua listed Mwiki, Kariobangi, Witima, Ol Kalou, Kisii, Thika Road and Keumbu, along with recent incidents at Nairobi nightclubs and hotels, as evidence of a coordinated pattern, and said Kenya's police deployment to Haiti had in fact served as "a benchmarking mission" for cooperating with, rather than confronting, criminal gangs.

He further alleged that police officers in Kisii had been instructed to work with the goons who disrupted the Linda Mwananchi convoy, and claimed that officers implicated in the earlier Witima church attack had since been promoted rather than prosecuted. Gachagua also alleged that a squad of hired goons had been lodged in a three-star hotel in Ol Kalou ahead of the July 16 by-election, awaiting instructions to disrupt the vote, and said one victim of an earlier attack in the constituency was in intensive care. He accused Inspector-General Kanja of failing to control the service, saying plainclothes officers were being deployed to protect gangs while uniformed officers were told to "keep off."

None of Gachagua's specific allegations linking the President, the Inspector-General or named security officials to the attacks have been independently verified, and neither State House nor the National Police Service had responded to the claims by the time of publication. The government has previously rejected similar accusations from Gachagua as politically motivated.

The Directorate of Criminal Investigations has since arrested seven suspects in connection with the Keumbu attack, and detectives working with officers from Keumbu police station have summoned Nyaribari Chache MP Zaheer Jhanda over the incident. Kanja directed the Internal Affairs Unit to fast-track an assessment of the police response. Police spokesman Michael Muchiri said the unit would examine whether there had been "operational shortcomings" and recommend appropriate action.

The Keumbu attack came two days after a similar disruption in Thika, where suspected goons blocked the Thika Superhighway at Pangani on the morning of Friday, July 3, following a demolition exercise, causing a major traffic snarl-up that

stranded hundreds of motorists for hours. Some of the group were reported to be carrying machetes, and several motorists said they were robbed during the disruption before armed police officers moved in and cleared the barricades.

Separately, four armed men riding two motorcycles robbed patrons at a restaurant along General Mathenge Road in Westlands on the night of Thursday, July 2, making off with seven mobile phones and a laptop in a raid that lasted under a minute. Nairobi police boss Issa Mohamud said most such crimes were being committed by gangs operating on motorcycles, and that police were working to address the trend.

The incidents follow a widely condemned attack on ACK All Saints Cathedral in Nairobi on June 12, when a group of men on motorcycles twice stormed the church during a public forum on the national budget organised by civil society groups, robbing and assaulting attendees before being dispersed by police. One suspect arrested at the scene told Citizen TV he had been recruited a day earlier and paid KSh 2,000 to take part, and separately claimed the operation had been planned with the involvement of plainclothes police officers. The Anglican Archbishop of Kenya, the Most Rev. Jackson Ole Sapit, said CCTV footage had clearly captured the attackers' faces and motorbike registration numbers, and asked why police had failed to make further arrests. "Who owns the goons in Kenya who attack in broad daylight and are not arrested?" Sapit asked.

The National Council of Churches of Kenya described the cathedral raid as state-sponsored and said a suspect in custody had named a government official as having ordered it, a claim that has not been tested in court and that no public official has been charged over. Interior Cabinet Secretary Kipchumba Murkomen confirmed one arrest at the time and said detectives were analysing CCTV footage to identify further suspects, adding that "those people will be taken to court and held to account."

A similar attack on a church service at Witima ACK in Nyeri County in January, during an event attended by former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, followed the same pattern



Armed gangs attacking a political convoy in Kisii

of masked attackers on motorcycles operating with apparent impunity.

President William Ruto, in mid-June, directed Murkomen to launch a nationwide crackdown on organised gangs and on those financing them, and accused unnamed politicians of sponsoring youth groups to disrupt political meetings and cause disorder. The Interior Ministry has separately warned that anyone found sponsoring violence would be held accountable "regardless of political affiliation," while the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission has warned it could disqualify candidates found to be behind political violence ahead of the 2027 General Election.

Kisii County Woman Representative Doris Donya, speaking during a church fundraiser in Bonchari constituency, condemned the recruitment of young people into political violence and called for restraint from politicians and firmer action from security agencies. "As a lead-

er, no one can allow violence to take place because the people involved in violence are our children," she said. Donya said politicians were exploiting unemployed youth by paying them to attack rivals, exposing them to injury and arrest. "Those our children are being given money so that they do violent things. Please stop it," she said, adding that her own constituency office had previously been attacked but that the experience had not shifted her opposition to violence of any kind.

Taken together, the incidents point to a widening gap between the government's public commitments to end political violence and the reality on the ground, where hired groups continue to operate against political rallies, places of worship and ordinary residents with little apparent deterrent. Investigations into each attack remain open, and no senior official has yet been charged in connection with any of them.

**Politics** DP said selling shares in government-owned companies is not new only that this time the money raised is being invested prudently

# Do not politicize National Infrastructure Fund, Kindiki tells opposition

BY DPCS

@themtkenyatimes

Deputy President Kithure Kindiki has accused the opposition of politicising the National Infrastructure Fund which he hailed as a game-changer in accelerating socio-economic development in the country.

Prof. Kindiki said marshalling development resources through the sale of government-owned shares is an innovative way to shield Kenyans from more taxes and debt.

Speaking yesterday during an interdenominational church service and fundraiser for over 100 churches in Siliat, Kericho County, the

DP said selling shares in government-owned companies is not new only that this time the money raised is being invested prudently.

“Those in the opposition are lecturing us yet this is not the first time the government has sold its shares in Safaricom. They were first sold in 2008 and during the administration of President Mwai Kibaki, shares were sold twice. This is the third sale, and we are not selling all the shares,” DP stated.

He said the money raised from the sale will be channelled directly into the National Infrastructure Fund, which is managed by an independent board, and invested in mega projects across the

country.

“Unlike in the past, we will not use proceeds from the sale of government-owned entities to finance recurrent expenditure. This is the difference between President William Ruto’s administration and previous administrations,” he emphasized.

Previous sales including those in Kenya Airways, he reiterated, have been directed to offsetting recurrent expenditure thus failing to make any big impact on the lives of Kenyans.

“Going forward, all money raised through the capital markets from the sale of government stakes in state-owned enterprises will go directly into the National In-



DP Kithure Kindiki with Kericho county leaders yesterday | Photo: Courtesy.

rastructure Fund to finance infrastructure projects,” DP revealed.

So far, 245 billion shillings and over 100 billion shillings have been raised from off-loading part of shares in Safaricom and Kenya Pipeline Company respectively.

The government seeks to use the proceeds to lobby for investments from the private sector into the Fund with DP saying every one shilling invested by the government will attract ten shillings from the investors.

Prof. Kindiki said the money will be spent on an additional 28,000 kilometres of roads, 50 mega dams, 200 medium-sized dams, and 1,000 micro and small dams across the country.

“Kenya is on the right track,

and the future is bright. If God grants us life, we shall witness Kenya becoming like Malaysia and Singapore within the next 20 to 30 years through the National Infrastructure Fund. This is not just talk—it is already underway,” he added.

Additionally, Prof. Kindiki said President Ruto’s government has improved agricultural production citing higher earnings for tea, coffee and sugarcane farmers.

He said the price of coffee has tripled over the last three years, rising from KSh50 per kilogram in 2022 to between KSh120 and KSh160 per kilogram this year.

“We are ensuring adequate supply of seedling and subsidised pesticides to increase production. Within the next

year or so we want to raise the price further to between KSh250 and KSh300 per kilogram. It is possible” he added.

Prof. Kindiki said roads that had stalled for years have been revived and other infrastructure initiatives including modern markets, affordable houses, stadiums are ongoing nationally including in Kericho County.

Present were Senate Majority Leader Aaron Cheruiyot, Kericho Governor, Dr Eric Mutai, Women Reps Beatrice Kemei (Kericho) and Lilian Toto (Bomet), MPs Justice Kemei (Sigowet- Soin), Joseph Chererot (Kipkelion East), and Hillary Kosgei (Kipkelion West), Kericho County Assembly Speaker Patrick Mutai, MCAs, distinguished leaders and residents.




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DP Kithure Kindiki in Kericho yesterday.

