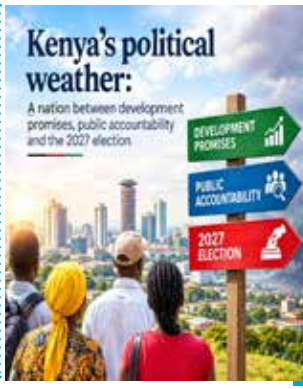




Nairobi factory bid aims to put Kenya on the map for precision infrared optics
On most continents, the journey from raw material to finished technology product is well worn. In Africa, it remains the exception. A Nairobi company is now making a quiet but ambitious bet

Page 8



Kenya's political weather:

A nation between development promises, public accountability and the 2027 election

Kenya's political weather: A nation between development promises, public accountability and the 2027 election
Kenya enters the coming week carrying the familiar weight of political expectation, economic anxiety and the persistent search for accountable leadership.

Page 12

THANK YOU FOR ADVERTISING WITH US
For any news you would wish us to publish, email us: news@mountkenyatimes.co.ke
For Adverts & Sponsorship
email us: ads@mountkenyatimes.co.ke

Monday, October 12, 2026

No. 01654 KSh 60 (TSh 1,700 : USh 2,700 : RFr 900)



themtkenyatimes

Voice of the People

The Mt. Kenya Times Daily ePAPER

Countdown 2027  **Kenyan counties withheld taxes, pensions, statutory deductions for years**

Counties' KSh100B Payroll Scandal

County governments across Kenya have been systematically withholding taxes, pension contributions and statutory deductions from workers' salaries for years, accumulating arrears now estimated at KSh100B — and a new automated financial system introduced on July 1 has finally closed the loophole that made it possible.

The scale of the problem, laid bare before the Senate Labour Committee by Controller of Budget Margaret Nyakang'o, is striking. For years, counties processed payroll in a way that allowed them to pay employees their net salaries while quietly holding back money owed to the Kenya Revenue Authority, pension schemes and other statutory bodies. The deductions were collected from workers' pay — meaning employees believed their obligations were being met — but the money never reached its intended destination. Instead, it was absorbed into county budgets to finance other expenditure, leaving a growing pile of debt that has quietly ballooned into one of devolution's most damaging financial scandals.



Page 9

Controller of Budget Margaret Nyakang'o



NEXT GENERATION CLASSIFY
"ONE-STOP NATIONAL BUSINESS DIRECTORY"
www.businessavaibale.com



Gachagua's party storms Kikuyu from afar as 2027 countdown begins

BY James Mwangi

@themtkenyatimes

Some of the moments as captured in pictures

Democracy for the Citizens Party has launched a bold ground offensive in Kikuyu Constituency, Kiambu County, with former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua declaring the seat fair game even as he directed operations remotely from the United States.

The incursion into Kikuyu — home turf of National Assembly Majority Leader Kimani Ichung'wah — was led on the ground by DCP Secretary-General and Nyandarua Senator John Methu, while Gachagua fired his political shots from abroad via social media. "Kikuyu Constituency is not anyone's personal property — it belongs to the people," Gachagua posted, in a pointed message aimed squarely at those who assume the seat is already settled. "They have every right to make their own decision, free from coercion or intimidation."

Methu was considerably less diplomatic. Addressing Ichung'wah directly after the Kikuyu visit, the senator issued a stark warning: "Next time, pick on people your own age. I will crush you completely. Those people you paid have taken your money and run." The broadside signals that DCP intends to contest Kikuyu not merely symbolically but to win — and that its leaders are prepared for a bruising fight with one of Kenya Kwanza's most prominent parliamentary voices. Methu has previously argued that Mount Kenya suffered politically in 2022 by entering the Ruto alliance without its own party vehicle. "We as Mt Kenya have faced many challenges because we went to Ruto without our political party, but now we have our own political party, which is DCP," he said. Kikuyu Constituency is where that argument is being tested most directly — on Ichung'wah's own ground, with 315 days to go before August 2027.

Gachagua's ability to mobilise crowds in contested territory while thousands of kilometres away speaks to a political operation hitting its stride early — and to a Mount Kenya landscape that remains deeply, dangerously unsettled. The battle for Kikuyu has begun, and neither side is pretending otherwise.



Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times



The Mt Kenya Times is a Kenyan Newspaper that provides a unified view of Kenyan news, entrepreneurship, events, opinions, analysis, and a historical background to current affairs in a way that is both creative and innovative. It is published by **Exponential International Limited**, a Private Limited Liability company incorporated in Kenya to provide Communications and Media services.

Group Executive Chairman

M. Danson

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/dan-mwangi-1b47446b/>

Our Contacts

P. O. Box 101 675 - 00101 Nairobi, Cell: 0700 161 866, 0705 215 262

Editorial Desk: editorial@mtkenyatimes.co.ke, **Adverts:** ads@mtkenyatimes.co.ke,

News Desk: news@mtkenyatimes.co.ke, **Web:** www.mtkenyatimes.co.ke

Facebook: Mt. Kenya Times, **Instagram:** Mt. Kenya Times, **Twitter:** @themtkenyatimes

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/mt-kenya-times-a07999115/>



NEXT GENERATION CLASSIFY

"ONE-STOP NATIONAL BUSINESS DIRECTORY"



"ALL BUSINESSES
ONE PLATFORM"



LOCAL
BUSINESS
DIRECTORY
NEAR ME

SCAN TO REGISTER

Contact Us:



+254 720 918 828



business@exponentialinternational.com



www.businessavaibale.com

NEWS IN BRIEF



Wiper Democratic Movement leader Kalonzo Musyoka concluded the second day of his coastal political tour on a high note yesterday, drawing enthusiastic crowds across Kilifi Town, Nyali, Kisauni and Shanzu as his Ukombozi campaign message gained visible momentum along the Coast. Kalonzo was flanked by Democratic Party leader Justin Muturi and DAP-Kenya party leader Eugene Wamalwa, presenting a united opposition front that party officials described as the broadest coalition the region has witnessed ahead of 2027. At each stop, the Working People's Front mobilised local aspirants and grassroots officials in what organisers called a blue wave sweeping the Coast. With the August 2027 General Election drawing closer, the three-party alliance is betting that coastal disillusionment with the current administration translates directly into votes.



A High Court has struck out a petition filed by a magistrate against Chief Justice Martha Koome, dealing a procedural blow to a case that had attracted attention for the seniority of its target and the boldness of its challenger. The court found the petition fatally defective and dismissed it without proceeding to the merits, leaving the substantive allegations untested in law. The ruling underscores the strict procedural thresholds that govern litigation against senior judicial officers in Kenya — thresholds that exist to protect the integrity of the bench but which critics argue can shield it from legitimate accountability. The magistrate's legal team had not indicated at the time of the ruling whether they intended to refile or appeal the decision.



Kenya's Ministry of Health has reported no new Ebola infections among 108 individuals placed under quarantine as contacts of a confirmed case, offering cautious but welcome relief as health authorities continue active surveillance operations. The contacts, who are being monitored daily by public health teams, have so far shown no symptoms consistent with the haemorrhagic fever, which carries a high fatality rate and spreads through direct contact with the bodily fluids of infected persons. Health officials have urged the public to remain calm while avoiding complacency, emphasising that the surveillance window has not yet closed. Kenya's rapid containment response, drawing on protocols refined during previous outbreak scares, has been credited with preventing wider community transmission at this early and critical stage.



President William Ruto has vowed to continue delivering development projects in Trans Nzoia County regardless of the area's shifting political loyalties, dismissing attempts to weaponise government resources as a political tool ahead of the 2027 General Election. Speaking during a visit to the county, Ruto was unequivocal: "I cannot allow the people of Trans Nzoia to suffer because of foolish politics." The remarks came against the backdrop of growing opposition activity in the North Rift region, where Democracy for the Citizens Party has been making inroads. Ruto's statement was a deliberate signal — to both his allies and his critics — that his administration intends to govern all counties, not merely those that voted for him, as he builds his case for a second term.



The 2026 Africa Concours d'Elegance did not disappoint. Held against the manicured backdrop of the Nairobi Racecourse, the annual celebration of automotive heritage and timeless design once again drew collectors, enthusiasts and curious onlookers in their hundreds, united by a shared appreciation for machines that have outlasted the eras that built them. Vintage Bentleys, pre-war Rolls-Royces and rare African-market classics competed for judges' attention alongside motorcycles and memorabilia that told stories their owners could spend hours narrating. What makes the Concours more than a car show is precisely that storytelling — the human histories attached to chrome, leather and steel. In an age of disposable everything, there is something quietly radical about a gathering that insists beauty is worth preserving.



Jubilee Party's presidential candidate Fred Matiang'i has thrown his political weight behind Bishop Margaret Wanjiru's bid for the Nairobi governorship, in a move that signals a deepening of opposition alignments ahead of the August 2027 General Election. Matiang'i's endorsement gives Wanjiru, the flamboyant founder of Jesus Is Alive Ministries and a veteran of Nairobi's bruising political arena, a significant boost in a race expected to attract a crowded field of ambitious contenders. The backing also reflects Jubilee's strategy of building a broad coalition of candidates across key counties to complement its presidential ticket. For Wanjiru, who previously served as Starehe Member of Parliament, the endorsement repositions her as a serious contender in what promises to be Nairobi's most competitive gubernatorial contest in years.

The Africa Largest eCOMMERCE



[www. gotyou.co.ke](http://www.gotyou.co.ke)

**NOW
OPEN**

Call/Text/WhatsApp: +254 714 090 155

Carbon credit On carbon credits, Ogamba was direct about the government's intentions. "What we are doing about the 15 billion trees is that we will then be able to sell what we call carbon credit

CS Ogamba: tree planting could generate carbon credit millions to fund education

BY Elizabeth Angira
@themkenyatimes

Kenya's 15-billion-tree campaign could earn revenue from international carbon markets, with proceeds channelled back into education and health

By Elizabeth Angira
Education Cabinet Secretary Julius Migos Ogamba says Kenya's ambitious tree-growing campaign could earn significant revenue from carbon credits in international markets, providing additional resources for education, healthcare and other government priorities.

Ogamba made the remarks during a tree-planting exercise at Nyangweta Forest in Kisii County, as the country marked the 2026 Mazingira Day celebrations under the theme "Panda Miti, Boresha Mazingira." The exercise formed part of the government's campaign to plant 15 billion trees by 2032 — an initiative aimed at increasing tree cover, restoring degraded landscapes and strengthening Kenya's response to climate change.

He commended Kisii residents for achieving 26.4 per cent tree cover and urged them to push towards the national target of 30 per cent. "We are almost at 26.4. We only have 4.4 per cent remaining in order to figure out what we are going to do in 2032," he said.

On carbon credits, Ogamba was direct about the government's intentions. "What we are doing about the 15 billion



Education Cabinet Secretary Julius Migos Ogamba (C)

trees is that we will then be able to sell what we call carbon credit in the international markets, so that we have enough resources which will then factor back into the education system and our social system, including health," he said. "So that we have enough money to ensure that we get the services that we need from the government. It is something that we are doing."

Carbon credits are issued to projects that demonstrate measurable reductions in greenhouse gas emissions or verifiable removal of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. In forestry, activities such as forest restoration and large-scale tree growing may qualify — but only if they meet recognised standards for measurement, monitoring and independent verification.

