



# News

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# weekend

# STAR

President capped delegation sizes and timelines

# SH7.4 BILLION SPLURGED ON TRIPS AS RUTO BAN IGNORED

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Inspector General of Police Douglas Kanja chats and National Police Service Commission chairperson Dr Amani Komora on Friday /JOHN CHESOLI

## IG Kanja, NPSC agree to work together after five-hour talks

The National Police Service Commission and the National Police Service have set aside their differences pledging to work together for the benefit of Kenyans.

Speaking after a meeting that lasted more than five hours in Mombasa, NPSC chairman Amani Komora and Inspector General of Police Douglas Kanja committed to work together and resolve any disputes amicably should they arise.

"We have agreed to chart out a new chapter in terms of how we relate, with more collegiality and with more respect to the different mandates that are bestowed on us as constitutional offices," Komora said.

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## Opposition team hosts dons, students



HOW IT WENT DOWN: Fred Matiang'i, Wiper Patriotic Front leader Kalonzo Musyoka and Mukhisa Kituyi dance with university student leaders at Kalonzo's Yatta home /DENISH OCHIENG

## Confusion over UHC workers as President's order angers governors

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## PLEDGE TO WORK TOGETHER

# Police boss Kanja and NPSC bury the hatchet

*This comes after push and pull over their mandate, especially regarding payroll*

BRIAN OTIENO  
@Yobramos4

THE National Police Service Commission and the National Police Service have set aside their differences pledging to work together for the benefit of Kenyans.

Speaking after a meeting that lasted more than five hours in Mombasa, NPSC chairman Amani Komora and Inspector General of Police Douglas Kanja committed to working together and resolve any disputes amicably should they arise. "We have agreed to chart out a new chapter in terms of how we relate, with more collegiality and with more respect to the different mandates that are bestowed on us as constitutional offices," Komora said.

This comes after weeks of push and pull over the mandate of the two entities, especially regarding the police officers payroll.

Komora said the commission cannot succeed without the service and the service cannot succeed without the commission.

"We have agreed on a very clear, elaborate framework of working together that you will see as we move on. There will be more synergy and closer collaboration without parties pulling apart," the commission chairman said.

Komora, however, said they will discuss the issue of payroll later, adding there was no time to discuss it on Friday.

"On matters payroll, we ask Kenyans that they give us more time because there are many things that need discussions that we did not discuss today. It is only the first day," he said.

"Kenyans should know that we will sit down and iron out that issue in the spirit of one government approach. We are all serving the same people and we believe there will no



**Inspector General of Police Douglas Kanja and National Police Service Commission chairperson Amani Komora at Kenya School of Government in Mombasa on Friday**  
/JOHN CHESOLI

longer be the push and pull that you have been seeing."

This was the first meeting between the two entities since President William Ruto reconstituted the commission.

Komora expressed optimism that going forward the commission and the service will work together professionally. "This is a clear demonstration of a new opportunity to reorganise and reconfigure the relations that are supposed to obtain between the commission and the service," he said.

For a long time, the commission had been incomplete, with two commissioners missing but that has been resolved with recent appointments.

The commission now includes chairman Komora, Inspector General of Police Douglas Kanja, Colleta Suda, Edwin Chelugut, Perris Muthoni, Benjamin Imai, Angeline Siparo, Deputy Inspector General of Police Eliud Lagat, DCI boss Mohamed Amin, Banis Silal and CEO Peter Lelei.

"With the commission now fully constituted, we are confident in our ability and capacity to spearhead the far reaching reforms that will entrench a professional, responsive and police-centric police service," the NPSC chairman said.

Komora said they had three main agendas, but the most urgent one was the recruitment of an additional 10,000 police officers to bolster the NPS.

He said although they have independent roles, they still work together.

The commission is established under article 246 of the Constitution with the mandate to recruit and appoint persons to hold office in the NPS, determine promotions and transfers, and exercise disciplinary control over the members of the service.

Article 245 on the other hand grants the IG the mandate to exercise independent command over the NPS ensuring its operational

efficiency, discipline and overall effectiveness.

The chairman said the commission on Friday held a meeting to deliberate on various human resource matters within the service, with priority being the recruitment of the 10,000 additional police officers.