**Faith** Drawing from several biblical passages, Prof. Nzabonimba urged leaders to reject division, hatred, tribalism, and violence

# Njiru hosts national prayer and commissioning ceremony honouring Bishop Josephat Njoroge Gitau

BY DMS

@themtkenyatimes

Hundreds of faithful, religious leaders, peace ambassadors, and community representatives gathered in Njiru, Nairobi, for a special ceremony to honour, recognize, commission, and offer a national prayer for Ambassador Bishop Dr. Josephat Njoroge Gitau, celebrating his commitment to spiritual leadership, peacebuilding, and community transformation.

The event was presided over by Amb. Prof. Eugene Kavune Nzabonimba, Supreme Global President of the Global Council for Human Transformation and Development (GCHTD) and President of Peniel Mission Ministries International.

In his keynote address, he called on Kenyans to embrace unity, servant leadership, and

peaceful coexistence, emphasizing that lasting peace and sustainable development are founded on faith in God and respect for human dignity.

Drawing from several biblical passages, Prof. Nzabonimba urged leaders to reject division, hatred, tribalism, and violence, instead promoting reconciliation, dialogue, justice, and national cohesion. He described leadership as a sacred responsibility rooted in service, humility, and compassion rather than position or status.

The gathering was attended by hundreds of worshippers led by Archbishop Arthur Kitonga and Apostle Teresia Njenja, alongside bishops, pastors, government representatives, members of the security services, youth and women leaders, peace ambassadors, and development partners from different parts of the country.

Their presence underscored a shared commitment to strengthening moral leadership, promoting peace, and advancing community development initiatives.

During the commissioning, Bishop Gitau was recognized for his outstanding contributions to preaching the Gospel, mentoring young people, promoting forgiveness and reconciliation, supporting vulnerable families, and championing humanitarian and community empowerment programmes. He was also commissioned to continue serving as a Spiritual Leader, Peace Ambassador, Community Transformation Champion, and National Voice for Unity and Development.

Special prayers were offered for Kenya, its leadership, security agencies, families, youth, women, educational institutions, and the nation's continued peace and prosper-

ity. Participants also prayed for greater national unity, wisdom among leaders, and renewed commitment to justice and service.

The ceremony further highlighted the importance of environmental stewardship, encouraging tree planting, climate awareness, conservation of natural resources, and responsible environmental practices as part of sustainable development.

As the event concluded, participants reaffirmed their dedication to fostering peace, integrity, accountability, and community transformation across the country. They called upon all Kenyans to work together in building a united, prosperous, and just nation, expressing hope that faith, servant leadership, and collective responsibility will continue to guide the country's future.



Some of the peace ambassadors who attended the Saturday event.



Amb. Prof. Eugene Kavune Nzabonimba (left) with Bishop Josephat Njoroge Gitau. Photos/Courtesy.

# Kindiki: Government fast-tracking new Cooperatives law to improve governance, modernise the sector

BY DPCS

@themtkenyatimes

The government is fast-tracking the passage and enactment of the new Cooperatives Bill that will modernize the sector and make it more beneficial to millions of members of cooperative societies spread across the country, Deputy President Kithure Kindiki has said.

Prof. Kindiki stated that President Ruto is set to sign the Bill into law in under a month paving the way for the overhauling of the sector in a bid to make it more transparent, efficient and technologically savvy.

“Within a month, the Bill will be signed into law by the President so that we can modernize this sector, improve transparency and governance as well as make it digitally conversant,” DP said.

Speaking on Saturday when he graced the 104th Ushirika Day celebrations at Uhuru Park in Nairobi, Prof. Kindiki said the Kenya Kwanza Administration has placed cooperatives at the centre of its development agenda hence the acceleration of the sector reforms.

The creation of a standalone Ministry of Cooperatives and MSMEs, he reiterated, reflects the seriousness the administration treats the sector.

“The Cooperatives Bill currently before Parliament, alongside the ongoing SACCO reforms, will reinforce public confidence by promoting sound governance and protecting the savings of the more than eight million Kenyans who have entrusted SACCOs with deposits exceeding KSH 1 trillion,” he

added.

While underscoring the role played by the cooperatives in the improvement of livelihoods mostly at the grassroots, the Deputy President said it is crucial to implement a modern legal and regulatory framework that enables the societies to grow, compete and deliver greater value to their members.

“Our goal is to build cooperative institutions that are transparent, financially sound, professionally managed and resilient enough to drive inclusive economic growth and support the successful implementation of the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda,” he assured.

Through various cooperative entities, Prof. Kindiki emphasized, farmers have improved production and secured better markets, workers have mobilized savings and accessed affordable credit, while families have educated their children, built homes and established businesses.

To ensure the movement remains strong and effectively responds to contemporary needs, the Second in Command pressed for inclusion of youth and women in the cooperatives and in their management.

“We must encourage the youth to keep this tradition of joining the cooperative movement to be able to succeed in business and other ventures,” DP noted.

With the government accelerating the realization of its flagship projects, Prof. Kindiki said the cooperatives are properly positioned to play a big role in increasing agricultural productivity, strength-

ening Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, expanding affordable housing, supporting Universal Health Coverage and advancing the digital economy.

“They also remain one of the most practical pathways for addressing youth unemployment by enabling young people to organize themselves, mobilize capital, establish enterprises and become creators of jobs rather than seekers of jobs,” he stressed.

Prof. Kindiki appreciated the role the Ministry of Cooperatives is playing in streamlining and advancing the sector, promising to push for higher budgetary allocation to enhance the sector and double cooperatives’ enrollment



DP Kithure Kindiki addressing cooperators at Uhuru Park on Saturday.

from the current 14 million members.

“We thank the members of Saccos for developing a sav-

ings and productivity culture and taking part in national development. I look forward to greater development in our

country with the cooperatives sector playing a bigger role,” DP said.



DP Kithure Kindiki, CS Wycliffe Oparanya, PS Kirimi and other officials at Uhuru Park on Saturday. | Photo: Courtesy.

**School** The gesture gave way to the start of the institution, giving a smile to the young learners whose parents had a difficult time while escorting them

# Kamwana school a reprieve to learners who trekked over 10KM in search of education

BY MKT REPORTER

@themkenyatimes

Education has come closer for Kamwana learners in Gichugu constituency after the National Government Constituency Development Fund (NG-CDF) initiated Kamwana Primary school.

The institution will cut short, journeys of learners who walk for over 5 kilometers searching for education.

The residents could not hide their joy after making endless requests for over 40 years, and will see the first batch of learners occupy the classes

starting today.

The learners as young as five years would trek to Kiambaatha and Ngariama Comprehensive schools, 10 kilometers away from their homes, starting their journey at 5am to be in school by 7am.

Gichugu MP Githinji Gichimu said that the institution started with public participation where residents suggested the institution be built on a government land that is near the forest;- but after the second and third participation with an increase of wild life invasion to their homes, they agreed to have it away from the forest with one family surrendering their land for the

school.

The gesture gave way to the start of the institution, giving a smile to the young learners whose parents had a difficult time while escorting them.

Pauline Wangai added that the learners safety at Kamwana is assured as they will be expected to leave home as from 6.30 am and arrive at 7.30 am, minimizing the early morning risk.

She said most criminals would way-lay their children in the morning hours, mostly they would hide on the roadside.

“We have planted vegetation like napier grass by the roadside, this has acted as hid-

ing place for criminals who would way-lay our children when they leave their homes as early as 5am endangering their lives, we as parents especially women would also not be safe when escorting our children for fear of being attacked by them, with the school being near, we have gotten a reprieve” said Ms. Wangai.

She also stated that the area is near Mt. Kenya Forest and having Njukiini forest surrounding the village they are at risk of wild animals invading their farms,homes creating fear for learners’ safety too.

“We would get wild animals



Writing on a wall at the newly built Kamwana Primary school in Gichugu constituency.

in our farms, we were also scared of the animals attacking our children while they are going to school “she went on to add.

Gichimu explained what’s expected to start a learning institution, Currently the school has four teachers who have been posted there and an enrollment of 40 learners.

“ There are 40 learners who have shown interest to study

in the institution, also the ministry of education has sent four teachers,we also have four classrooms and in the next 2026/27 financial year we will set aside funds to ensure learning continues it doesn’t stop at grade four”Gichimu added.