Planting trees does not automatically generate credits. Projects must prove their climate benefits and satisfy the requirements of the relevant carbon market before credits are issued and can be sold. Revenue ultimately depends on the number of verified credits, prevailing market prices and the cost of establishing and maintaining the projects over time.

Ogamba acknowledged the Ministry of Education's direct role in the campaign, noting its commitment to engaging learners from primary schools through to tertiary institutions in environmental conservation. He praised Kisii University, Kisii National Polytechnic and other education stakeholders for donating trees and taking an active lead in the day's exercise.

The involvement of schools and learning institutions, he said, was essential in building a lasting culture of environmental responsibility among young people — ensuring that tree growing continues well beyond national celebrations.

Kisii Forest Conservator William Ojijo noted that Nyangweta Forest continues to provide a habitat for wildlife while offering opportunities for recreation, bird watching and eco-tourism. In a county where many households depend on agriculture, forests play a vital role in protecting water sources, reducing soil erosion and supporting farming communities. Their broader benefits, however, depend on planting suitable species in appropriate locations and ensuring that seedlings actually survive.

That last point was where Ogamba reserved some of his sharpest words. He warned that conservation gains would be quickly undermined if seedlings planted during campaigns were uprooted or destroyed afterwards — a pattern he made clear he was aware of. "I want to urge each one of us that today is not just one day. It is important to continue planting trees," he said.

He called on communities to take direct responsibility for protecting what had been planted. "We should not allow people to take the seedlings from where they have been planted," he said. "Because those are people who are going to affect the job that we have done. We know what they are doing. They are ruining it." His remedy was collective ownership. "But if we allow everyone to participate, no one will be able to take the

seedlings from where they have been planted," he added.

The Cabinet Secretary's message, delivered beneath the canopy of one of Kisii County's most significant forest reserves, was ultimately a simple one: tree planting is not a single day's work. The seedlings in the ground on Mazingira Day will only deliver their promised benefits — environmental, economic or otherwise — if the communities around them choose to protect and nurture them. Kenya's carbon credit ambitions and its 30 per cent tree cover target are both within reach, but they will be built not by government programmes alone, but by the daily decisions of millions of Kenyans who choose to treat the trees around them as an asset worth keeping.



Education Cabinet Secretary Julius Migos Ogamba (C)

The MT. KENYA TIMES

Where Investors Get Returns

To advertise in Mt. Kenya Times read by discerning Kenyan professionals and the business community contact our exclusive UK & Europe Advertising and Marketing representatives.



ADLINK INTERNATIONAL (1989) MEDIA GROUP
16 Upper Woburn Place, London WC1H 0AF
Phone: 0330 606 1438 (44 330 606 1438)
Email: media@adlinkinternational.com
www.adlinkinternational.com
Contact: Mr Shamlal Puri

NEWS PAPER

IN BUSINESS



The Mount Kenya Times

+254 724 439 949, +254 720 918 828, +254 721 103 040, +254 713 318 438

website: <https://mountkenyentimes.co.ke>

Business The company's initial application is rooted firmly in Kenya's agricultural reality. The lenses will go into thermal cameras designed for livestock monitoring

Nairobi factory bid aims to put Kenya on the map for precision infrared optics

Backed by Australian investor Olivier Abrahamson Lokolomba, HANDLE Investment plans to manufacture thermal-imaging lenses locally, starting with cameras that watch over Kenya's livestock

BY Dan Mwangi

@themkenyatimes

NAIROBI — On most continents, the journey from raw material to finished technology product is well worn. In Africa, it remains the exception. A Nairobi company is now making a quiet but ambitious bet that Kenya can manufacture one of the more technically demanding components in modern imaging technology — and in doing so, begin to answer a question the continent has long struggled to resolve.

HANDLE Investment is developing a facility in the capital to produce precision infrared optical lenses, the small but critical components that allow thermal cameras to detect and interpret heat. The company is led by Eng. Erick Kamau Kahura and backed by Australian investor Olivier Abrahamson Lokolomba, who finalised his financing commitment in September after a planned February start was pushed back. The delay was not unusual for a project of this complexity. What is unusual is the project itself.

Infrared optical lenses are not consumer products. They are precision-engineered components, shaped and finished to exacting tolerances, that sit at the heart of thermal imaging systems used across industries — from livestock health monitoring and building inspection to electrical fault detection and scientific research. The global supply of these lenses is dominated by a small number of manufacturers, almost none of them African. HANDLE wants to change that calculus, starting in Nairobi.

The company's initial application is rooted firmly in Kenya's agricultural reality. The lenses will go into thermal cameras designed for livestock monitoring — systems capable of detecting the subtle temperature variations that often precede illness in a herd by hours or even days. A farmer who can identify a feverish animal before symptoms become visible can intervene earlier, reduce losses and avoid the spread of disease through a herd. In a country where livestock represents both live-



Eng. Erick Kamau Kahura

lihoods and cultural wealth for millions of Kenyans, that early-warning capability has tangible economic value.

But the technology is not limited to the farm. The same infrared lenses that spot a feverish cow can identify an overheating transformer before it fails, reveal heat escaping through poorly insulated walls, detect electrical faults in industrial equipment and support a wide range of scientific and research applications. HANDLE's market, if it can establish quality and reliability, extends well beyond any single sector.

The company's decision to focus exclusively on the lenses — not the cameras, housings or software sys-

tems built around them — reflects a clear-eyed understanding of where its competitive advantage lies and where the manufacturing complexity is manageable. Every lens will be shaped, finished and quality-checked in Nairobi. The precision required is considerable. Infrared lenses are not ground and polished the way conventional glass optics are; they are typically made from specialised materials such as germanium, zinc selenide or chalcogenide glass, each requiring distinct and demanding fabrication techniques. Getting that process right, consistently and at commercial scale, is the central technical challenge the company faces.

The economic argument for manu-

facturing locally rather than importing is not difficult to make. Precision infrared lenses sourced from established overseas suppliers are expensive, subject to long lead times and poorly suited to the iterative development process that a new product typically requires. When a design changes — as designs inevitably do during development — waiting weeks or months for revised imported components is a serious constraint. HANDLE estimates that local production will save tens of millions of shillings over the project's lifetime, a figure that reflects both the direct cost of the lenses and the indirect cost of delays. The company says it will prioritise the domestic market, supplying Kenyan customers before it looks to export. That positioning is likely to be well received by a government that has made manufacturing growth a stated economic priority.

On employment, HANDLE is targeting approximately 400 permanent positions at full operational scale, spanning engineering, production, quality assurance, maintenance and logistics. The significance of those jobs goes beyond their number. Precision optics manufacturing is a discipline that almost no Kenyan engineer has had the opportunity to practise professionally within the country. Most of the expertise that exists has been acquired abroad, in countries where advanced manufacturing is already established. A functioning plant in Nairobi would create a domestic training ground, give graduates a career pathway that does not currently exist locally, and begin to build the kind of specialised technical base that sustains advanced industry over the long term.

The company has been deliberate about sequencing its commitments. It will not purchase production equipment until it has secured reliable raw material supply chains. That discipline limits the risk of capital being tied up in machinery that cannot be fully utilised — a trap that has undermined other ambitious manufacturing projects on the continent. It is the kind of measured approach that tends to attract sustained investor confidence.

None of which makes success inevitable. Precision manufacturing is unforgiving. Buyers of infrared optical components — particularly those integrating them into commercial or industrial products — expect certified quality, batch-to-batch consistency and reliable delivery. Winning and holding that confidence requires not just capable machinery but a trained, stable workforce and robust quality management systems. Building all of that from a shallow local base, while competing against manufacturers with decades of accumulated expertise, is a formidable undertaking.

There is also the broader question of whether the economics hold as the project scales. Component manufacturing is often brutally price-sensitive at volume, and established overseas producers benefit from supply chains, equipment and process knowledge built over many years. HANDLE will need to demonstrate that it can match not just the quality but the economics of its international competitors, or carve out a niche — responsiveness, customisation, proximity — where local manufacture confers a durable advantage.

What the project represents, regardless of outcome, is worth noting. Africa's persistent challenge is not a shortage of raw materials. It is the gap between extraction and value addition — between digging something out of the ground and turning it into something the world wants to buy. HANDLE Investment is not working with African raw materials in any direct sense, but it is making the same structural argument: that the continent can manufacture precision technology, not just consume it.

If the facility succeeds, Kenya will be producing a component that sits inside thermal imaging systems used globally. That is a small piece of a large and growing industry. It is also, for a country that imports almost all of its precision manufactured goods, a meaningful start.

The facility remains in development. All employment, production and market figures are company targets, contingent on successful implementation.

Scandal The scale of the problem, laid bare before the Senate Labour Committee by Controller of Budget Margaret Nyakang'o, is striking

Counties caught: The KSh100B payroll scandal Kenya can no longer hide

A new automated system has shut the door on county governments that have spent years pocketing workers' deductions — but the damage already done will take years to repair

BY David Kimani

@themkenyaintimes

County governments across Kenya have been systematically withholding taxes, pension contributions and statutory deductions from workers' salaries for years, accumulating arrears now estimated at KSh100B — and a new automated financial system introduced on July 1 has finally closed the loophole that made it possible.

The scale of the problem, laid bare before the Senate Labour Committee by Controller of Budget Margaret Nyakang'o, is striking. For years, counties processed payroll in a way that allowed them to pay employees their net salaries while quietly holding back money owed to the Kenya Revenue Authority, pension schemes and other statutory bodies. The deductions were collected from workers' pay — meaning employees believed their obligations were being met — but the money never reached its intended destination. Instead, it was absorbed into county budgets to finance other expenditure, leaving a growing pile of debt that has quietly ballooned into one of devolution's most damaging financial scandals.

"The Integrated Financial Management Information System has been mapped to the payroll," Nyakang'o told senators, describing how the reform works. "The moment the county presses 'pay', the net salary goes to the employee, PAYE goes to the KRA, pensions go to the schemes and the statutory payments are paid." The change, she explained, was made possible through improvements to the Human Resource Information System, with the Ministry of Public Service playing a key role in connecting payroll processing to the national financial management platform known as IfMIS.

The logic of the reform is elegant in its simplicity. By integrating the two systems, the government has removed the human decision — or human temptation — from the equation. Counties no longer have a window between processing salaries and remitting deductions. The payments now happen simultaneously, automatically, without requiring any fur-

ther action from county treasuries. The gap that existed before July 1, and that allowed billions of shillings to be diverted over more than a decade, has been sealed.

But the reform fixes tomorrow's problem, not yesterday's. The KSh100B in accumulated arrears — money owed to pension funds, to the taxman, to statutory institutions and ultimately to the workers whose contributions were withheld — remains outstanding, and Nyakang'o was direct about the limits of her office's intervention. "We are dealing with what happened before July 1," she told the committee, directing senators to a detailed report classifying county salary arrears by how long the amounts had remained unpaid. The classification is intended to distinguish between debts inherited from previous administrations and those incurred by current county governments — a distinction that will matter enormously as accountability conversations intensify ahead of the 2027 General Election.

The political timing of this reckoning is not incidental. Kenya is entering one of the most consequential electoral periods in its devolved history. Governors who have presided over counties with substantial arrears will face voters in under a year, and the Controller of Budget's report now provides senators — and ultimately the electorate — with a county-by-county breakdown of who owes what and for how long. Murang'a County was cited specifically, with Nyakang'o noting that its own returns showed approximately KSh1.096B in outstanding liabilities. It will not be the only county named as the committee's scrutiny deepens.