"We are well aware that the nation requires to be secured and we have to progressively beef up our numbers within the NPS so that we move towards the best international practices," Komora said.

He said the upcoming recruitment exercise will be guided by the 2025 regulations, which were developed pursuant to section 28 of the NPSC Act to address the gaps identified in the earlier regulations of 2015, while incorporating emerging issues in policing and human resource management.

Komora said they will ensure transparency and merit-based selection in the recruitment process.

"The commission also considered and approved a comprehensive roadmap and instruments to facilitate the immediate commencement of the recruitment exercise," the NPSC chairman said at the Kenya School of Government in Mombasa.

The roadmap outlines key steps from the advertisement of the vacancies up to the final selection of successful candidates who will thereafter report to various designated training colleges.

## (+) INSTANT ANALYSIS

There has been a dispute between the police commission and the service over who has the constitutional authority to control the Sh60 billion police payroll. The payroll is a human resource function vital for the recruitment, promotion and disciplinary actions. The NPSC claims payroll management is integral to its mandate as the employer, while the IG's office has maintained control.

## UNEVEN DISTRIBUTION

## Weatherman warns Kenyans to brace for depressed rains

AGATHA NGOTHO

KENYA is likely to experience depressed short rains this year, with the Kenya Meteorological Department warning of prolonged dry spells and uneven rainfall distribution across the country between October and December.

The distribution of rainfall during the upcoming short rains season is expected to be poor, with prolonged dry spells and isolated storms in some areas, the Kenya Meteorological Department (KMD) has said.

According to the climate outlook for October-December 2025, most of the Northeast, Southeastern lowlands, and coastal regions will receive below-average rainfall.

The South and Central Rift Valley, most of the Lake Victoria Basin, the Highlands East of the Rift Valley including Nairobi, parts of Kajiado, and western Samburu and Marsabit are expected to get near to below-average rainfall. Meanwhile, the Highlands West of the Rift Valley and parts of Northwestern Kenya may experience near to above-average rainfall.

Charles Mugah from KMD said the outlook is largely influenced by a developing negative Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD), expected to persist from September to November before returning to neutral in December.

"A negative IOD typically brings drier than normal conditions over East Africa, potentially suppressing rainfall during the short rains," he explained.

The World Meteorological Organisation has also indicated a 55 per cent chance of La Niña developing during September-November 2025, rising to 60 per cent in October-December. KMD said it will continue to closely monitor these evolving conditions.

Mugah said the October-December short rains are a key rainfall season for Kenya, especially in the central and eastern regions. He said the latest outlook projects varied rainfall patterns across the country.

Kisii, Nyamira, Uasin Gishu, Kakamega and Bungoma will likely see near to slightly above-average rainfall with fair to good distribution and occasional storms.

Siaya, Kisumu, Homa Bay, Migori and southern Busia will receive near to slightly below-average rainfall, except northern Busia where rainfall may be near to above average. Distribution will be poor to fair.

Nakuru, Narok and parts of Baringo are likely to receive near to slightly below-average rainfall, and poorly distributed.

Turkana and western Samburu may see near to slightly above-average rainfall, though poorly distributed with prolonged dry spells.

Nairobi, Kiambu, Murang'a, Nyeri, Meru, Nyanjarua, Embu and Tharaka Nithi are expected to get near to below-average rainfall, with poor to fair distribution and breaks during the season.

Kitui, Makeni, Taita Taveta, parts of Machakos, Kajiado and Tana River will likely experience below-average rainfall, with prolonged dry spells and poor distribution.

Mandera, Wajir, Garissa, Isiolo and eastern Marsabit will experience below-average rainfall, poorly distributed with prolonged dry spells.

Mombasa, Kilifi, Kwale, Lamu and Tana River are also expected to receive below-average rainfall with intermittent breaks, occasional storms and poor distribution.



Pedestrians during a downpour in Nairobi on October 31, 2023 /VICTOR IMBOTO

## STAR SURVEY

### TODAY'S QUESTION

**Should Kenya withdraw from Haiti police mission?**

### YESTERDAY'S QUESTION

**Have university fees reduced under Ruto's regime?**

YES 54%

NO 46%



BLAMES CHANG'AA

# We'll crush you, Murkomen cautions gangs in Western

*Says special team will be deployed to deal decisively with thugs and sponsors*

CYRUS OMBATI  
@CyrusOmbati

INTERIOR CS Kipchumba Murkomen has vowed to dismantle criminal gangs in the Western region.