## The Mt. Kenya Times

**T**KE



## To be one in Heart is better than to be one in tongue



To be one in heart is best,  
It brings the soul a gentle rest.

Tongue can speak and sound so sweet,  
Yet hearts may still not meet.

Better hearts that beat as one,  
Then empty words that quickly run.

When love is real and true,  
It shows in all we do.

So let the heart be bright,  
And keep our words in light.

Rajesh Kanna B N

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

## Words are thrown around without seeing the pain they can cause



Words can make a life, while words can also destroy a life. Words have sweetness like a fruit, but they can also be bitter like a bitter gourd. Words have a soul; once you speak them, they never come back.

When you do not speak, you are the master of your words.

When you speak harsh words, those words become the master of you. Before you speak, you must think and analyze the positive and negative consequences. Some words heal pain, while some words create pain.

So, think well before you act.

Stay with good people.

If you motivate others, they will grow more and more. Therefore, be kind and speak sweetly. It will lead you to a better life.

\_\_\_G YasminSirajudheen  
Secondary grade teacher  
Melmalayanur block  
Villupuram dt

## The Universe Guides



Intuition knows the truth within;  
The Universe guides where dreams begin.

When our intuition is pure and clear,  
It leads our hearts with wisdom near.

If your mind is healthy and pure,  
You can achieve anything with ease.  
So keep smiling, spread love everywhere,  
And live each day with hope and care.

Health is strengthened,  
Finances grow,  
Wealth follows,  
And peace will flow.

Trust your intuition every day—  
The Universe will light your way.

Health. Finance. Wealth. Peace.  
These are the gifts of a guided life.

V. JAYANTHI  
Graduate teacher  
Creative writer  
Chengalpattu district

## The Power of a Teacher's Words



It was a pleasant Thursday morning.

Like every other school day, the campus was filled with homework, class tests, notebooks, assignments, examinations, and the silent pressure that students carried every day.

Among them was a seventh-grade girl named Anu. She was hardworking, determined, and passionate about learning. She consistently secured top ranks in her class and actively participated in various competitions. Her achievements brought pride to her parents, teachers, and school.

One day, Preethi Ma'am entered the classroom with an important announcement.

"There is a state-level competition," she said. "Students who are interested may participate. It will be a valuable opportunity for your future."

The announcement immediately caught Anu's attention.

Without hesitation, she decided to participate. From that day onward, her journey began.

For nearly a year, Anu worked tirelessly. She spent countless hours preparing, sacrificing her free time, playtime, and many moments of comfort. There were nights when sleep disappeared from her eyes and worry filled her heart. Sometimes she felt confused. Sometimes she felt exhausted. Sometimes tears became her only companion.

Yet she never stopped. Because this competition was not just another event for her.

It had become her dream.

Her teachers encouraged her throughout the journey, and their support gave her the confidence to keep moving forward. After months of hard work, Anu successfully cleared the school-level round and earned the opportunity to represent her school at the next stage in Puducherry.

It was one of the proudest moments of her life.

Finally, the long-awaited day arrived.

As she sat among talented students from different places, her heart was filled with hope, excitement, and nervousness. She held the question paper in her hands and gave her very best. Every sacrifice, every sleepless night, and every hour of preparation seemed to lead to that moment.

When the results were announced, however, her name was not among the winners.

For a few seconds, everything around her seemed to disappear.

The dream she had carried for so long felt shattered.

Months of effort, sacrifice, and hope flashed before her eyes. A deep disappointment settled in her heart. She could not accept what had happened.

She became quiet.

She stopped talking to others.

She sat alone with tears in her eyes, questioning herself and wondering whether all her hard work had been meaningless.

At that moment, Preethi Ma'am noticed her pain. She walked towards Anu and gently asked her to look up.

But Anu could not even meet her teacher's eyes. Her disappointment was too heavy. Preethi Ma'am sat beside her and spoke softly.

"Anu, never lose hope because of one result. Not winning this competition does not mean that you have failed. Sometimes God closes one door because a greater door is waiting to open. What feels like a disappointment today may become a blessing tomorrow.

This is not the end of your journey. It is only a small test along the way. Leave your worries with God and continue moving forward. Many opportunities, achievements, and beautiful moments are still waiting for you."

Those words touched Anu's heart in a way nothing else could.

They were simple words. But at that moment, they became a light in her darkness.

Slowly, the tears in her eyes turned into determination.

From that day onward, whenever she faced failure, she remembered Preethi Ma'am's words. Instead of giving up, she learned to rise again. Instead of fearing failure, she learned to learn from it.

Years passed.

Anu continued to work hard in her studies and every opportunity she received. She achieved excellent results, earned appreciation from her teachers and parents, and became an inspiration to others.

Whenever someone asked her about the secret behind her success, she did not think about trophies, certificates, or ranks.

She remembered a quiet moment after a painful disappointment.

She remembered a teacher who believed in her when she could not believe in herself.

And she remembered the one sentence that changed her life forever.

Moral: Sometimes, a single word of encouragement from a teacher can become the turning point of a student's entire life.

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

**School**, Mugo said school transport has become an integral part of quality education, noting that institutions without buses often miss valuable learning opportunities

# Mathioya MP unveils plan to expand school transport as Mioro Senior Day School receives bus

BY Bernard Munyao  
@themkenyatimes



Students and parents of Mioro senior day school of Mathioya constituency receive a new bus.

The move to improve learning conditions in Mathioya Constituency gained momentum after Mioro Senior Day School received its first-ever school bus, with area MP Edwin Mugo unveiling an ambitious plan to equip more day secondary schools with buses through the National Government Constituencies Development Fund (NG-CDF).

The newly acquired bus is expected to ease transport challenges that have for years limited students' participation in academic tours, sports competitions and other co-curricular activities, while reducing the cost of hiring vehicles.

Speaking during the handover of the bus last Friday, Mugo said school transport

has become an integral part of quality education, noting that institutions without buses often miss valuable learning opportunities beyond the classroom.

He announced that four other senior day secondary schools;

Gitugi Mixed, Kiriaini Mixed, Kamune and Iruri secondary schools, have also been earmarked to receive buses through the constituency's NG-CDF programme in the coming months.

The legislator noted that the

buses will not only benefit students but will also serve members of the surrounding communities whenever the need arises, helping ease transport challenges during community activities and emergencies.

The MP noted that Mioro Senior Day School is the first institution in Mathioya Constituency to acquire a school bus through the NG-CDF since the constituency was established, describing the project as a milestone in efforts to modernise learning institutions.

Mugo, who serves as a member of the National Assembly Budget and Appropriations Committee, reaffirmed Parliament's commitment to strengthening the education sector through adequate funding.

He said the committee has allocated sufficient resources in the national budget to support basic education, university education, school capitation and other critical programmes aimed at improving access to quality education across the country.

Mugo expressed confidence that timely funding of the education sector would enable schools to operate more effectively while ensuring learners receive the support they need to excel academically.

He further asked school management to ensure the institutions have sufficient security citing the recent wave of student unrest which left schools' properties worth millions of

shillings destroyed.

"Our schools need to have appropriate security. Learners should feel much safer while in schools. It is my prayer that the institutions' management need to provide security measures for both learners and school properties," He added.

On her part, Mioro school board of management chairperson Susan Karina welcomed the new bus, saying it marks the end of years of transport difficulties that had seen students miss educational trips and co-curricular events due to the high cost or unavailability of hired buses.

Parents and education stakeholders also hailed the initiative, expressing optimism that reliable transport will enhance students' exposure, improve participation in competitions and strengthen the school's overall academic performance.

The school bus programme is part of a broader education development agenda in Mathioya, where the constituency leadership continues to invest in classrooms, laboratories, learning equipment and other infrastructure aimed at improving the quality of education.

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**Water** That journey was not unique to me. Sadly, many years later, it's a daily reality to millions of African children today

# Water, dignity and opportunity: Why every African child deserves access to wash

BY Nicholas Mulila

@themkenyatimes

As we marked the 2026 Day of the African Child under the theme, "Ensuring Universal Access to Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene for Every Child in Africa," I was taken back to my childhood growing up in Kitui.

Like many children in rural Kenya or the informal settlements, my early mornings did not begin with books or play, but with long treks in search of water.