The broader problem Nyakang'o identified goes beyond deliberate misappropriation. Some county governments, she said, have been budgeting only for employees' net salaries — the take-home figure — rather than the full cost of employment, which includes employer pension contributions, statutory deductions and other obligations. The practice is not merely poor accounting. It is a structural guarantee of arrears, because from the moment



Controller of Budget Margaret Nyakang'o

a budget is approved on this basis, the county has already committed to spending money it has not allocated. The gap gets filled, predictably, by withholding the deductions that should have been remitted — and the cycle continues.

The Senate Labour Committee's engagement with this issue reflects a growing political awareness that the county payroll crisis is not a technical footnote. It is a workers' rights issue. The people most directly harmed by this practice are not abstractions in a budget spreadsheet. They are public servants — teachers, nurses, engineers, administrators — whose pension contributions have gone unpaid for years, whose tax compliance records may show liabilities they did not create, and who face retirement having had money deducted from their salaries with no guarantee it was ever invested on

their behalf. For workers in counties with the longest outstanding arrears, the consequences of this failure will be felt long after the political figures responsible have left office.

Nyakang'o set a clear benchmark for the new system's success. By the end of the 2026/27 financial year, there should be no arrears in the category covering deductions less than one year old. "As every payroll is made, the statutory deductions are paid automatically," she told the committee. "Any failure to meet this target would likely result from a system malfunction" — a statement that effectively removes any remaining excuse for non-compliance. If the numbers still show fresh arrears after July 1, the problem is no longer a system failure. It is a deliberate one.

For Kenya's devolution project, the stakes extend beyond any single county's balance sheet. The prom-

ise of devolution was that bringing government closer to the people would make it more accountable, more responsive and more efficient. A decade of payroll deduction theft — for that is what the sustained and systematic withholding of workers' contributions amounts to — has left that promise with a serious credibility problem. The new system is a necessary correction, and a welcome one. But it cannot by itself repair the trust that has been eroded, compensate the workers who have been shortchanged or recover the KSh100B that county governments spent on things it was never meant to fund.

That work — slower, harder and more politically uncomfortable — is only just beginning.

Cybersecurity Businesses are equally exposed. Small and medium enterprises, the backbone of Kenya's economy, often operate without dedicated cybersecurity personnel.

Kenya's cybersecurity crisis: Are millions of Kenyans safe in the digital economy?

As Kenya races to connect its citizens, criminals are racing just as fast — and ordinary Kenyans are increasingly in the crosshairs

BY Collins Kibet

@themtkenyatimes

Kenya has embraced the digital economy with remarkable speed. From mobile money and online banking to e-government services, digital marketplaces and remote work, technology has woven itself into the fabric of everyday life. Yet behind this transfor-

mation lies a growing threat that can no longer be treated as someone else's problem. Cybercrime has become a national concern, and it raises a question every Kenyan deserves an honest answer to: are we truly safe in the digital economy?

The scale of the threat is alarming. Kenya continues to record billions of detect-

ed cyber-threat events annually, demonstrating how aggressively criminals are targeting the country's increasingly connected infrastructure. These range from malware and phishing to identity theft, financial fraud and denial-of-service attacks. The figures are not merely technical statistics — behind each successful attack is a



Kenyan family that has lost money, a business struggling to recover, a student with a compromised account, or an institution forced to suspend essential services.

The greatest danger is that cybercrime has moved squarely into ordinary life. For millions of Kenyans, the phone is a bank, a classroom, a workplace and a personal identity document rolled into one. Mobile money has transformed how people transact — but that same convenience creates openings for criminals who exploit human error, stolen data and social engineering. Fraudsters impersonate banks, mobile operators, government agencies and even relatives to trick victims into revealing sensitive information or transferring money. A fake website can look identical to an official one. A scam message, personalised with details scraped from social media, can appear entirely convincing. In this environment, cybersecurity is no longer the exclusive domain of IT professionals. Every Kenyan who owns a smartphone or uses mobile money is now part of the country's cybersecurity landscape — whether they know it or not.

Businesses are equally exposed. Small and medium enterprises, the backbone of Kenya's economy, often operate without dedicated cybersecurity personnel. A compromised email account or a ransomware attack can cause crippling financial losses and lasting reputational damage. For a small business already battling high operating costs,

one serious cyber incident can threaten its survival. Cybersecurity must therefore be treated as an essential investment, not an optional expense.

Government carries an outsized responsibility. As Kenya digitises public services, government systems hold vast amounts of sensitive personal and financial data. Citizens who use digital platforms to access services expect their information to be protected. A serious breach would not only expose citizens to fraud and identity theft — it would fundamentally undermine public confidence in digital government. National digital infrastructure must be treated as a matter of national security.

Technology alone, however, cannot solve the problem. Kenya needs a genuine cybersecurity culture — built on public awareness, effective regulation, rapid-response mechanisms and continuous education. Cybersecurity must be taught in schools, workplaces and communities. Collaboration between government agencies, financial institutions, telecoms, technology providers and law enforcement must be deepened and made faster. Cybercriminals do not respect institutional boundaries, and the national response cannot afford to either.

The legal framework must keep pace with technology. Artificial intelligence-assisted scams, sophisticated phishing campaigns and identity manipulation are evolving faster than many existing laws. Enforcement mechanisms must respond. At the same time,

stronger security must never become a pretext for restricting legitimate communication, privacy or freedom of expression. Kenya needs protection that defends citizens without eroding their rights.

Individuals carry a responsibility too. Kenyans must stop assuming cybercrime only happens to others. Strong passwords, two-factor authentication and careful verification of suspicious messages can dramatically reduce exposure. No one should ever share a PIN or one-time code, however convincing the caller sounds. Before clicking a link or sending money, pause and verify independently.

The digital economy offers Kenya enormous opportunity — jobs, financial inclusion, better public services and global market access for businesses. But those benefits cannot be fully realised if citizens distrust digital platforms or if businesses operate under the permanent shadow of attack. Kenya has shown it can adopt technology rapidly. The urgent challenge now is to build a digital economy that is secure, trustworthy and resilient.

A connected Kenya is not automatically a successful Kenya. Success will come when Kenyans can participate in the digital economy with genuine confidence — knowing their money, their identities and their livelihoods are protected. The future is digital. But without security, that future belongs to the criminals.

Where Moments Become Memories

Use Promo Code **TOURISM26**

Sales valid until 15th March 2026
Travel valid until 30th June 2026

ENJOY **6% OFF** DOMESTIC ROUTES

Book on: www.kenya-airways.com,
or via KQ Mobile App

www.kenya-airways.com

Kenya Airways The Pride of Africa

Health Stress is the body's reaction to any demand or pressure. When the brain perceives a threat — physical, emotional or psychological — it releases hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline

Stress solutions: Building mental wellness in an age of pressure

Stress will never disappear — but with the right daily habits, you can learn to manage it before it manages you



By: Wanjohi P. Mugambi
@themkenyatimes

Stress is not an illness. It is a natural biological response that has kept human beings alive for thousands of years. When our ancestors faced physical danger, stress triggered the fight-or-flight reaction that helped them survive. The threats have changed — from wild animals to deadlines, debt, family pressure, social media comparison, unemployment and relationship conflict — but the human body still reacts in exactly the same way. According to the World Health Organization, stress is the health epidemic of the twenty-first century. In Kenya and around the world, rising cases of anxiety, depression, burnout and lifestyle disease are directly linked to chronic, unmanaged stress. The starting point for any lasting solution is a simple but important truth: mental wellness is not the absence of stress. It is the ability to manage stress in a way that protects the mind, the body and our relationships.

Stress is the body's reaction to any demand or pressure. When the brain perceives a threat — physical, emotional or psychological — it releases hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline. In small doses, that response is useful. It

helps a person perform, meet a deadline or avoid danger. In large, continuous doses it becomes harmful. Acute stress is short-term — the kind you feel stuck in traffic before an important interview. It ends quickly and leaves no lasting damage. Episodic acute stress is more serious, affecting people who are always overloaded, constantly in conflict or perpetually behind. Chronic stress is the most dangerous form: long-term, persistent and often feeling endless, driven by poverty, toxic workplaces, long-term caregiving or unresolved family problems.

Chronic stress does not merely exhaust a person. It physically rewires the brain — shrinking the prefrontal cortex responsible for decision-making and self-control, while enlarging the amygdala, the brain's fear centre. The warning signs appear across every dimension of life. Emotionally, a chronically stressed person feels irritable, anxious and stripped of motivation. Physically, they suffer headaches, disrupted sleep, stomach problems and persistent fatigue. Behaviourally, they withdraw from loved ones, procrastinate and increase alcohol or phone use. Cognitively, constant worry, negative thinking and forgetfulness become the new normal. Left unaddressed, chronic stress leads to burnout, depression, hypertension and a weakened immune system.

Effective stress management is not about one dramatic fix. It is about small, consistent daily habits that calm the

body, shift thought patterns and strengthen human connection. The most immediate place to start is physical, because stress lives in the body before it lives anywhere else. Breathing techniques are deceptively powerful. The 4-7-8 method — inhale for four seconds, hold for seven, exhale for eight — activates the parasympathetic nervous system and can lower cortisol in under two minutes. Physical exercise is equally effective: 30 minutes of brisk walking, running or dancing four times a week burns off excess adrenaline and releases endorphins. Research consistently shows that regular exercise is as effective as antidepressants for mild to moderate stress. Sleep is not optional — the brain heals during sleep, and seven to eight hours requires discipline: a consistent wake time, screens off an hour before bed and no caffeine after 3pm. Reducing sugar, alcohol and ultra-processed foods while increasing water, fruit, vegetables and magnesium-rich foods such as beans, nuts and leafy greens also helps regulate the body's stress-hormone system from the inside out.

Not every thought that arrives in the mind is true, and learning to challenge stressed thinking is one of the most powerful tools available. Cognitive reframing involves noticing a thought such as "I am going to fail" and consciously replacing it with something more accurate: "I have prepared — one setback does not define me." Mindfulness and ten minutes of daily medita-

tion reduce overthinking and quiet rumination. Journaling — writing worries down for 15 minutes — externalises them and reduces their power, while a daily gratitude list of three genuine things shifts the brain's default setting from threat to appreciation. Perhaps the most overlooked psychological skill in Kenya is the ability to set boundaries. Many people suffer quietly under the weight of obligations they never agreed to. Learning to say no — calmly and respectfully — is not selfishness. It is a fundamental act of mental wellness. You cannot pour from an empty cup.

Human beings were never designed to carry stress alone. Isolation amplifies it;

Stress is the body's reaction to any demand or pressure. When the brain perceives a threat — physical, emotional or psychological — it releases hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline. In small doses, that response is useful. It helps a person perform, meet a deadline or avoid danger. In large, continuous doses it becomes harmful. Acute stress is short-term — the kind you feel stuck in traffic before an important interview. It ends quickly and leaves no lasting damage. Episodic acute stress is more serious, affecting people who are always overloaded, constantly in conflict or perpetually behind.



connection heals it. Talking honestly with a trusted friend, elder, pastor or professional counsellor can reduce emotional burden significantly. African culture understood this well — the baraza, the family gathering and the communal meal were all, in their own way, forms of collective therapy. When stress begins to affect sleep, work or relationships for more than two weeks, professional support should be sought without shame. Psychologists and counsellors are available at local hospitals, universities and through organisations such as Befrienders Kenya, Chiromo Hospital Group and Amani Counselling Centre. Two or three people who truly listen are worth more than hundreds of contacts who do not know your struggles. Joining a healthy community — a support group, a church fellowship, a positive chama or a sports team — creates a genuine buffer against daily pressure.