He said a special team will be deployed to deal decisively with the gangs, their leaders and sponsors.

"The government will not allow any part of the country to be the playground of goons. Within the next month, we need to see gang leaders face the full force of the law," the CS said.

Speaking in Kakamega during the 36th Jukwaa La Usalama tour of counties, Murkomen said whereas in other parts of the country gangs largely operate in urban

areas, in Kakamega they are even in villages. "The proliferation of goons in this county, including in villages, is largely driven by the near-normalisation of drugs and illicit alcohol," he said.

"Kakamega is the leading producer of chang'aa in the country. Over the past month, we have seized 30,000 litres of the brew in this county."

He said the goon menace was heightened by politicians. "Nearly every politician in this county, right from MCAs, has goons. When they are not on duty at the behest of politicians, they engage in other crimes like animal theft."

He called for cooperation of politicians and other leaders in the region to tackle the menace.

"Anybody hiring young people to disrupt meetings, including funerals, and engage in robberies will be dealt with firmly regardless of their status," Murkomen said.

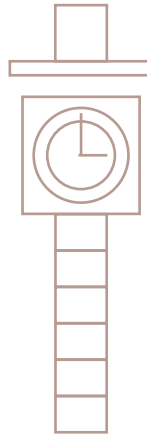
"It is unfortunate that we have to deploy up to 50 police officers even at solemn meetings like funerals. This is unacceptable."

He also called for the collaboration of the Judiciary and prosecution teams so that the criminals face severe punishment.

The CS also decried the prevalence of defilement in the region.

"We have had more than 100 reported defilement cases in a month. This is fuelled by high alcohol and drug use as well as cultural activities such as disco matanga. We shall work with all relevant institutions.

## CORRIDORS OF POWER



### POLITICAL GOSSIP

Who is doing what and where in the world of politics



★ **A BITTER POWER** struggle has reportedly erupted between two senior officials within a key ministry responsible for shaping the country's image. Sources indicate that the feud, which has been simmering for months, recently escalated over control of a delegation set to represent Kenya at an international event. Each official reportedly submitted a separate list of delegates, sparking a standoff that nearly derailed the trip, an outcome that could have had serious diplomatic and reputational consequences for the country.

★ **IS A TOP** government official considering stepping down ahead of the 2027 election? Insiders say the man, credited with playing a key role in the rise of the current administration, is seriously weighing the option of quitting. However, some sources indicate he remains undecided about his next move. It is reported that emissaries from the opposition have approached him, urging him to abandon the government and join their camp. They are said to be courting him for a prominent position in the upcoming polls.

★ **ELECTED POLITICIANS SEEKING** to discipline an official over alleged graft were supposedly served a dose of their own medicine. The official they had targeted reportedly hit back during a high-level meeting by unveiling a seemingly damning dossier on his accusers. He exposed the politicians' alleged extortionist activities, revealing how some had allegedly morphed into self-styled revenue collectors, operating more like an extortion racket than public servants. Stunned and angered by the revelations, the politicians quietly walked out of the meeting. Unsurprisingly, the push to punish the official fizzled out.

★ **COMPETITION FOR A** much sought-after constituency seat has taken a dramatic turn. This is amid reports that a county boss is allegedly plotting the arrest of a strong contender on trumped-up charges, ostensibly to pave the way for a preferred candidate. Confidential sources indicate that the top county official has supposedly reached out to powerful figures in a bid to sideline the aspirant, with plans allegedly underway to nab him at a major port upon his return from a trip abroad. The official is said to be seemingly determined to block the aspirant's bid at all costs, apparently rattled by the contender's growing support among youth and women voters. The surge has reportedly shaken the confidence of the establishment.