After school, we walked for kilometers in search of water, carrying jerricans or leading donkeys to fetch unclean water for use at home. One would get back home after dark meaning there would be no time to revise the day's studies. That was the daily routine.

That journey was not unique to me. Sadly, many years later, it's a daily reality to millions of African children today.

For these children, access to education isn't just about classrooms, teachers, or textbooks.

It is about whether they have safe water to drink, whether there are dignified sanitation facilities at school and whether they can spend their time learning instead of trekking daily looking for water.

A thirsty child cannot concentrate. A child worried about hygiene cannot fully participate in school. A community burdened by water scarcity cannot thrive.

This is why the theme of this year's Day of the African Child is so important. It highlights the truth we must continue to confront water, sanitation and hygiene are not luxuries; they are fundamental rights and powerful enablers of opportunity, dignity and progress.

My personal journey came full circle earlier this year when I returned to Kitui County, at Kalwila Comprehensive School, where, as part of a collective effort to change that reality for others, I joined community leaders, parents, teachers and learners for the groundbreaking of a transformative project supported by the M-PESA Foundation.

With an investment of KSh22.5 million, the Foundation is supporting the construction of modern classrooms, an administration block, improved sanitation facilities and most importantly, borehole and water storage



Safaricom officials during commissioning of the project | Photo: Courtesy.

tanks. For the learners of Kalwila and the surrounding community, this is more than infrastructure; it is an investment in opportunity.

The borehole ensures that children no longer have to walk long distances in search of water before or after school. Instead, they will have more time to learn, play and simply enjoy being children. Access to clean water will improve health outcomes while better sanitation facilities will restore dignity and create a safer learning environment, particularly for girls, who are often disproportionately affected by inadequate sanitation.

We have already seen the transformative power of such investments at Kithumuoni Comprehensive School in Kitui County.

During the recent handover of newly constructed facilities, one lesson stood out clearly: water is often the foundation upon which other educational gains are built. The investment worth KSh40 million gives the school access to reliable access to clean water and dignified sanitation which in turn contributes to improved attendance, better learning outcomes and creating an environment where children can focus on achieving their full potential.

This is the impact of investing in water, sanitation and hygiene. It is the impact of turning lived experiences into meaningful action.

As we reflect on the progress made and the work ahead, we are reminded that universal access to water,

sanitation and hygiene is not just a development goal. It is a promise to every African child. A promise that

their dreams will not be limited by preventable barriers. A promise that where they are born will not define

how far they can go.

For me, this is deeply personal because I know what it means to walk those long distances. I also know what it means to come back and be part of the solution.

Together, we must continue to invest in solutions that restore time, dignity and opportunity to our children. Because when we ensure access to water, sanitation and hygiene, we are not just meeting a basic need. We are unlocking Africa's future, one child at a time.

As we celebrate the resilience, talent and promise of African children, let us recommit ourselves to creating environments where they can truly thrive. Let us ensure that no child misses school in search of water and that every learner has access to safe, dignified sanitation.

Because the African child deserves more than an education, they deserve the conditions that make education possible.

And it begins with water.

*The writer is Safaricom's Group Chief Risk Officer, Safaricom PLC.*

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SCAN FOR MAJISAFI

**South Africa** Xenophobic violence against Zimbabwean migrants betrays a debt written in blood and solidarity

# Blood, ballots and borders: A Pan-African call to protect our people in South Africa

BY Norman Mwale

@themkenyatimes

“We did not share a border by accident. We shared a struggle by choice.”

This is a Pan-African appeal to remember our shared struggle and protect our shared future.

The videos arrive on our phones late at night, and they do not leave us. A Zimbabwean vendor curled on a Johannesburg pavement, blood on his shirt after a mob attack. A mother in Durban, her hands over her face as municipal officers overturn her table and bundle her goods into the back of a truck while her children cry beside her. Young men in Pretoria, herded into a van at dawn for deportation, with nothing but the clothes they were wearing. We watch, and our hearts break, because these are not strangers. These are our brothers, our sisters, our own flesh and blood.

To understand why this hurts so deeply, we must remember who we were to each other, and who we promised to be.

Zimbabwe and South Africa are neighbours not only by geography but by blood and by fire. During the 1970s and 1980s, when Zimbabwe was still fighting to free itself from Rhodesian rule, South Africa's apartheid regime stood with Ian Smith. In response, Zimbabwe became a home for South African liberation fighters. In training camps and safe houses across the country, young men and women from Soweto, KwaMashu and the Eastern Cape learned guerrilla warfare alongside Zimbabwean comrades from ZANU and ZAPU.

Zimbabweans died for South Africa's freedom. Some fell in cross-border raids by apartheid forces. Others never returned from operations inside South Africa. In return, South African exiles were given shelter, food, education and dignity in Zimbabwe when the rest of the world had closed its doors.

That solidarity carried through to independence. When apartheid finally collapsed, South Africans did not forget what Zimbabwe had given. Zimbabweans living in South Africa in 1994 shared in the joy of that first democratic election, an election many had, in one way or another, helped make possible through the years of shelter and support their country had offered the liberation



Illustration

movement.

That is the covenant that makes what we are seeing today so unbearable.

Economic collapse at home has forced hundreds of thousands of Zimbabweans across the Limpopo. They went to build, to work, to send money home to pay school fees and buy mealie-meal. Instead, many have found xenophobia, police raids and violence. We have seen videos of Zimbabweans dying in police cells. We have seen our men maimed in mob justice in townships. We have seen women assaulted and children left stateless because their parents were deported. The same streets where Mandela once walked to freedom now run red with the blood of people whose country helped him get there.

This is not the South Africa we fought for. This is not the Zimbabwe that stood by its neighbour.

Silence in the face of this is betrayal.

First, the Government of Zimbabwe must act with the weight of history behind it. The President must engage his counterpart in Pretoria directly. We need urgent bilateral talks, a joint commission on the rights of Zimbabwean nationals, and immediate consular intervention at every police station and deportation centre. Legal aid must be provided. No Zimbabwean should die in a foreign jail without the Zimbabwean flag demanding answers. South Africa must

be reminded, formally and publicly, of the debt the liberation struggle created between our two nations.

Second, we must fix the reason our people are leaving. No immigration policy in South Africa will stop migration if Zimbabweans still cross the border to feed their families. Government must prioritise job creation, support for small businesses, agricultural revival and transparency in how our mineral and tourism wealth is used. People should not have to risk their lives to survive.

Third, fellow African countries must rise. This is not only a Zimbabwe-South Africa matter. It is an African matter. The African Union, SADC and individual governments must condemn xenophobia in the strongest terms and mediate urgently. African states that have benefited from migrant labour, in mining, construction, health and agriculture, must lead by example and protect all African nationals within their borders. Visa regimes, work permits and documentation processes across the continent must be harmonised so that no African is treated as a foreigner on African soil. We fought colonialism together. We must not allow borders drawn by colonisers to divide us now.

Fourth, the diaspora must act. Zimbabweans in the UK, USA, Canada, Australia and across the globe must mobilise. We must fund legal aid for those arrested in South Africa, document abuses, and lobby host gov-

ernments and the United Nations to pressure Pretoria. Diaspora media, influencers and churches must amplify the voices of victims and keep this issue on the global agenda. Remittances keep families alive, but solidarity must also keep people safe. Let the diaspora be the bridge that forces accountability.

Fifth, we the people must lead. Churches, unions, student bodies and community organisations in both countries must teach this shared history again. Let the youth in Soweto know that Zimbabweans died for their freedom. Let the youth in Bul-

awayo and Harare know what South Africa's independence meant to Zimbabwe too. We must hold joint commemorations of our liberation struggle so that xenophobia finds no ground to grow.

A nation is judged by how it treats those who stood with it when it was weak. Today, Zimbabweans are asking South Africa for nothing more than life, dignity and protection.

And to our brothers and sisters across the Limpopo, hear this word of hope: we see your struggle. We feel your pain. No one should be beaten, deported, or made to feel like a foreigner for seeking bread.

But remember: home remains the best. Zimbabwe may be bruised, but she is still your mother. She remembers you. She is waiting for you.

As the late Oliver Mtukudzi once sang of the motherland calling her children home, so we say to every Zimbabwean abroad: that call is not poetry. It is a promise. The land is still here. The soil is still fertile. The people are still your people.