Much stress comes not from tasks themselves but from the feeling of being out of control. The Eisenhower Matrix helps by separating what is urgent from what is merely important, encouraging deliberate focus on planning, rest and relationships before crises form. The two-minute rule is equally practical: if a task takes less than two minutes, do it now. Scheduling one hour daily without a phone allows the brain to exit the state of constant alertness that notifications create. A sense of purpose — drawn from faith, service to others

or family — builds resilience that no productivity system can replicate. Prayer, worship and meditation offer perspective: a reminder that life is always larger than the current problem.

For moments when stress feels genuinely overwhelming, keep five steps ready. Pause and drink water. Take five slow, deep belly breaths. Ground yourself by naming five things you can see, four you can touch, three you can hear, two you can smell and one you can taste. Call one trusted person and speak honestly. Step outside and walk for ten minutes. These steps, practised consistently, can prevent a difficult moment from becoming a crisis.

Stress will never completely disappear. Examinations, bills, loss and relationship difficulties are part of being human. Mental wellness is therefore not about eliminating stress — it is about building resilience, the capacity to absorb difficulty and recover. Start small this week: twenty minutes of walking, ten minutes of journaling, one honest phone call, phone off by 9pm. Small, consistent actions are the foundation of lasting wellness. If you or someone you know is feeling unable to cope or having thoughts of self-harm, please reach out immediately to a counsellor or call the Kenya Red Cross toll-free line on 1199. Your mental wellness is your most valuable asset — protect it every day, with the same care and intention you give to everything else that matters.

Politics What makes this moment significant is not any single event, but the convergence of several questions that speak directly to the relationship between the Kenyan state and its citizens

Kenya's political weather: A nation between development promises, public accountability and the 2027 election



BY Fredrick Kipchumba Chelimo

fkpchelimo@yahoo.com

"The test of leadership is not the promises made before the public, but the difference those promises make in the lives of ordinary citizens."

Kenya enters the coming week carrying the familiar weight of political expectation, economic anxiety and the persistent search for accountable leadership. Across the North Rift, President William Ruto's development tour is building towards the Mashujaa Day celebrations in Eldoret on 20 October. Beyond the ceremonies, however, a more consequential national conversation is taking shape around the cost of living, public expenditure, healthcare preparedness, large-scale investment and the increasingly visible manoeuvres of political actors positioning themselves ahead of the 2027 General Election.

What makes this moment significant is not any single event, but the convergence of several questions that speak directly to the relationship between the Kenyan state and its citizens. Can the government demonstrate that its development promises are changing lives? Can public institutions account convincingly for the money entrusted to them? Can emerging investment opportunities generate broad-based prosperity rather than simply impressive headlines? And can the political class offer a credible vision of the country beyond the immediate calculations of electoral survival?

These questions will shape the political atmosphere over the next seven days, mak-



Illustrations

ing this a week in which the difference between political presentation and substantive performance deserves particular scrutiny. The lingering Dangote question on investment, sovereignty and the right to know will still feature. Few issues illustrate the tension between economic ambition and public accountability more clearly than the proposed Dangote East Africa refinery in Lamu. The project promises to transform the region's industrial landscape, attract investment, create employment and potentially strengthen East Africa's energy infrastructure. Its scale, however, makes transparency indispensable.

The government has defended the investment and urged critics to use parliamentary channels to obtain information. Opposition figures, including Senator Edwin Sifuna, have pressed for greater disclosure of the agreement and the commitments made by the state.

Both the economic opportunity and the accountability question deserve serious treatment. Kenya needs investment, but investors and governments must recognise that projects with substantial

public implications invite legitimate scrutiny. The terms of financing, environmental safeguards, land arrangements, local employment commitments including persons with disabilities and the allocation of commercial risks should be matters of public interest.

This week, the important question is not whether Kenya should welcome investment or reject it. It is whether the country can negotiate ambitious projects while protecting its citizens' interests and preserving public confidence. Transparency is not an obstacle to investment; it is part of the foundation on which durable investment rests.

Other critical issues that will remain in focus, especially from majority of citizens is the question of cost of living and credibility of economic policy. Beneath the grand infrastructure announcements lies a more intimate political reality: the daily struggle of households to balance income against rising expenses. Fuel, food, transport, school costs and healthcare continue to determine how citizens experience the economy.

The government's broader infrastructure financing strat-

egy offers a potential route towards expanding economic activity without placing excessive pressure on public borrowing. Reuters reported that the National Infrastructure Fund had begun deploying its KSh340 billion seed capital through domestic government bonds, with an ambition to support commercially viable infrastructure projects. Yet the credibility of this strategy will depend on governance, the quality of investments and the returns they generate. Citizens will reasonably ask whether these investments create jobs, improve transport, expand electricity access and reduce the cost of doing business.

Economic policy ultimately acquires political meaning at household level. A trader wants affordable premises and predictable expenses. A young graduate wants meaningful employment rather than repeated promises of opportunity. A farmer wants accessible markets and a fair return for produce. These are not abstract economic indicators; they are the everyday experiences through which citizens judge leadership.

As Eldoret prepares for the national celebrations, the

symbolism of Mashujaa Day deserves to extend beyond the official programme. The occasion recognises the courage and sacrifice of those who contributed to Kenya's freedom and development. It should also invite reflection on the responsibilities that accompany public office.

The North Rift tour provides an opportunity to examine whether infrastructure projects respond to long-standing community needs, whether public procurement creates fair opportunities and whether development reaches people who are often overlooked. Are water from the dam reaching the farm or just a pipe of water for four individuals to use for domestic purposes. Persons with disabilities, women, young people, small-scale traders and residents of remote areas should be considered in planning and implementation, rather than added as an afterthought.

There is also a security dimension. In communities affected by insecurity, development cannot be measured only by roads, markets or buildings. It must include personal safety, access to schools, protection of livelihoods and confidence that public institutions can maintain lasting peace. The most meaningful legacy of the celebrations would be a credible account of what has been achieved, what remains unfinished and how outstanding commitments will be delivered.

The coming week will offer the government an opportunity to demonstrate the substance behind its development narrative. Civil society, professional bodies, journalists and citizens have an equally important role in asking informed questions and distinguishing verified facts from political speculation.

The Ebola response will test public-health preparedness and financial accountability. The Dangote refinery will test the balance between investment promotion and transparency. The North Rift tour will test the credibility of development commitments. Economic pressures will continue to test whether national policies are improving ordinary lives, while emerging political alliances will reveal how seriously leaders are preparing for the 2027 election.

These developments should not be treated as isolated stories. Together, they illuminate the broader question confronting Kenya: what kind of political settlement can sustain economic opportunity, public trust and democratic accountability?

As the week unfolds, the country should look beyond the volume of speeches, the size of crowds, the harsh words hurled against political opponents and the prominence of visiting dignitaries. The more important measures are whether public money can be accounted for, whether projects deliver the promised benefits, whether citizens can obtain information about decisions made in their name and whether leaders respond constructively to criticism.

Kenya does not lack ambition. It has an energetic population, substantial entrepreneurial capacity and considerable opportunities for investment and regional leadership. The challenge is to ensure that these strengths translate into broadly shared prosperity. "The true measure of a nation's progress is not how loudly it celebrates its achievements, but how faithfully it honours its promises to the people."

The political weather of second week of October will ultimately be determined by the distance between what leaders promise and what citizens experience. If the week produces verifiable progress, transparent decisions and meaningful engagement with public concerns, it could strengthen confidence in the country's institutions. If it produces only ceremony, confrontation and unanswered questions, the political consequences may linger well beyond Mashujaa Day.

Politics “We want leaders who bring development to the people, not those who are full of ethnicity,” Kibet told the gathering

Farouk Kibet calls for unity and development as leaders rally behind Ruto’s 2027 re-election bid

Presidential aide tells Kisii gathering that voters should judge leaders by development delivered, not ethnic loyalty

BY Elizabeth Angira
@themtkenyatimes

Farouk Kibet, aide to President William Ruto, has called on Kenyans to prioritise development and national unity over ethnic politics, telling a gathering in Kisii County that the country needs leaders who improve lives rather than divide communities along tribal lines.

Kibet made the remarks at Igonga grounds in Bonchari Constituency during a boda boda empowerment event hosted by Kisii Woman Representative Dorice Donya Toto, who is seeking to become the area’s Member of Parliament in the 2027 General Election. The event drew several senior political figures, among them National Assembly Minority Whip Junet Mohamed, John

Bwire, Mwengi Mutuse, Innocent Mugabe, Nyamira Woman Representative Jerusha Momanyi, Nominated Senator Essy Okenyuri and Kitutu Chache North MP Japhet Nyakundi.

“We want leaders who bring development to the people, not those who are full of ethnicity,” Kibet told the gathering. He argued that political leadership should unite Ken-



Farouk Kibet

yans regardless of their backgrounds, with a focus on the practical issues that shape ordinary lives — access to economic opportunity, affordable livelihoods and tangible progress in communities.

The event served a dual purpose. At the grassroots level, it brought together boda boda operators from across the constituency in an economic empowerment exercise — a nod to a sector that has become a primary source of income for thousands of young Kenyans, particularly those locked out of formal employment. Motorcycle transport is not without its pressures: operators routinely contend with high fuel and maintenance costs, limited access to affordable credit and persistent road safety concerns. For many, the question after every such gathering is whether the goodwill translates into lasting improvements — access to financing, business training, safety education and social protection — or whether it remains a one-off event with little follow-through.

The political dimension of the afternoon was equally prominent. Leaders used the platform to rally support for President Ruto’s bid for a second term in the 2027 General Election, with Junet Mohamed, Momanyi, Okenyuri and Nyakundi among those signalling their backing. Their presence reflected concerted efforts to build cross-regional and cross-constituency political alliances ahead of what is expected to be a fiercely con-

tested election cycle.

For Donya Toto, the event carried additional significance. Currently serving as Kisii Woman Representative, she is using engagements like this one to build name recognition and demonstrate grassroots connection as she makes her bid for the Bonchari parliamentary seat. Hosting a forum that combines economic empowerment with political heavyweights is a calculated move — one that allows her to present herself as both a mobiliser and a serious legislative contender.

Kibet’s broader message, however, pointed beyond any single constituency or campaign. His call to judge leaders by their impact rather than their ethnic affiliations speaks to a debate that has defined Kenyan politics for generations — and one that voters in Kisii County will weigh carefully as 2027 draws closer. The county, like much of the country, is watching to see whether the promises made at public gatherings become roads, hospitals, school facilities and employment opportunities, or whether they evaporate once the rally crowds disperse.

For boda boda operators, that distinction is not abstract. They operate in an environment where policy decisions about fuel levies, road infrastructure and lending regulations have immediate consequences for their income. Empowerment events matter to them not as political theatre but as potential access points

to resources and recognition. Whether this particular gathering moves the needle will depend on what follows it.

As political mobilisation gathers pace across Kisii County and the wider country, the competition for voter confidence is intensifying. Development has emerged as the defining campaign currency — not because it is a new idea in Kenyan politics, but because voters have grown more discerning about the difference between its promise and its delivery. Leaders who can point to tangible change in their constituencies will carry a significant advantage. Those who cannot will find that rallying cries for unity, however sincere, carry limited weight at the ballot box.