## PHOTO OF THE WEEK



Nairobi Governor Johnson Sakaja and ODM leader Raila Odinga during a meeting with MCAs /HANDOUT

If you have any tips send them to [Tips@the-star.co.ke](mailto:Tips@the-star.co.ke)

## DEFIED RUTO DEPARTMENT OF MSMEs HAD THE HIGHEST DELEGATION OF 80 TO JUBA, FOR EA



Controller of Budget Margaret Nyakang'o appears before the Public Petitions Committee on March 7, 2023 /EZEKIEL AMING'A

# State agencies blow Sh7.4 billion on trips

MOSES OGADA  
@AliwaMoses

A NEW report reveals that multiple state agencies blatantly ignored President William Ruto's directive to curb costly foreign travel, splurging millions of taxpayer shillings on unnecessary trips.

The Controller of Budget's report, covering up to June 30, 2025, shows several departments continued to dispatch huge delegations abroad despite the presidential order, spending Sh7.4 billion in the long run.

President Ruto, through a memo by the Head of Public Service in June 2023, gave conditions for travel, capping delegation sizes and timelines.

Cabinet secretaries, principal secretaries, chairpersons and CEOs of state corporations were directed to get travel approval from the President.

It was ruled that delegations by Cabinet secretaries shall not exceed four persons, including the CS as head of delegation.

PS' delegations were restricted to three, while personal assistants and

security personnel were barred. Governors were allowed a maximum of three people, including themselves, while state corporation CEOs and board chairs are only allowed to travel alone.

Commission CEOs and chairpersons were allowed one extra person while staff travel was suspended – save for leave-based travel and representation.

Only the Deputy President and the Prime Cabinet Secretary were allowed to travel with personal assistants.

The circular also provided that government officials would only be granted a maximum of seven days per travel, 15 days per quarter and 45 days in a year.

In October 2023, the government in another memo suspended benchmarking and study visits, trainings, and conferences.

Meetings of general participation, symposia, exhibitions, and association meetings were also banned.

The dossier by CoB Margaret Nyakang'o reveals that some of the flagged trips included those to luxury destinations and conferences of ques-

tionable value. The State Department of MSMEs had the highest delegation of 80 to Juba, South Sudan, for EAC Trade Fair, and took 10 days, burning Sh40 million.

The department sent another 15 personnel to the USA for negotiations. It stands out as having sent some of

the biggest delegations of five to nine people. The Trade Department spent Sh16 million on 13 officers to attend a training in Arusha in breach of the presidential directive.

Another 11 from the Trade Department went to Tanzania for the 46th meeting of the Sectoral Council on Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment.

Labour Department was also found to be notorious for sending huge delegations. A team of 40 gobbled Sh109 million in a trip to Geneva, Switzerland. Reports show the team was there for the International Labour Conference.

This was besides another team of 15 who went to Geneva on what was reported as "audit verification on consular offices".

Another 10 went to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, for an ILO meeting, with 10 others to Addis Ababa for a labour skills conference.

Some 10 officers from the department travelled to New York, USA, for the 69th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women for 11 days.

The National Gender and Equality

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*Labour Department was also found to be notorious for sending huge delegations. A team of 40 gobbled Sh109m in a trip to Geneva*



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# AG TRADE FAIR, AND TOOK 10 DAYS, BURNING SH40M

Commission sent 10 officers to the same event, bringing the total of Kenyan attendees to 21.

The Judiciary is also on the spot, with the report flagging the huge delegations it dispatched to various countries in the year under review.

The Judiciary sent 18 personnel to Kigali, Rwanda, for the annual conference of the Commonwealth Magistrate and Judges' Association.

Another group of 11 travelled to Tanzania on a benchmarking tour of Arusha, while the number sent to the US for a global conference was not stated, yet they splurged Sh11 million.

The Judicial Service Commission sent 11 officers to Mozambique for a training of trainers and another 22 to Arusha for the East African Magistrates and Judges Association conference.

The commission further sponsored 27 officers for an exchange visit of the United States, costing taxpayers Sh33 million.

The Ministry of Defence's trip of 10 officers to attend the 40th meeting of the Sectoral Council in Defence Affairs has also been flagged.

The Housing Department has also been called out after sending 20 officers to Cairo for the World Urban Forum 12, spending Sh8 million at the end of it all.

Lands dispatched 13 to Arusha for a training on strategic public sector financial management and human capital optimisation.

The report also flagged five officers of the EACC who were allocated Sh300,000 in winter clothing allowances during an undercover training in Tampa, Florida.