Come back and build with us. Come back and let us create the jobs, the farms, the businesses, the schools that will mean no child has to cross the Limpopo in fear again. Come back so that we can heal together, and build the Zimbabwe our liberation heroes dreamed of.

South Africa was a place of refuge in the struggle. Now let Zimbabwe be a place of rebuilding in peace. We need your skills, your experience, your courage back home.

The motherland is ready. And we are ready with you.

Let us not allow borders to erase brotherhood. Let us not allow silence to betray memory.



Zulu protestors

**Zimbabwe** Today, many people struggle to afford basic groceries, medical care, school fees or decent housing.

# From a nation of promise to a nation struggling to survive

BY Alice Nyamande

@themkenyaintimes

For many Zimbabweans who lived through the 1980s and 1990s, the image above is more than just a supermarket. It is a painful reminder of what once was, and of how much has changed.

There was a time when Zimbabwe was regarded as one of Africa's most promising economies. Supermarkets were well stocked, industries were operating, hospitals functioned, schools produced some of the best graduates on the continent, and formal employment gave millions of families dignity and hope. People could plan for tomorrow with confidence, knowing that hard work could provide a decent life.

Step by step, that foundation began to crumble. Factories closed



Zimbabwean Market

their doors. Farms and industries that once sustained the economy declined. Inflation destroyed sav-

ings, and the Zimbabwe dollar lost its value. Businesses shut down, unemployment soared, and millions of

Zimbabweans were forced to leave the country in search of opportunities elsewhere. Families were separated, communities were weakened, and a generation grew up without the stability their parents once knew.

Today, many people struggle to afford basic groceries, medical care, school fees or decent housing. Street vending has become a means of survival for countless families, not because it was their dream, but because formal jobs have become scarce. Young people graduate with qualifications only to face unemployment, while pensioners who worked all their lives often struggle to buy medication.

This is not merely about economics. It is about the loss of dignity, security and hope.

Zimbabwe was blessed with fertile land, hardworking people, abundant natural resources and enormous po-

tential. The question every citizen must ask is: how did a country with so much promise arrive at this point?

As the Action Democratic Movement, we believe Zimbabwe's story does not have to end here. Our nation can rebuild through accountable leadership, respect for the rule of law, economic stability, investment, job creation, and policies that place the welfare of citizens above politics. Zimbabweans deserve a future where young people no longer have to leave home to find opportunity, where businesses thrive again, and where every family can live with dignity.

Below is today's Zimbabwe.

What memories does this image bring back? What did Zimbabwe mean to you in the 1980s and 1990s? What do you think changed, and what must be done to restore our nation's pride and prosperity?

Alice Nyamande, President, Action Democratic Movement

**Power** Constitutional battles, jihadist strikes and economic strain are testing whether Africa's institutions can hold

# Power, protest and pain: Africa's fragile balancing act in 2026

BY Norman Mwale

@themkenyaintimes

"The facts are established. They cannot be erased. But neither can the hunger, the debt, nor the fear of another power grab."

Africa moved through the second quarter of 2026 with its democracies, economies and security architectures under simultaneous pressure. From constitutional battles in Harare to jihadist strikes in Bamako, and from doctors downing tools in Abuja to survivors pulled from ADF captivity in eastern Congo, the continent spent the quarter testing whether its institutions could hold.

In Harare, opposition parties warned of a creeping constitutional power grab. Proposed amendments would allow parliament, rather than voters, to elect the president and extend presidential and parliamentary terms from five to seven years. If passed, the changes could keep President Emmerson Mnangagwa in office until 2030. Opposition lawyer Tendai Biti said the public hearings had been marred by "intimidation and repression". ZANU-PF countered that

the reforms were "constitutional and necessary for political stability and cost reduction".

The debate mirrored developments 2,000km north. In April, Cameroon's parliament approved the return of a vice-presidency for 93-year-old President Paul Biya, more than four decades after the post was scrapped in 1972. Under the amendment, the vice-president is appointed by Biya rather than elected, and would serve out the remainder of his term should he die, resign or become incapacitated. Opposition figures, including Cameroon Renaissance Movement leader Maurice Kamto, called the move a "constitutional and institutional coup". Even a senator from Biya's own party described the process as "suspicious".

On 7 April, Rwanda marked 32 years since the Genocide against the Tutsi. President Paul Kagame used the Kwibuka32 commemorations to warn against "historical distortion", saying the facts had been documented by international courts and the Gacaca process. "The genocide was not spontaneous," Kagame stressed, citing warnings from 1993 that went unheeded.

In Nigeria, the human cost of governance failures played out differently. Resident doctors launched an indefinite nationwide strike on 7 April over the government's move to halt a revised professional allowance table, adding pressure to hospitals already stretched by insecurity. The strike was suspended the same day after the government pledged to address the doctors' demands, though the union warned it could resume action if those commitments went unmet. The dispute added to pressure on President Bola Tinubu's administration, which had just secured House approval for a \$6 billion external loan for infrastructure and debt refinancing.

Violence spiked across the Sahel. Mali's Defence Minister, General Sadio Camara, was killed on 25 April when a suicide truck bomb struck his residence in Kati, near Bamako, as fighters from JNIM and the Azawad Liberation Front staged coordinated attacks across the country. UN Secretary-General António Guterres condemned the "acts of violence".

There was relief in the east. Ugandan and Congolese forces rescued



more than 200 civilians, including children, from an ADF camp linked to the Islamic State. The UPDF said several fighters were killed and weapons recovered.

Maritime security also returned to the agenda. An oil tanker with 17 crew was hijacked 30 nautical miles off Somalia and anchored near Puntland. Piracy, nearly eradicated three years ago, is resurging as fuel prices triple in Mogadishu.

A joint AU-AfDB-UNDP report warned that the Middle East conflict "presents a serious risk to Africa". With 15.8 per cent of Africa's imports coming from the region, fuel and food prices, shipping costs and exchange rate pressures could trigger a cost-of-living crisis, and GDP growth could drop by 0.2 percentage points if the war exceeds six months. Some states are adapting. South

Africa deployed 2,200 soldiers for a year, from March 2026 to March 2027, to five provinces hit hardest by gangs and illegal mining. Critics note that soldiers can only arrest civilians in rare circumstances.

From constitutional engineering to kitchen-table economics, the second quarter exposed Africa's fault lines. Citizens demanded accountability — whether through strikes, memorials or ballots. Governments responded with security deployments, loans and legal changes. The question now is whether leaders will choose stability through inclusion, or survival through consolidation. As Kagame put it in Kigali, history cannot be erased. The same must be true for democratic norms.

**Politics** Tigania West MP says support for the President is conviction, not blind loyalty, as PS Rono highlights agricultural reforms

# Mutunga defends Ruto's re-election push as Rono touts government's development record

BY Brian Gitonga

@themkenyatimes

Tigania West MP John Mutunga has defended the growing "two-term" campaign for President William Ruto, insisting that leaders backing the President's re-election are doing so out of conviction rather than blind loyalty. He urged residents to continue supporting the Kenya Kwanza administration, arguing that those who elected the government should stand by it.

Speaking during an inspection of construction works at the Kenya School of Agriculture's Kamutune Campus in Tigania West, Mutunga rallied residents to remain behind Ruto as leaders intensified calls for his re-election in the 2027 General Election.

"We are not chanting two terms because we are fools. We are saying two terms because we know the government is ours, and it is us who put it in power," Mutunga said.

The inspection was attended by Principal Secretary for Agriculture Paul Rono, Principal Secretary for Trade Regina Ombam, Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO) Managing Director Eliud Kireger, and local leaders including Tigan-



Tigania West MP Dr John Mutunga addresses residents at Kamutune. | Photo: Brian Gitonga

ia West MCA Jim Muchui.

Mutunga said residents should not be ashamed of supporting the government if they voted for it, arguing that those who elected the Kenya Kwanza administration have a responsibility to stand by it. He also defended Deputy President Kithure Kindiki, saying Meru residents should proudly support one of their own after Ruto nominated him for the position and Parliament overwhelmingly approved his appointment.

"If you voted for the government, then you are the gov-

ernment and should never be coerced into not supporting what you took part in putting into power. If you lock President William Ruto out, aren't you cutting your own hand off?" Mutunga said.