Kibet’s message at Igonga grounds was, at its core, a challenge to every leader in attendance: earn the trust of the people through what you build, not through where you come from. Whether those words are matched by action — in Bonchari, in Kisii County and across Kenya — is the test that 2027 will ultimately deliver.



I will wait for you



No longer, no more,
My heart has understood,
It has let you go...
Counting the lifespan
I wasted on you,
Unintentionally,
It burst out laughing...
I will wait for you
No longer, no more,
Is living without a sense of love
Not enough?
You do not care at all;
Am I the only one who lived
Missing you, loving you,
And receiving no love in return?
I will wait for you
No longer, no more,
I know what lies
In your thoughts.
One day your pride
Will destroy you,
In my regrets, I will celebrate
My unrequited love like a wedding.
I will wait for you
No longer, no more,
Why should I keep
Deceiving myself?
If you don't love me, so be it,
For I know that one day
You will desperately crave
To even find my tracks...
I waited for you,
I waited for so long,
Forgetting my pride,
My honor, and myself.

Your nonexistent love blinded my eyes for so long;
Now I finally grasp it,
I have realized at last—
I made mistakes,
So many mistakes...
I waited for you,
I waited so much,
Closing my eyes to it all,
Even when you hurt or scolded me.
I loved you,
I loved you so deeply,
Swallowing my tears
And my pain inside.
One day, one day,
As if suddenly,
I woke up again
And understood it all.
Into my foolish heart
That wouldn't listen to my words,
I placed all my pain,
Realizing it was all an illusion.
My heart listened for a long time,
Sighed deeply,
Gently touching its wounds
One by one...
Seeing the drops falling
From my eyes,
It snapped the thread
Of this unfruitful love;
My fluttering heart
Broke the rules of the game.
Since then I am at peace,
I am calm at last,
I have understood that not loving
Is not dying.
Now you won't even find
My footsteps—
I have walked away from you,
Walked away like the brave.

By: Amirova Nodira
A student of the Psychology program at the
Faculty of Social Sciences, Alfraganus University,
Republic of Uzbekistan.

The wisdom to adapt



The strongest tree may snap in the storm,
While the supple grass bends, safe and warm,
The river does not wrestle with stone,
It changes its course, yet finds its own.

It is not the strongest who always survive,
Nor the weakest who merely remain alive;
But the one who can read the changing tide,
And bend with wisdom, with courage as guide.

Adapt, adapt not surrender or fear,
But knowing when to hold, when to steer;
For wisdom is knowing which battles to fight,

And when to bend gently to make things right.

The chameleon changes its colours with grace,
The seasons transform every landscape and
space,
The seed cracks open, the butterfly flies,
Life changes its form beneath changing skies.

Intelligence whispers, "Observe and learn."
While resilience teaches, "Adapt and return."
For rigid minds break when circumstances turn,
But flexible spirits evolve, grow and learn.

So when life rewrites the script that you knew,
Don't cling to the old when the old is through,
Adjust your sails when the wild winds blow,
You need not change who you are to grow.

For survival is not merely strength in the fight,
But knowing when darkness requires different
light,
The wise don't resist every change that they see,
They adapt to the world while remaining free.

Nandini Anandkumar
Educator, Writer, Motivator

Hunger - The Secret Ingredient



The biryani from a popular restaurant
Sat at my dining table, asking me to eat.
Neither its aroma nor its appearance
Could tempt me—I simply wasn't hungry.

The next week, I went on a short trip
With my friends to a remote temple.
No restaurants, no shops nearby,

And I was ravenous by lunchtime.

Bitter gourd and rice from a humble home,
Was all that we could find to eat.
Yet every morsel tasted heavenly,
As hunger made it a delicious feast.

"What makes food taste the best?"
My son asked as he added some salt.
"Hunger," I said with no hesitation,
"And sometimes, that is all you need."

M.Raddhika
Freelance content writer,
Creative Writers
Sivakasi Tamil Nadu India

The fear of the unknown



What will be there?
In the darkest night of the year,
I peep out to see
The tall trees with their leaves.
An unlit road sends fear through me,
My mind searches for a beacon,

But fails to find one.
I run tirelessly to unravel the mystery,
The sound of an owl adds feathers to fear.
I find a house where no one lives,
Afraid to move, even a bit.
Stars twinkle in the sky,
A horror-filled night I have never known.
Viji T.
Cw. Writer.
Namakkal
Tamilnadu
India

Sometimes, stepping back is the best way to move forward



Sometimes, stepping back is the best way to
move forward.
Stepping back is not a failure;
it is a strategy for success.
An empty vessel makes noise,

but a filled vessel remains silent. Seeds take
their own time before they sprout.
Likewise, staying back is a time for preparation
before coming forward.
Do not underestimate someone's present state.
If we keep pushing everything forcefully forward,
we may not get the desired result.
So, be patient, wait for the right time, and then
act wisely.
—G.YasminSirajudheen
Secondary grade teacher Melmalayanur block
Villupuram dt

Sometimes stepping back, is the best way to move forward



Stepping back, is the best way to move forward,
Stepping back is not beyond one's dignity,
Many times we learn from humility.
To get a clear view, we have to step back.

The waves are beautiful, when they move back and
forth,
They touch the shore, then leave the earth.
They never stay, they never stand still,
Yet they return with love and will.
So is our life, so is our art,
We step out, we step in, but never apart.

PEARL AMBROSE
Our Lady's Matriculation School... Ranipet

Climate “Environmental conservation is life,” Wamalwa said, a conviction reflected in the school’s decision to make the exercise a whole-community affair rather than a token gesture.

Bikeke school marks Mazingira Day with tree-planting drive

Head teacher Ronald Wamalwa personally funds seedlings as school community turns conservation lesson into living practice

BY Daniel Kipchumba and Fridah R.
@themkenyatomes

Bikeke Comprehensive School marked Mazingira Day yesterday with a hands-on tree-planting exercise, bringing together the entire school community in a practical demonstration of environmental stewardship that went well beyond the classroom.

The initiative was driven in large part by head teacher Ronald Francis Toili Wamalwa, who personally funded the purchase of seedlings and has committed to ensuring the young trees are properly maintained. For Wamalwa, the effort is more than a calendar event. He believes environmental conservation is inseparable from the quality of life his students will inherit.

“Environmental conservation is life,” Wamalwa said, a conviction reflected in the



Bikeke students and teachers planting trees in mazingira day.

school’s decision to make the exercise a whole-community affair rather than a token gesture.

The tree-planting exercise targeted the school compound with the twin goals of preventing soil erosion and creating a cleaner, greener learning environment. Trees anchor the soil through their root systems, reducing the damage caused by runoff during heavy rainfall — a particularly pressing concern in Trans Nzoia Coun-



Students preparing seedlings before planting.

ty, where seasonal rains can strip exposed ground rapidly. Beyond erosion control, the new trees will provide shade, support local biodiversity and improve air quality around the school.

For learners, the day offered something equally valuable: the chance to translate environmental lessons into direct action. Planting and caring for a tree builds a sense of ownership and responsibility that no textbook exercise can replicate.

The school stressed that the work does not end with planting. Regular watering, protection of young seedlings and ongoing maintenance of the school grounds are essential if the environmental gains are to last. Conservation, Wamalwa reminded the school community, is not a one-day event — it is a daily commitment.



Tel. 0722890813 / 0720 012577

GRANFI LTD

Molds for poles, culverts, etc

We make molds for construction works. You name it we make it

LE

LIKINE

ENTERPRISES

DEALERS IN MANUFACTURING ALUMINUM PANS AND ALL TYPES OF SCRAP METAL

QUALITY MANUFACTURING

SCRAP METAL SOLUTIONS

RELIABLE SERVICE

CONTACT 0721673632

GRANFI LTD

BOREHOLE SERVICES

Wondering where to start when it comes to boreholes? Talk to us today.

DISCOUNTS AVAILABLE

OUR SERVICES:

- Borehole cleaning
- Drilling new boreholes
- Repair of boreholes
- Pump installation and repairs
- Solarization of boreholes

REACH US TODAY:

+254 722 890 813

granfild@gmail.com

Business “I am not bringing promises to Kenya,” Jaricha said during the interview. “I am bringing depots, trucks, and payroll. Every depot must feed families in that county.”

Jaricha’s billions: the African conglomerate chief with Kenya in his sights

The Zimbabwean-born professor behind a 29-year, 56-country conglomerate has named Nairobi as his East Africa headquarters and committed US\$5M to a logistics hub that will hire 150 Kenyan youth in year one.

BY M. Danson

@themtkenyatimes

Prof. Clemence Jaricha, founder and chairman of CJ Global Express Group Unlimited, told The Mt Kenya Times in an exclusive interview yesterday that Kenya is the East Africa headquarters of his diversified African conglomerate, announcing an initial capital deployment of US\$5 million for a logistics and distribution hub in Nairobi’s Industrial Area, with a satellite handling facility linked to Mombasa Port.

The announcement, backed by a formal corporate structure spanning four jurisdictions, marks one of the more substantiated foreign investment commitments to arrive in Nairobi in recent years. Phase 1 of the Kenya operation targets 150 direct jobs in year one — drivers, dispatchers, warehouse staff, and e-commerce support personnel — drawn from Kenyan youth. The group’s Kenyan subsidiary registration is currently ongoing through the Business Registration Service, with the depot targeted for operational status upon completion.

“I am not bringing promises to Kenya,” Jaricha said during the interview. “I am bringing depots, trucks, and payroll. Every depot must feed families in that county.”

The group’s global holding structure anchors the Kenya push with documented legal registrations across four markets. The original entity dates to Zimbabwe in 1997. The South African mother company — CJ Global Express Group (Pty) Ltd, registration number 2021/344459/07 — was incorporated on 25 Jan-



Prof. Clemence Jaricha, founder and chairman of CJ Global Express Group Unlimited

uary 2021 and operates from Silverwoods Country Estate, Gauteng. A Zimbabwean holding and investment vehicle, Clemence Jaricha Global Express Group Unlimited (Private) Limited, registration number 32264A00222025, was registered on 14 February 2025 at 320 Borrowdale Brooke, Harare. A United States entity, registered in Chicago in 2025 and formally recognised in 2026, followed the same umbrella model, as did a United Kingdom arm registered in London in early 2026.

The Kenyan subsidiary is currently in registration, with the Business Registration Service process underway for a foreign-owned entity, and a certificate pending. CJ Global Express Group Unlimited confirmed to The Mt Kenya Times that Kenya will operate under the same global umbrella name, with local divisions trading under acquired, client-known brand

names — a model the group applies consistently across all its markets.

The investment structure is deliberately uniform: one holding name globally, with local operations adopting the trading names of businesses acquired in each market. It is a model designed for brand continuity at the customer level while preserving consolidated ownership at the group level — an approach that explains why certificates across jurisdictions reflect different trading names under a single beneficial owner. “Divisions trade under different acquired names for brand retention,” Jaricha explained. “Clients know those brands. But the owner is always the same.”

The logistics arm — CGEG Transport and Logistics Division — forms the operational core of the Kenya entry. The division already runs cross-border trucking, last-mile delivery, and courier services along the Durban-Zim-

babwe corridor. Jaricha’s stated intention is to extend that arterial route northward to Mombasa and Nairobi, positioning East Africa’s busiest port as the group’s regional trade gateway. The strategic logic is straightforward: any serious logistics operator seeking to service southern and eastern Africa simultaneously must eventually anchor in Mombasa. For Jaricha, that calculation has now been made.