The MP maintained that continued support for the President would translate into more development projects in Tigania West, pointing to the ongoing tarmacking of the Kirindine-Miathene road and the Kunene-St Anne-Miomponi road as evidence of the government's commitment to the area.

Mutunga said the constituency had for years lagged behind in development but was now beginning to witness major infrastructure improvements because of its close working relationship with the national government.

"For many years, we the Tigania people endured insults and were ridiculed for lagging behind in development. But look at us now — we are among those ahead because of supporting the President," Mutunga said.

Principal Secretary for Agriculture Paul Rono echoed the MP's remarks, saying the Ruto administration was implementing development projects across the country while reforming the agriculture sector to improve farm-

ers' earnings. He said reforms in the coffee sector had helped eliminate exploitative brokers, while the government was also engaging stakeholders to improve miraa markets, particularly in Somalia. He added that ongoing infrastructure projects in Tigania West reflected the government's commitment to equitable development.

"The price of red cherry has increased from KSh50 per kilogram to KSh150 per kilogram, and we are confident it will continue rising until it reaches KSh250 per kilogram," Rono said.

Area MCA Jim Muchui also urged residents to continue supporting the Kenya Kwanza administration, saying Tigania West remained firmly behind Ruto's second-term bid. He said the constituency had already started benefiting from government-backed development projects.

Muchui welcomed the establishment of the Kenya School of Agriculture's Kamutune Campus, saying it would complement the Karumo Technical Training Institute and strengthen education and economic growth in the area. He also praised Mutunga for lobbying for national government projects for the constituency.

"Please go and tell President William Ruto to bring all the remaining development projects here, because the people of this area are firmly behind the two-term movement," Muchui said.



Athwana Ward MCA Jim Muchui addresses residents at Kamutune. | Photo: Brian Gitonga



PS for the state department of Agriculture Dr Paul Rono addresses residents at Kamutune | Photo: Brian Gitonga



The Kenya School of Agriculture, Kamutune Campus takes shape. | Photo: Brian Gitonga

**Agroecology** Agriculture remains the backbone of Kenya's economy, yet investment in the sector remains far below what is needed

# From Farm to Market: Why financing and fair markets hold the key to Kenya's agroecology revolution

BY Wangari Ndirangu

@themtkenyatimes

The future of Kenya's food system will not be determined solely by what farmers grow, but by whether they can earn a decent living from it.

That was the resounding message from agroecology advocates at the Financing Agri-Food Systems Sustainably (FINAS 2026) Conference in Nairobi, where calls for increased investment in sustainable agriculture were matched by a plea to create reliable markets that reward farmers for producing healthy food while protecting the environment.

For Rosina Mbenya, Country Coordinator of Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM) Kenya, agroecology is no longer just an environmental agenda; it is an economic necessity.

"Agriculture remains the backbone of Kenya's economy, yet investment in the sector remains far below what is needed," she told KNA.

Representing a network of 68 organizations working with smallholder farmers, pastoralists, and fisherfolk, Mbenya believes that transforming Kenya's food systems will require governments, financiers, researchers, and the private sector to rethink how agricultural investments are made.

Although financing for agriculture is already limited globally, she notes that agroecology receives an even smaller share despite its proven ability to improve food security, restore soils, and build resilience against climate change.

She argues that sustainable farming practices from healthy soils to farmer-managed seed systems offer practical solutions for communities facing increasingly unpredictable weather, particularly in Kenya's arid and semi-arid regions.

Mbenya says young people need access to digital technologies, while women must receive equal opportunities in financing, decision-making, and ownership of productive resources if agriculture is to attract a new generation.

She added that schools as powerful drivers of change have seen PELUM Kenya piloting an agroecological school meals programme in Murang'a County that links local farmers directly to schools, providing



Rosina Mbenya, country coordinator of Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM) Kenya speaking to KNA on funding Agroecology at the FINAs summit.

nutritious meals for children while creating dependable markets for producers.

The organization is also digitizing agroecological knowledge through online platforms and artificial intelligence to make sustainable farming information more accessible to farmers across the country.

Today, PELUM Kenya reaches about 1.5 million farmers, pastoralists, and fisherfolk, but Mbenya acknowledges that millions more still need training, technical support, and access to indigenous agricultural knowledge.

She believes Kenya has already laid the policy foundation through the National Agroecology Strategy launched in 2024 and several county-level policies but says the challenge now is implementation backed by meaningful investment.

While Mbenya speaks about financing systems, a young farmer and entrepreneur, Nyambura Simiyu, speaks from lived experience.

More than a decade ago, she joined a community of organic farmers, only to discover that producing healthy food did not guarantee buyers.

Rather than watch surplus herbs go to waste, she began processing them into products with longer shelf life, and that simple decision gave birth to Ardor Life Kenya.



**Representing a network of 68 organizations working with smallholder farmers, pastoralists, and fisherfolk, Mbenya believes that transforming Kenya's food systems will require governments, financiers, researchers, and the private sector to rethink how agricultural investments are made. Although financing for agriculture is already limited globally, she notes that agroecology receives an even smaller share despite its proven ability to improve food security, restore soils, and build resilience against climate change. She argues that sustainable farming practices from healthy soils to farmer-managed seed systems offer practical solutions for communities facing increasingly unpredictable weather, particularly in Kenya's arid and semi-arid regions.**

Today, her organization located in Ngong transforms organic produce into juices, kombucha, and herbal beauty products sourced from agroecological farmers, creating value while reducing post-harvest losses.

For Simiyu, markets are the missing piece in Kenya's agricultural transformation. "Unless there is a market for what agroecological farmers produce, they have little incentive to continue farming sustainably," she says.

She believes agriculture should no longer be viewed simply as farming, but as a complete value chain encompassing production, transport, processing, branding, marketing, and retail, creating thousands of employment opportunities for young people beyond the farm.

"The only way to attract young people into agriculture is to show them that there is money in it," she says, adding that technology is helping bridge the gap between producers and consumers.

Ardor Life Kenya has introduced a traceability system that allows customers to scan product codes and identify where ingredients were grown and the farming practices used.

The products are also laboratory tested to verify they are free from harmful pesticide residues, giving

consumers confidence in the authenticity of organic foods.

Simiyu argues that financing agriculture should increasingly support agribusinesses that connect farmers to markets. "If farmers have no buyers, agriculture cannot generate returns, making it difficult to attract investment," she says.

She has now employed 13 people, works with numerous agroecological farmers, and has expanded her customer base through digital marketing and consumer education.

She also challenges the perception that organic food is only for wealthy consumers, insisting many products are competitively priced while offering long-term health and environmental benefits.

Like Mbenya, Simiyu believes government support remains essential. Subsidizing organic farm inputs, strengthening market systems, and raising public awareness, she says, would encourage more farmers to adopt sustainable agriculture.

Together, the two women present different pieces of the same puzzle, one pushing for policies, financing and institutional reforms that enable agroecology to flourish and the other demonstrating how innovation, entrepreneurship and market access can turn sustainable farming into a viable business.

Their shared message is simple but powerful: Kenya's agroecology movement will succeed not merely by teaching farmers how to grow food sustainably, but by ensuring that sustainable farming becomes profitable.

For millions of smallholder farmers, the future of agriculture depends not only on what happens in the field but also on what happens after the harvest, where finance, markets and innovation come together to transform livelihoods.

The FINAS 2026 summit, held in Nairobi from 30th June to 2nd July 2026, under the theme: Towards Sustainable Financial Architecture for Africa's Food Systems, brought together governments, financial institutions, development partners, private sector actors, farmer organizations, researchers, and innovators to explore sustainable financing solutions for Africa's agri-food systems.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Leadership must be earned, not negotiated

By Alvis Ndambuki

Kenya does not owe any political party the presidency. Recent demands by leaders within the Orange Democratic Movement for the presidency or deputy presidency in 2027 have reignited a familiar debate: should high office be negotiated, or should it be earned?

Coalition talks are a normal feature of Kenyan politics, and parties have every right to seek positions that reflect their strength. But bargaining for the presidency before an election even begins sends the wrong message — that power belongs to political elites to trade, not to citizens to award.

The presidency and deputy presidency are not consolation prizes for coalition loyalty. They are offices earned through the confidence of millions of Kenyans, expressed freely at the ballot box. Any party seek-



ing these positions should do so by presenting clear policies, confronting the concerns of ordinary citizens, and building genuine public trust — not by staking claims in backroom negotiations. Kenyans have long memories, and they will remember which parties fought for power and which fought for them.

As a student watching this debate unfold, I see leadership as a responsibility, not an entitlement. Kenyans do not need pol-

iticians who feel owed power; they need leaders who prove they deserve it, election after election.

The next president and deputy president should be chosen by voters, not by coalition arithmetic. Anything less weakens our democracy and insults the very people these offices are meant to serve.

In the end, negotiations may shape alliances, but only the ballot should decide Kenya's future.

### Youth turn to digital skills as jobs dwindle

By Mercy Kanini

Faced with a shrinking job market, young Kenyans are rewriting the rules of survival, turning to digital skills to build incomes the formal economy can no longer guarantee.

Across the country, youth are enrolling in online courses to learn graphic design, video editing, coding, digital marketing and content creation, determined to improve their chances of earning a living as traditional jobs grow scarcer.

Career experts say the shift mirrors a broader transformation in the labour market, where employers increasingly prize digital competencies over conventional qualifications. Many young people have also turned to freelancing and online businesses, opening doors to clients far beyond Kenya's borders.

Yet barriers remain. Stakeholders point to unreliable



internet access, the high cost of digital devices, and limited awareness as obstacles preventing many young people from fully tapping into the digital economy's potential. For every success story, there are countless others locked out simply because they cannot afford a laptop or a stable connection.

Stakeholders have called on both the national and county governments to expand affordable internet access, establish more digital training centres, and support youth-led innova-

tion as part of a broader strategy to tackle unemployment.

The message from Kenya's youth is increasingly clear: if the job market will not open its doors, they will build their own. Whether the country's leaders respond with the infrastructure and investment to match that ambition will determine how many young Kenyans turn digital promise into real, lasting income.

### No violence in politics: peace must prevail

By Justine Chacha Mwita

Violence has no place in politics. Yet cases of aggression during rallies and campaigns are rising, and they demand urgent attention from every stakeholder in our democracy.

Political platforms exist so leaders can present their ideas, policies and vision to the public, not to stage confrontation, intimidation or disorder. When rallies descend into chaos, democracy itself becomes the casualty.

Political violence undermines democratic principles, threatens national unity and endangers innocent lives. It breeds fear among voters, discourages participation in governance, and tarnishes the country's standing as a democratic state. No disagreement, however deeply felt, justifies aggression or hostility.

Leaders must lead by example, promoting tolerance, responsi-



ble conduct and respect for differing opinions among their supporters. Citizens, too, have a duty to embrace peaceful coexistence and reject any incitement to hatred or violence for political gain. Democracy thrives when competing ideas are contested through dialogue and persuasion, not threats and force.

Government and security agencies must strengthen measures to prevent violence at political gatherings and ensure that those who commit criminal acts face the full force of

the law. Equal protection and justice for all remain the pillars of a stable society.

As Kenya continues to deepen its democratic ideals, peace, respect and unity must sit at the centre of political engagement. Our future will not be built on division and conflict, but on dialogue, understanding and a shared commitment to national progress. Peace is not weakness; it is the foundation on which every lasting nation is built.

### Love beyond expectations

*A chance meeting in a library grew into a love story built on quiet devotion*

By Emma Odhiambo

Sarah had almost given up on love when she met Brian in a local library. What began as a quiet friendship over shared books slowly deepened into long conversations about dreams, family and the future.

Then came the test that would define them. When Brian's mother fell seriously ill, Sarah did not step back; she stepped closer. She sat with the family through anxious hospital visits, offered quiet encouragement when hope wavered, and stayed present through some of their hardest days. Her compassion spoke louder than any declaration of love ever could, proving that real devotion is shown through action, not words.

Weeks later, Brian's mother recovered. Grateful and moved by all Sarah had carried along-side them, Brian gathered the



family together. In front of the people who mattered most, he thanked Sarah for her unwavering support and asked her to marry him.

Their story has quietly inspired everyone who has heard it, a reminder that love does not always announce itself with grand gestures. More often, it reveals itself in the small, steady choices we make for the people we care about: showing up, staying patient, and choosing kindness even when it costs us something.

In a world quick to celebrate romance built on excitement alone, Sarah and Brian's journey offers a gentler truth: the strongest relationships are not simply found. They are built, moment by moment, through compassion, patience and an unshakeable commitment to one another. Sometimes, love beyond expectations is simply love that shows up when it matters most.

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**Sports >>** \*Climate scientists and players' unions are pressing FIFA for stronger heat protocols as a punishing summer collides with the tournament's knockout stages

## World Cup heat raises player safety concerns amid extreme temperatures

By Alfred Mutua

Organisers of the 2026 FIFA World Cup are facing renewed calls to strengthen player safety measures after extreme heat affected several matches across the United States, with the tournament colliding this week with one of the hottest spells of the North American summer.

A heat dome settling over large parts of the United States and Canada has pushed temperatures above 43 degrees Celsius in several host cities, according to forecasters, with peak heat indexes in the eastern and central United States reaching between 38 and 46 degrees Celsius. Saturday's Round of 16 match between France and Paraguay in Philadelphia was flagged by meteorologists as one of the tournament's hottest fixtures, while venues in Miami, Kansas City, Dallas, Houston and East Rutherford, New Jersey, have all been identified as high-risk locations.

Climate scientists have linked the unusually high temperatures and humidity to climate change, warning that conditions in some host cities have exceeded recommended safety thresholds for elite football. Researchers at World Weather Attribution have found that roughly a quarter of the tournament's 104 matches could be played in conditions considered dangerous under the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature index, which measures heat stress by combining air temperature, humidity, wind and sun exposure. FIFPRO, the international players' union, has set 26 degrees Celsius on that index as the threshold at which cooling and other heat-related safety measures should be triggered.

Joyce Kimutai, a research associate in extreme weather and climate change at Imperial College London, said the physiological heat-stress conditions facing players this year have



World Cup heat raises player safety concerns amid extreme temperatures.

become more likely and more intense than during the last United States-hosted tournament in 1994, when host-city temperatures averaged 0.7 degrees Celsius cooler than today. Researchers describe the shift as consistent with the broader pattern of human-caused climate change.

Medical experts and players' representatives have urged tournament organisers to consider additional cooling breaks, revised kick-off times and clearer protocols for postponing matches during dangerous weather. FIFA has already introduced mandatory three-minute hydration breaks midway through each half, alongside pitch-side sprinklers, misting stations and expanded medical staffing at stadiums. Some scientists argue the breaks should be longer to allow players to meaningfully cool down and rehydrate when conditions are most severe, while critics within the game say the pauses disrupt the flow of matches.

Several teams have reported players struggling with the intense conditions. French play-

ers used pitch-side sprinklers to cool off during their Round of 32 match against Sweden in East Rutherford, while other squads have trained with ice collars and taken extended water breaks to manage the heat. Fans attending matches have also required medical attention for heat-related illness, prompting host cities including Toronto, Philadelphia and Dallas to expand access to shaded areas, cooling tents and free water for spectators.

Not all stadiums face the same risk. Venues in Atlanta, Dallas and Houston have retractable roofs and air conditioning, sheltering players and fans once inside, while open-air stadiums in cities such as Miami, Kansas City and Philadelphia leave tens of thousands of supporters exposed to direct sun for the duration of a match. Public health officials have also warned that surrounding infrastructure, including car parks and paved walkways, can retain and radiate heat well beyond the air temperature recorded by weather services.

Despite the mitigation mea-

asures already in place, experts say more action may be needed as global temperatures continue to rise. Exertional heat stroke, a medical emergency that can occur when the body's core temperature climbs too high for its cooling mechanisms to cope, remains among the leading causes of death among athletes, and specialists have called for individualised hydration plans and closer monitoring of players with a history of heat illness.

The debate over player and fan welfare is expected to remain a key issue as the tournament progresses into its decisive knockout stages, with forecasts indicating that hot weather will persist in several host cities in the days ahead. Organisers face growing pressure to demonstrate that a tournament expanded to a record 104 matches across 16 stadiums in the United States, Canada and Mexico can keep both players and the millions of fans travelling to watch them safe as the competition heads towards its climax on 19 July.