The model, he told this newspaper, is partnership rather than competition. The group intends to open its supply chain to Kenyan SME transporters, farmers, and retail landlords, inviting them to co-build the operation from the ground up rather than displacing existing players. “Every new depot will hire Kenyan youth,” he said, a commitment that carries real weight in a country where youth unemployment remains a persistent structural challenge.

At 150 direct jobs targeted for year one alone, the arithmetic of that pledge is at least measurable, and therefore accountable.

Beyond logistics, the group’s CJ Global Mall division targets Kenya’s fast-growing small and medium enterprise sector, with plans to build supply chains that give smaller operators access to markets currently beyond their reach. Kenya’s tech-literate population, relatively robust mobile payments infrastructure, and expanding middle class make it a natural testing ground for the kind of integrated physical-and-digital retail model Jaricha is describing. A US\$670 million commercial property development remains the most capital-intensive element of the broader Kenya proposition, though precise location and timeline details have not been disclosed — details that investors and analysts will watch closely as the operation takes shape.

The conglomerate’s nine divisions span heavy transport logistics, retail and e-commerce, construction and property, mining, hospitality, beauty and wellness spas, nightclubs and restaurants, and a premium spirits label — CJ Vodka — now on shelves in Chicago. The breadth reflects nearly three decades of cross-border commerce, a track record the group traces to its 1997 Zimbabwe registration, giving it a verified operational history of 29 years. That the conglomerate has grown to cover 56 countries on six continents without attracting significant public profile in East Africa until now is itself a commentary on how quietly formidable commercial empires can be assembled

when the builder prefers execution to announcements.

Jaricha holds academic and entrepreneurial credentials simultaneously — an unusual combination in African business, where the two worlds seldom occupy the same room. His professorial title is not ceremonial. He has combined scholarly work with the hands-on demands of running a multinational operation, and the analytical rigour with which he discusses market entry and supply chain architecture reflects both registers. “We must build businesses that feed families, not just balance sheets,” he told The Mt Kenya Times — a phrase that functions as both personal philosophy and corporate mission statement.

Kenya’s attraction to operators of his profile is not difficult to explain. Nairobi has consolidated its position as East Africa’s commercial capital, supported by a growing tech ecosystem, a sophisticated consumer market, and a government agenda to position the country as a logistics and manufacturing hub along the Northern Corridor. For a group whose structural spine is cross-border logistics, the geography makes its own case.

What distinguishes Jaricha’s pitch from the long line of foreign investors who have arrived in Nairobi with ambitious plans is the degree to which the corporate architecture is already in place. Registrations are documented, capital figures are stated, job targets are quantified, and the BRS process is underway. The substance of the Kenya chapter, however, will ultimately be measured in depots opened, contracts signed, and payroll disbursed — the unglamorous arithmetic of execution that determines whether a vision becomes an enterprise or remains a prospectus.

DO YOU WANT TO GET PUBLISHED?

ARE YOU A WRITER OR CORPORATE?

Let Professional Editors and Authors turn your story into a Dream Book.

THRILLERS - FICTION - FACTION - BIOGRAPHIES - TRAVELOGUES - HUMOUR - COFFEE TABLE - BROCHURES

London-based contract Publishers for independent and self-publish authors.

We offer one-stop top notch Editing, Expert Design, Proof Reading, Book Covers, Artwork, Digital, Litho Printing, E-Books, Corporate Brochures and UK ISBN number. Reasonable costs. We print and deliver books. Authors retain 100% sales profits.

SELECTED PORTFOLIO

BEST SELLER NOVELS

The Crownbird Publishers logo and imprint owned by Adlink International (1989) Media Group London

Copies of some books available for sale: hard copy/digital. Contact us: media@adlinkinternational.com
Email Subject: Crownbird Books

Crownbird Publishers
ADLINK INTERNATIONAL (1989) MEDIA GROUP BOOKS IMPRINT
INTERNATIONAL BOOKS & MAGAZINES PUBLISHERS

ADLINK INTERNATIONAL (1989) MEDIA GROUP
Books Division
16 Upper Woburn Place, London WC1H 0AF (UK)
Tel: 44 330 606 1438
Email: media@adlinkinternational.com
www.adlinkinternational.com

Profile In her current position as Vice President of Technology and Digital Transformation at Colombia's National Savings, Diana contributes to the institution's technological development

Diana Arenas Blanco: Advancing digital transformation through strategic technology leadership



By: Anila Bukhari
@themkenyatimes



Diana Arenas Blanco

Diana Arenas Blanco is a Colombian technology and digital transformation leader whose work reflects the growing importance of innovation, technology governance, and strategic information systems in strengthening public institutions. With more than 12 years of professional experience, she has developed expertise in organizational transformation, strategic IT management, enterprise architecture, data governance, and technological innovation. Her professional vision centers on using technology responsibly to modernize institutions, strengthen organizational capabilities, and create sustainable value for the public sector.

As Vice President of Technology and Digital Transformation at Colombia's National Savings, Diana contributes to the strategic modernization of technology capabilities and the development of digital initiatives that support institutional progress. Her role brings together technical knowledge, organizational strategy, and innovation, positioning technology as an essential component of effective governance and long-term institutional development.

Building a Career at the Intersection of Technology and Strategy

Diana's professional journey reflects an understanding that technology leadership extends beyond implementing digital systems. In modern organizations, particularly public institutions, technological progress requires a coordinated approach that connects infrastructure, governance, people, processes, and strategic objectives.

Throughout more than a decade of professional experience, she has worked across areas that influence how organizations adopt technology, manage digital resources, and respond to changing operational demands. Her background in organizational transformation and strategic information technology management provides a foundation for approaching complex institutional challenges

with both technical awareness and a broader understanding of organizational priorities.

For Diana, digital transformation represents an opportunity to strengthen the way institutions operate, make decisions, and deliver value. Successful transformation involves more than introducing new platforms or automating existing procedures. It requires an understanding of institutional needs, careful planning, effective governance, and the capacity to sustain change over time.

This perspective is particularly relevant in the public sector, where technological modernization must support institutional responsibilities while promoting reliability, accountability, and responsible resource management.

Leading Technology and Digital Transformation at National Savings

In her current position as Vice President of Technology and Digital Transformation at Colombia's National Savings, Diana contributes to the institution's technological development and modernization agenda. Her responsibilities encompass strategic areas including digital transformation, enterprise architecture, data governance, cybersecurity, and the evolution of technology capabilities.

These areas are closely interconnected. Digital transformation requires organizations to understand their existing technological environments, identify opportunities for improvement, and establish systems that can support future demands. Enterprise architecture helps connect technology investments with institutional objectives, while data gov-

ernance provides a framework for managing information responsibly and consistently.

Cybersecurity is equally important in an increasingly interconnected digital environment. As institutions depend more heavily on information systems and digital services, protecting information, maintaining system reliability, and addressing technological risks become essential elements of responsible leadership.

Diana's work brings these considerations into the broader context of strategic institutional development. By contributing to the modernization of technology capabilities, she supports an approach in which digital initiatives are considered part of the institution's overall direction rather than isolated technical projects.

Her leadership area also highlights the importance of aligning innovation with practical organizational needs. Sustainable technological progress depends on establishing clear priorities, understanding institutional challenges, and developing capabilities that can evolve alongside changing expectations and emerging opportunities.

Connecting Innovation With Institutional Governance

A defining element of Diana's professional interests is the relationship between technology and governance. As organizations become increasingly dependent on digital infrastructure, decisions about technology have broader implications for institutional performance, risk management, transparency, and strategic resilience.

Technology governance provides the structures and decision-making

processes through which institutions determine how technological resources are managed, how risks are addressed, and how digital investments contribute to organizational objectives. When supported by effective governance, innovation can become a more consistent and sustainable part of institutional development.

Diana's experience in strategic IT management and organizational transformation offers a foundation for examining these connections. Her professional perspective recognizes that technological capabilities must be developed within an institutional framework that encourages accountability, coordination, and long-term thinking.

This approach is especially significant for public organizations, which must consider not only operational effectiveness but also their wider institutional responsibilities. Modernization initiatives require a balance between innovation and security, efficiency and accountability, and immediate priorities and future readiness.

By bringing strategic technology management into conversations about institutional development, Diana's work reflects the importance of leadership that can connect technical decisions with organizational purpose.

An Academic Commitment to Organizational Development

Alongside her professional responsibilities, Diana is pursuing doctoral studies in Organizational Administration. Her academic interests include corporate governance and the

development of critical technology capabilities in public institutions.

This area of study creates an opportunity to explore questions that are increasingly relevant to contemporary organizations. How can public institutions develop the technological capabilities needed to remain effective in a rapidly changing environment? What governance structures help ensure that technology investments produce meaningful institutional value? How can organizations strengthen their ability to manage innovation while maintaining accountability and resilience?

These questions connect Diana's academic interests with the practical challenges of technology leadership.

Her educational background also reflects an interdisciplinary approach to professional development. As an Electronic Engineer with post-graduate education in strategic ICT management and innovation management, she combines technical foundations with specialized knowledge of organizational strategy and technological change.

This combination supports a broader understanding of how technology operates within institutions. Engineering provides insight into technical systems and problem-solving, while strategic management and innovation studies help connect technological possibilities with institutional objectives.

Doctoral research further offers a framework for examining these relationships through structured inquiry, evidence, and critical analysis. By exploring corporate governance and critical technology capabilities, Diana is developing an academic perspective that complements her professional experience.

Championing Responsible and Sustainable Digital Progress

Responsible technology leadership requires more than an interest in emerging tools or digital trends. It involves making thoughtful decisions about how technology is introduced, governed, secured, and sustained. It also requires recognizing that technological change affects institutional processes, professional responsibilities, and the way organizations prepare for the future.

Diana's professional vision empha-

Medicine Quality medicines are produced in accordance with strict scientific, technological, and regulatory standards. They must be safe, effective, and reliable

Quality medicines – The foundation of effective treatment



BY Hasanova Alomatxon
@themkenyaintimes

Human health is one of the greatest values in society, and the quality of medical care largely depends on the quality of medicines used in treatment. Medicines play a crucial role in preventing diseases, relieving symptoms, and improving the quality of life. Therefore, high-quality medicines are considered the foundation of effective treat-



ment. Quality medicines are produced in accordance with strict scientific, technological, and regulatory standards. They must be safe, effective, and reliable. Before reaching patients, medicines undergo extensive laboratory testing, clinical trials, and quality control procedures to ensure that they meet established requirements. Such measures help protect patients from ineffective or harmful products. The use of quality medicines

significantly increases the chances of successful treatment. Patients receive the expected therapeutic effect, recover more quickly, and experience fewer complications. In contrast, poor-quality or counterfeit medicines may

fail to treat diseases properly, lead to adverse reactions, and even threaten patients' lives. For this reason, healthcare professionals strongly emphasize the importance of purchasing medicines only from licensed pharmacies and trusted sources. Pharmacists play a vital role in ensuring the safe and rational use of medicines. They provide professional guidance, inform patients about proper dosage and administration, and help prevent medication errors. Their knowledge and responsibility contribute greatly to achieving positive treatment outcomes. In recent years, advances in pharmaceutical science and technology have led to the

development of innovative medicines that improve the effectiveness of healthcare. Modern pharmaceutical industries continuously work to enhance drug quality, increase accessibility, and meet the growing healthcare needs of the population. In conclusion, quality medicines are essential for effective treatment and the protection of public health. Ensuring the production, distribution, and rational use of high-quality medicines should remain a priority for governments, healthcare institutions, pharmaceutical companies, and healthcare professionals. By promoting quality standards and patient awareness, society can achieve better health outcomes and a higher quality of life. Hasanova Alomatxon Alfraganus University Faculty of Dentistry and Pharmacy Pharmacy Program 4th-Year Student

Diana Arenas Blanco: Advancing digital transformation through strategic technology leadership

Contd from page 18

sizes responsible leadership, institutional innovation, and stronger digital capabilities across the public sector. These priorities reflect the need for institutions to develop technology strategies that are not only responsive to current challenges but also adaptable to future developments. Building sustainable digital capabilities involves creating the conditions for continued learning and improvement. Institutions must be able to assess their technological needs, establish appropriate governance mechanisms, protect information, and align digital initiatives with their long-term objectives. Such progress depends on coordination between technology professionals, institutional leaders, and other stakeholders. Digital transformation is most meaningful when technical development is accompanied by strategic clarity and a shared understanding of the outcomes an organization seeks to achieve.

Through her work in technology and digital transformation, Diana contributes to this broader conversation about how public institutions can strengthen their technological foundations and prepare for an increasingly digital future. Looking Toward the Future Diana Arenas Blanco's professional profile brings together more than 12 years of experience, technical education, strategic technology management, and ongoing doctoral research. Her work at Colombia's National Savings places her within an institutional environment where technology modernization, governance, cybersecurity, and innovation intersect. Her career illustrates the value of approaching digital transformation as a comprehensive organizational process. Beyond technological implementation, meaningful modernization requires strategic planning, effective governance, institutional commitment, and the development of capabilities that can support lasting progress. As public institutions continue

to navigate technological change, leadership that connects innovation with accountability and organizational objectives will remain important. Diana's professional focus reflects this evolving understanding of technology as both an operational resource and a strategic institutional capability. Through her continued work and academic development, she remains engaged in the challenges of strengthening technology governance, advancing digital transformation, and understanding how public institutions can build the capabilities required for sustainable modernization. Her journey represents a commitment to bringing technical expertise and strategic thinking together in service of institutional progress. By focusing on responsible innovation and the long-term development of digital capabilities, Diana Arenas Blanco contributes to the broader effort to shape public institutions that are better prepared to respond to the opportunities and complexities of the digital age.

SILAS MWAUDASHENI NANDE

LEADERSHIP
AS A CALL TO
PURPOSE

Transforming Communities
Through Visionary Leadership

NOW AVAILABLE FOR
PRE-ORDERS!

AVAILABLE FROM
END OF
AUGUST 2026

PRICE
N\$350

VISION.

IMPACT.

LEGACY.

+264 81 260 3654

Nande Silas

Silas Nande

Law It is at this point that we should consider the weight of the word “People”. By 1995, the East Timor issue reached the Court

How do the people decide their own destiny?

A history of the answers provided by international courts



BY Rislig'oy Satiboldiyeva

@themtkenyatimes

How do the people decide their own destiny?

A history of the answers provided by international courts



Imagine: without asking the people living on an island, two great powers decide to divide that island. Or the inhabitants of an occupied territory live for centuries under the verdict that “this land is not mine”. So, what does international law say in such cases? And most importantly—who, and how, recognizes this as “justice”?

In search of answers to these questions, the world’s most prestigious court—the International Court at The Gage (ICJ) in The Hague—has been gradually shaping the concept of “the right to self-determination” for nearly half a century. This history is like a detective story—each case adds a step closer to an answer than the last. So let’s pause the dispute that began in the desert. The story starts in 1975 in the Western Desert. When Spain was about to leave this territory, Morocco and Mauritania claimed, “this land is historically ours”. The International Court of Justice, however, delivers an unexpected response: no matter how strong the historical ties, a people’s fate cannot be decided without first asking for their free and genuine will. The Court even specifically emphasizes one point — “political or economic unpreparedness” cannot be an excuse to delay independence. In other words, the argument that “it’s too soon” does not hold up in international law.

It is at this point that we should consider the weight of the word “People”. By 1995, the East Timor issue reached the Court. What is noteworthy this time is that even the two disputing states (Portugal and Australia) can agree on one thing: the people of East Timor truly have the status of a “people” and the right to self-determination. It was during

this period that the international jurist Antonio Cassese, in his famous book (“Self-Determination of Peoples: A Legal Reappraisal”, 1995), was among the first to map out the path by which this right could be transformed from a political slogan into an international legal obligation.

Let’s talk about the truth behind the wall?!

In 2004, the Falastin issue comes to the fore — is the wall built by Israel in accordance with international law? The Court this time speaks even more boldly: the existence of the Falastin people is no longer questioned by anyone, and their rights, of course, include the right to self-determination.

In 2010, the world faces another interesting question: Can Kosovo unilaterally declare independence? The Court answers that “such a declaration does not in itself violate general international law” — but this answer does not satisfy many, because the

Court sidesteps the fundamental question of “when a people has the right to form an independent state”. That same year, the Supreme Court of Canada draws a clearer line on the Kvebek issue: self-determination is generally to be achieved within a state — through autonomy, cultural rights — while the creation of an independent state can only be considered in exceptional circumstances. So is a simple “Yes” enough?

The 2019 Chagos archipelago case is one of the most tragic chapters in this chain of events. When Great Britain separated these islands from Mavrikiya, the consent of the local population was not sought. And the court is categorical in its conclusion: The state practice between 1950 and 1957 shows that the right to self-determination became a norm of international customary law during that very period — meaning the separation of the Chagos islands was illegal.

And finally, the most recent turning point — in its 2024 advisory opinion on Israel’s occupation of the Falastin territories — the International Court of Justice, for the first time in history, openly declares: that in cases of such occupation, the right to self-determination is *jus cogens* — a peremptory norm of international law that cannot be derogated by any state agreement. This is the “top tier” of international law, where only a few concepts reside, such as the prohibition on genocide or the norms against slavery. In other words, in 2024, the law is granted “sacred” status. Interestingly, some legal scholars criticize the decision as “too little, too late” — the Court did not provide a detailed justification for why it designated this specific norm as “sacred”. But one thing is clear: a new basis for debate has now emerged on this topic.

In 2025, however, there is a completely unexpected turn—in its advisory

opinion on climate change, the Court acknowledges that rising sea levels could affect the right of island states to self-determination. Thus, this right is now being applied not only to colonialism or occupation, but also to entirely new problems like the climate crisis. It is precisely here that we can see the stories of self-determination are still ongoing. A half-century journey — from the sands of the desert to rising sea levels. This shows that the seemingly simple idea that “a people decides its own destiny” is, in fact, constantly being rewritten through the unique trials of each generation.

Rislig'oy Satiboldiyeva, second-year student at the Faculty of Criminal Justice, Tashkent State University of Law.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Paralysis in public universities as lecturers' strike enters second week

Thousands of students remain stranded as government and unions dig in over a pay deal that neither side will blink on

By Jeremiah Kingamu

Kenya's public universities have ground to a halt. The nationwide lecturers' strike, now in its second week since beginning on October 2, has suspended lectures, postponed examinations indefinitely and left thousands of students anxious about their academic futures.

The dispute centres on the implementation of the 2025–2029 Collective Bargaining Agreement. The government has offered a four per cent annual salary increment, backed by KSh9.76B in allocated funding. The Universities Academic Staff Union, Kenya University Staff Union and KUDHEIHA have rejected the offer as inadequate, citing rising inflation and unresolved provisions on allowances, car loans and mortgages.

Education Cabinet Secretary



Julius Ogamba has called on lecturers to honour court orders and return to class, noting that arrears from previous agreements have been cleared. Union leaders are unmoved, insisting the strike continues until meaningful progress is made and accusing the government of chronically underfunding higher education.

For students, the cost is mounting — delayed graduations, disrupted coursework and the financial burden of extended

hostel stays. University administrators warn that institutional credibility is at stake, with the threat of unrest growing the longer the stalemate holds.

Kenya has weathered similar standoffs before, some stretching to nine months. That history offers little comfort now. Unless the government and unions find common ground quickly, what begins as a pay dispute risks becoming a full-blown crisis — and it is students who will pay the heaviest price.

Ruto's buffalo milk idea needs urgent clarification before it causes real harm

By Daniel Maina,

President William Ruto's proposal to explore buffalo farming as a solution to Kenya's milk shortage is not, in itself, unreasonable. What is unreasonable — and potentially dangerous — is the silence that has followed it.

Speaking on October 8, Ruto suggested Kenya could import domesticated water buffaloes, citing India's dairy industry as a model. The problem is that most Kenyans did not hear "water buffalo." They heard "buffalo" — and Kenya's buffalo, the African cape buffalo, is one of the most aggressive and deadly animals on the continent. It is wild, untreated and entirely undomesticated.

The distinction matters enormously. India's dairy buffaloes are purpose-bred, docile



animals. Kenya's are not. Yet without a clear government clarification, the presidential statement sits in public consciousness as an open invitation — and Kenyans, creative and bold in equal measure, will act on it. Game parks and conservancies could soon face trespassers attempting to milk wild animals. Poaching may spike as people seek to capture and domesticate wildlife. The health risks from unregulated, untested buffalo milk are real.

And casualties from encounters with provoked cape buffaloes are not a distant possibility.

The President may have intended no harm. But intent does not prevent consequences. The government must issue an immediate, unambiguous clarification. Kenya's tourism industry, wildlife sector and public health cannot afford to be casualties of an unexplained roadside remark.

Kipchoge breaks Melbourne record to claim first marathon win in three years

By Valentine,

Eliud Kipchoge is back. The Kenyan marathon legend delivered one of the most memorable performances of his remarkable career on Sunday, winning the 2026 Nike Melbourne Marathon in a new course record of 2 hours, 9 minutes and 10 seconds — and doing so with enough time to slow down, turn to the crowd inside the Melbourne Cricket Ground, and wave.

The two-time Olympic champion shaved two seconds off the previous course record of 2:09:12, set by fellow Kenyan Timothy Ronoh in 2022, to claim his 17th career marathon victory. It was his first win in three years, since Berlin in 2023, and it felt every bit like a champion rediscovering his stride.

Kipchoge crossed the finish line one minute and 25

seconds ahead of Australia's Thomas Do Canto, who took second in 2:10:35. Compatriot Reece Edwards was third in 2:14:33. In the women's race, New Zealand's Camille French won convincingly in 2:28:25.

The victory will mean a great deal to a man who has known difficult times in recent years. A 10th-place finish in Tokyo in 2024 and a DNF at the Paris Olympics had raised questions about whether the greatest marathon runner of his generation could still compete at the front of the field. Sunday's performance in Melbourne was a powerful answer.

Kipchoge broke away inside the last 10 kilometres on a redesigned course that ran partly through the Australian Formula One circuit at Albert Park before finishing inside the iconic MCG. The 2026 course was rebuilt to be fast-

er and flatter, with 20 per cent less elevation and 30 per cent fewer turns than its predecessor — changes that stripped out the notorious climb at the 36-kilometre mark that had long made Melbourne one of the more demanding urban marathons on the circuit.