# GET THE BEST OF WORLD

**Sports >>** \*"That goal took the air out of a Canada side who had to do without their captain, Alphonso Davies."

# Ounahi brace sends Morocco into World Cup quarter-finals as Canada's fairytale ends



By Norman Mwale

"That goal took the air out of a Canada side who had to do without their captain, Alphonso Davies."

HOUSTON — Morocco booked their place in the World Cup 2026 quarter-finals with a dominant 3-0 victory over co-hosts Canada in the Round of 16 at Houston Stadium on Saturday, 4 July 2026.

Azzedine Ounahi was the hero for the Atlas Lions, scoring twice to break Canadian hearts and become the first African player to score twice in a World Cup knockout match since Senegal's Henri Camara did so against Sweden in 2002. Substitute Soufiane Rahimi added a late third in stoppage time to seal a convincing win.

The match began with Canada pressing high and controlling

tempo. Coached by Jesse Marsch, the Canadians created the best chance of a goalless first half when Tani Oluwaseyi's close-range effort was brilliantly saved by Moroccan goalkeeper Yassine Bounou.

The momentum shifted five minutes after the restart. In the 50th minute, Morocco captain Achraf Hakimi rolled a clever pass from a well-worked free-kick routine into the path of the unmarked Ounahi, who swept a low shot through traffic from the edge of the box to open the scoring.

Canada pushed for an equaliser and were left exposed at the back. That allowed Morocco to strike again in the 82nd minute. After a swift four-on-two counter-attack, Real Madrid's Brahim Diaz slipped a pass to Ounahi, who fired a composed finish into the top corner for his second.

Deep into stoppage time, Diaz turned provider once more, setting up substitute Rahimi to tap in and complete a 3-0 victory.

The result ended Canada's best World Cup campaign in history. The co-hosts recorded their first tournament win, progressed beyond the group stage for the first time, and reached the knockout phase before being eliminated. Canada were also without captain Alphonso Davies, who was left out after his hamstring did not feel right in training, despite an MRI showing no fresh injury. "Mentally for me, it was tough," Davies said afterwards.

Marsch praised his team's effort but acknowledged Morocco had more quality when it mattered. Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney also congratulated the team on X, calling their World Cup run historic.

For Morocco, the win contin-

ues a remarkable rise. The Atlas Lions became the first African nation to reach the World Cup quarter-finals on more than one occasion, following their semi-final run in Qatar 2022. They will now travel to Boston for a quarter-final clash on 9 July against France, who beat Paraguay 1-0 in Philadelphia.

In Houston, the second half told the story. Morocco's defensive organisation and clinical counter-attacking proved too much for a brave Canadian side that ran out of ideas after Ounahi's opener.

With that, Canada's World Cup journey ends, while Morocco march on with belief that another deep run is possible.

# SPORTS NEWS



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# SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



## The eulogy we are writing today

By: Hadassah Karangu

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### Worth Noting:

- **Think about the people who have influenced your own life. Perhaps it was a grandmother whose prayers strengthened an entire family, a teacher who saw potential in you before you saw it yourself, or a friend who stood beside you during your darkest season. These individuals may never become famous, yet their influence continues to shape lives long after they are gone. That is the power of legacy.**
- **The truth is that we are all writing our eulogies right now. Every day adds another page. How we treat people, how we respond to failure, how we handle success, and how we speak to those who can do nothing for us all become part of the story. The words we use, the values we uphold and the example we set contribute to the final narrative of our lives.**

There is a question many people avoid because it feels uncomfortable, yet it is one of the most important questions anyone can ask: what will be said about me when I am gone?

One day, the busy schedules will end. The deadlines will stop mattering. The meetings, the social media posts, the endless pursuit of more money, more recognition and more possessions will all come to a halt. The world that once seemed so urgent will keep moving, but our chapter in it will have closed.

On that day, family, friends, colleagues, neighbours and perhaps even strangers whose lives we touched will gather to remember us. Some will cry. Some will smile through their tears. Some will share stories that others have never heard before. They will not be speaking to us. They will be speaking about us.

And that is where a powerful truth emerges: the eulogy read at our funeral is not written in a single day. It is written over a lifetime. Every choice we make, every word we speak, every act of kindness, every broken promise, every opportunity we seize or ignore becomes part of the story that others will one day tell about us.

The question, then, is not whether a eulogy will be written, but what it will say. Will people remember someone who chased success but forgot humanity? Or will they remember someone whose presence made life brighter for others?

In a world obsessed with achievement, many people spend their lives climbing ladders without ever asking whether the ladder is leaning against the right wall. Society teaches us to pursue titles, promotions, wealth and status. We are encouraged to build impressive careers, own beautiful homes and collect symbols of success. Yet if we listen carefully to the words spoken at funerals, we discover something surprising.

Rarely does anyone stand and say, "She owned the most expensive phone," or "He had the biggest television," or "She never missed an opportunity to make more money." Instead, they speak of character: the mother who sacrificed for her children, the teacher who believed in students when nobody else did, the friend who remained loyal through difficult seasons, the neighbour who



was always ready to help, the father whose wisdom guided his family, the young person whose kindness left a lasting impression. These are the stories that survive long after possessions have been forgotten.

Life has a way of distracting us from what truly matters. We become consumed by surviving, paying bills, building careers and planning for the future. Days become weeks, weeks become months, months become years, and before we realise it, another year has passed. Yet amid all this busyness, a deeper question waits quietly for an answer: what kind of legacy am I building?

Legacy is not reserved for presidents, celebrities or famous leaders. Every person leaves one — a shopkeeper, a farmer, a student, a teacher, a parent, even a child. The size of the audience does not determine the size of the impact. Some of the most influential people never appeared on television screens or newspaper headlines; they changed lives through simple acts of love, generosity, integrity and compassion.

Think about the people who have influenced your own life. Perhaps it was a grandmother whose prayers strengthened an entire family, a teacher who saw potential in you before you saw it yourself, or a friend who stood beside you during your darkest season. These individuals may never become famous, yet their influence continues to shape lives long after they are gone. That is the power of legacy.

The truth is that we are all writing our eulogies right now. Every day adds another page. How we treat

people, how we respond to failure, how we handle success, and how we speak to those who can do nothing for us all become part of the story. The words we use, the values we uphold and the example we set contribute to the final narrative of our lives.

This reality matters even more in a generation where appearances often count for more than substance. Many people work hard to build impressive online profiles, carefully choosing photographs and captions to present a version of themselves that attracts attention. Yet while a public image can be managed, character cannot be hidden forever. A reputation is what people think you are; character is who you truly are. And when the time comes for others to remember us, character will speak louder than image.

Imagine, for a moment, that your loved ones were asked today to describe your life. Would they describe someone generous with time and resources? Someone who lifted others instead of pulling them down? Would they remember honesty, humility and compassion? Would they say your presence made difficult days easier and joyful days even brighter?

These questions are not meant to create fear. They are meant to inspire reflection, because the beautiful thing about life is that the story is still being written. As long as there is breath in our lungs, another chapter can be added. Mistakes can be corrected, relationships restored, dreams pursued, forgiveness offered, kindness shown, and purpose rediscovered. Every new day is a chance

to add something meaningful to our legacy.

Perhaps the greatest tragedy is not dying, but reaching the end of life only to realise that we spent our years pursuing things that never truly mattered. Money is useful, but it cannot replace love. Success is valuable, but it cannot replace character. Recognition is enjoyable, but it cannot replace integrity. At the end of life, people will not remember us primarily for what we owned; they will remember how we lived and how we treated others.

The greatest inheritance we leave behind is not wealth. It is influence. It is the example we set, the values we pass on, and the lives we touch. Years from now, someone may remember a conversation that encouraged them to keep going, a kindness that restored their hope, or the way we made them feel valued when the world overlooked them. Those moments may seem small today, but they become the foundation of a lasting legacy.

One day, the final chapter of our story will be written. The question is whether that story will be one of purpose or regret, generosity or selfishness, courage or fear, service or self-interest. The eulogy of tomorrow is being written today. With every decision, every word, every act of kindness and every life we touch, we are writing the story that others will one day tell. And when the noise of life finally falls silent, may that story be one worth remembering.