Speaking after the race, Kipchoge said: "On the course, it was really wonderful. I enjoyed seeing people standing, cheering and shouting my name. I believe that my body is still peaking, still able to compete with the next generation."

President William Ruto added his congratulations, saying: "At 41, he continues to compete and win, flying our flag high on the global stage."

The Melbourne result was the third stop on Kipchoge's ambitious Eliud's Running World tour — a project to complete a marathon on all

seven continents within two years, raising funds for his foundation. He opened the tour on May 24, 2026 at the Cape Town Marathon, crossing the line in 2:13:29. His second stop came in Porto Alegre, Brazil in July, where he ran 2:18:42 to finish 12th at the NB42k Porto Alegre Marathon. Melbourne was emphatically the best of the three — and a reminder that, at 41, Eliud Kipchoge is far from finished.



SPORTS
NEWSPHOTOS
SCORES
OPINIONS
STATISTICS
SCHEDULES
BREAKING NEWS

Sports >> *Goals from Haaland, Doku and Cherki seal a commanding second-half victory as City move to the top of the Premier League

City humiliate Liverpool at Anfield in 3-0 rout

By Andalo Christine Ingutia

Manchester City delivered a painful and emphatic blow to Liverpool at Anfield on Sunday, scoring three second-half goals to secure a convincing 3-0 victory in their Premier League Gameweek 6 clash.

Erling Haaland, Jérémy Doku and Rayan Cherki were all on target as City maintained their perfect start to the season, moving three points clear at the top of the table. It was a performance that said much about Pep Guardiola's side — composed, clinical and utterly ruthless when it mattered.

The result came at a particularly charged moment for City, who continue to face serious off-field pressure following an independent commission's finding of financial rule breaches. On the pitch, however, there was no sign of distraction. Guardiola's men let their football do the talking on what was a thoroughly difficult afternoon for the home side.

The first half was tightly contested, with both teams struggling to find the breakthrough. Liverpool pressed high and used their home advantage to make life uncomfortable for the visitors, but City controlled possession comfortably and were content to be patient.

Temper flared early, with Liverpool defender Ronald Araújo picking up a yellow card in the eighth minute. Ryan Gravenberch was also booked before the break — a caution that would prove decisive for the hosts.

Liverpool's hopes of salvaging anything from the match suffered a severe blow in the 47th minute when Gravenberch received his second yellow card and was sent off. The midfielder's dismissal left the home side with ten men and handed City exactly the space and opportunity they needed to take control.

They did not wait long to cap-



Final results.

italise. Haaland broke the deadlock in the 65th minute, finishing coolly to put City ahead and silence a stunned Anfield. Liverpool had barely had a chance to regroup when Doku doubled the lead just three minutes later. The winger produced a brilliant finish, cutting inside before curling the ball beyond the goalkeeper to make it 2-0.

City were now firmly in command, and Liverpool could offer little in response. Cherki added the third in the 78th minute, putting the result well beyond doubt and capping off a dominant second-half display.

Despite Liverpool's efforts in

the closing stages, City defended their advantage comfortably. Virgil van Dijk was booked late in the match as frustration visibly grew among the home players — a fitting symbol of how completely the afternoon had slipped away from them.

The numbers told the full story. City finished with 65 per cent possession and 15 shots to Liverpool's 35 per cent and 10 attempts, while completing 89 per cent of their passes — a masterclass in controlled, purposeful football.

For Liverpool, the defeat will sting long after the final whistle. They had held City well for

much of the first hour, and for a time the game looked finely balanced. Gravenberch's dismissal changed everything, but the manner in which City punished them illustrated just how merciless they can be when given even a hint of space.

For Manchester City, this was about far more than three points. It was a statement — a clear signal to every title rival that off-field turbulence will not derail their campaign. With six wins from six matches, City sit firmly at the summit of the Premier League, while Liverpool must regroup quickly and look ahead.

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >> *Real Madrid fear a lengthy ban for their Brazilian forward could rule him out of the season’s most anticipated fixture

Vinicius faces El Clásico doubt after Madrid red card

By Pascal Okoth

Real Madrid are growing increasingly anxious that Vinicius Júnior could miss the upcoming El Clásico against Barcelona, after his dismissal against Villarreal left the club facing a potentially damaging disciplinary outcome.

According to reports by COPE, Madrid fear the Brazilian forward could receive a three-match ban, though there is hope the punishment might be reduced to two games. Either way, his availability for the highly anticipated clash against Barcelona hangs in the balance — a prospect that will be causing real concern in the Spanish capital.

At the heart of the case is the referee’s official match report, which has attracted significant attention for the way it describes Vinicius’s conduct after he was sent off. The referee reportedly stated that the forward continued protesting loudly following his dismissal and displayed what was characterised as an aggressive attitude. It is that wording, more than the red card itself, that could prove most costly. Disciplinary panels weigh the referee’s official account carefully, and the language used in this particular report may push the punishment toward the higher end of the scale.

For Real Madrid, the uncertainty arrives at the worst possible moment. El Clásico is never just a football match — it is one of the biggest occasions on the Spanish football calendar, a fixture that draws the eyes of millions of supporters around the world and carries enormous weight in the title race. Vinicius has become central to Madrid’s attacking identity under head coach Xabi Alonso, and his particular qualities are not easily replaced.

His pace, directness and ability to take on defenders in one-



Vinicius Júnior

on-one situations give Madrid a threat that few wingers in world football can match. He stretches defensive lines, creates chances and carries the ball forward with a conviction that unsettles even the most organised backlines. Were he to miss El Clásico, Alonso would need to rethink his attacking approach — and while Madrid have other talented options, filling the gap left by Vinicius would be far from straightforward.

That said, his absence is not yet confirmed. The final out-

come rests with the disciplinary authorities, who will assess the referee’s report alongside the relevant regulations and the specific circumstances of the incident. Until that decision is made, Vinicius’s availability remains officially uncertain.

The episode also serves as a broader reminder of what is at stake for players in high-pressure moments. Emotions run hot when controversial calls go against you, but the cost of losing composure after a dismissal can extend well beyond the af-

ternoon itself. For Vinicius, the priority now is a waiting game — one that Madrid and their supporters will be following with considerable unease.

Real Madrid will hope for the most lenient outcome the regulations permit. But until the ruling is announced, the question of whether their most dangerous attacker will be available for one of the most anticipated matches of the season remains firmly unanswered.

SPORTS NEWS



PHOTOS
SCORES
OPINIONS
STATISTICS
SCHEDULES
BREAKING NEWS



SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN

Backpage



Kenya's publishing industry needs a woman at the helm

By: Ashford Kimani

@themkenyatimes

The death of Hilary McPhee, the pioneering Australian editor and publisher, offers the world a moment to reflect on the power of women to transform industries long dominated by men. For Kenya, her story raises an important question: when will the publishing industry deliberately create more space for women to lead?

McPhee co-founded McPhee Gribble Publishers with Diana Gribble in 1975, helping open doors for Australian writers whose voices deserved a wider audience. She later led the Picador imprint at Pan Macmillan Australia and became the first woman to chair the Australia Council for the Arts. Her career demonstrated that women do not merely participate in industries — they can shape their direction, influence their priorities and redefine their future.

Kenya does not have to look overseas for inspiration. We have women whose presence in educational publishing should provoke a serious conversation about leadership, representation and succession. Mary Maina of Moran Publishers, Josephine of Mentor Publishers and Cate of Distinction Publishers are names that deserve to be firmly in that conversation.

The question is not whether Kenyan women can contribute to publishing. They already do. The question is whether the industry is ready to give women real authority at the highest levels of decision-making.

Publishing is much more than printing books and supplying textbooks to schools. Publishers determine which stories reach readers, which writers receive opportunities, which histories are preserved and which ideas enter national conversations. In education, their decisions influence what children read, whose experiences learners encounter and how young people understand their communities and the wider world. An industry that neglects diverse voices risks producing books that are technically sound but disconnected from the realities of the people they



Woman at the helm

serve.

Women bring valuable perspectives to this process, just as men do. Their experiences can enrich editorial decisions, expand the range of stories considered worthy of publication and strengthen the bond between books and readers. The argument is not that women are inherently better publishers. It is that an industry cannot afford to overlook capable leaders simply because of gender.

Kenya already has a tradition of women challenging the boundaries of publishing. Asenath Bole Odaga helped create opportunities for African literature through Lake Publishers. Eunice Mathu built the Parents magazine brand into a long-running Kenyan institution. Their achievements demonstrate that female leadership in publishing is neither a foreign concept nor an unfamiliar experiment.

The task now is to build on that foundation. Mary Maina of Moran Publishers is an important point of reference. Moran is an established educational publisher, and Maina's professional journey to the position of managing director illustrates the

value of experience, institutional knowledge and steady leadership development. Josephine of Mentor Publishers and Cate of Distinction Publishers should feature equally in the wider conversation about women shaping Kenya's publishing landscape. Their names remind us that the industry is not built by one company or one individual. It is a network of publishing houses, editorial teams, authors, distributors, teachers and education professionals whose decisions collectively shape what reaches Kenyan learners.

These women should not be reduced to symbols of gender representation. The more important questions concern their professional contributions, the decisions they influence and the opportunities available to women aspiring to similar positions. Their presence should encourage the industry to identify more women with the experience and capacity to lead, invest in their professional development and make senior appointments through transparent, merit-based processes.

Representation, however, must translate into genuine decision-making

power. An organisation can employ many women as editors, proofreaders, marketers and sales representatives while reserving its most influential positions for a narrow circle. Representation at the lower levels is not the same as authority in the boardroom. Who decides which manuscript deserves investment? Who controls publishing budgets? Who determines the direction of educational publishing? These questions matter because leadership determines whether talent is nurtured or overlooked.

Kenyan publishing houses should examine their leadership structures and identify the barriers that prevent qualified women from advancing into senior editorial, executive and ownership positions. Transparent promotion procedures, mentorship, equitable access to professional development and family-friendly workplace policies can make advancement more accessible. Professional associations can support this process by developing leadership programmes, connecting emerging professionals with experienced mentors and encouraging meaningful

participation by women in industry decision-making. Women should also be encouraged to establish independent publishing ventures, build commercial networks, secure investment and take creative risks. Leadership is not confined to occupying an existing office; it also means creating new institutions and opening opportunities for others.

Kenya's publishing sector is being reshaped by digital platforms, artificial intelligence, changing reading habits and the demands of Competency-Based Education. Schools need relevant learning materials, teachers need practical classroom resources, and learners need books that develop curiosity, creativity and critical thinking. These challenges require leaders who understand both the commercial realities of publishing and its deeper educational responsibilities. Women must have a fair opportunity to help shape the industry's response.

Hilary McPhee's legacy reminds us that transformative leadership often begins with the courage to challenge convention. Kenya has its own pioneers — and its own contemporary women ready to write the next chapter. The time for merely praising women after they have broken through is over. What is needed now are structures that allow more women to rise, lead and succeed.

A woman at the helm of a major Kenyan publishing institution should not be appointed as a favour. She should lead because she possesses the vision, competence and professional judgment the role demands. The question is no longer whether Kenyan women can lead publishing. Our own history and present-day industry provide ample evidence that they can. The question is whether the industry is prepared to give the next woman the authority, resources and freedom to shape its future — not as a symbolic gesture, but as a confident investment in talent, innovation and the next generation of Kenyan literature.

Ashford teaches English and Literature and writes on education, literacy and youth development.