The Health ministry had the lowest spend of Sh1 million from three officers who were sent to Tanzania and Azerbaijan for a strategic meeting and climate change summit, respectively.

Many officers – 12 on different dates – from the Livestock Department went for training in Dubai, another six to Singapore.

Foreign Affairs recorded the highest spend at Sh2.5 billion, which is attributed to their nature of activities, followed by the National Assembly at Sh2 billion and the Senate at Sh633.49 million.

Geneva, Switzerland, emerged as a recurring destination, with multiple delegations attending WTO meetings. One trip for two officers to a WTO committee meeting cost Sh2.14 million.

Washington DC is also a much-sought destination. It came out as a hub for numerous engagements, including a Kenya-US trade negotiation where a principal secretary's air ticket alone cost Sh1.4 million.

Government officers also have a huge preference for Dubai, UAE, the destination standing out as a favourite for training and forums.

A Gulf food meeting cost taxpayers Sh4.9 million, and a training on retirement and pension planning for eight officers cost Sh7.6 million.

Dozens of other trips were undertaken to global capitals, notably London, Paris, Beijing, Rome, Singapore, Barcelona and Vienna.

Besides the huge delegations, the report highlights expenditures that raise questions about how the trips are prioritised.

A delegation of 15 officials from the Supreme Court spent Sh29 million on a trip to the United Kingdom for a meeting on alternative dispute resolution and judicial leadership.

The Judiciary allocated Sh265,932 to send two officers to a business football tournament in Gaborone, Botswana.

The Directorate of Information Communications and Technology



**Toyota Tsusho Corporation chairman and CEO Toshimitsu Ima, President William Ruto and Health CS Aden Duale on the sidelines of Ticad 9 at Yokohama, Japan, on August 21 /PCS**

spent Sh17 million to send an undisclosed number of officers for training in Dubai.

In several cases, the audit found that government entities paid for trips even when external sponsors had offered to cover the costs.

An officer's travel and accommodation to a conference in Belgium were fully covered by Ghent University, yet the budget still recorded a cost.

Similarly, trips to China, Ghana, and Germany were noted as being paid for by external universities and foundations, yet still appeared on the government's ledger.

## (+) INSTANT ANALYSIS

The National Government Budget Implementation Review Report for 2025 paints a picture of a government struggling to enforce its own rules. The detailed breakdown of travel costs serves as a powerful testament to the challenges of curbing wasteful expenditure in the public sector. The report presents a critical test of accountability. It remains to be seen whether those who authorised the defiance of a presidential directive and use of public funds will face any consequences, or if the cycle of extravagant spending will continue unabated.



**Deputy President Kithure Kindiki meets representatives of Kenyan students studying in Algerian universities and staff of the Kenyan Embassy in Algiers on September 5 /DPCS**

## NEWS GENERAL

## GOVERNORS DEMANDS

# Confusion as Ruto UHC staff order angers county chiefs

President has directed counties to immediately absorb the workers, CoG vows to defy

JULIUS OTIENO  
@JuliusOtieno04

CONFUSION continues to surround the fate of more than 7,400 Universal Health Coverage (UHC) workers after governors rejected President William Ruto's directive ordering counties to immediately absorb the personnel.

Barely a day after Ruto's announcement, county bosses vowed to defy the directive unless the government releases Sh7.7 billion to facilitate their absorption on permanent and pensionable terms.

They are also demanding an additional Sh9.4 billion to clear gratuity arrears for staff under existing contracts.

"What the President is saying is not possible. We don't have the money to absorb all of them. Unless they give us money, it will be difficult to implement his order," a governor told the Star.

The county chiefs are set to meet next week to deliberate on the directive, which came just days after they opposed a similar order from the Ministry of Health.

Earlier, the ministry and the Council of Governors (CoG) had reached an agreement to retain the workers on the Salaries and Remuneration Commission salary scale until June 2026, when their salaries would be factored into the national budget.



CoG vice chairperson Mutahi Kahiga, chairperson Ahmed Abdullahi and Health Cabinet Secretary Aden Duale during a meeting at CoG offices, Westlands on April 14 /LEAH MUKANGAI

Governors rejected the ministry's initial plan for one-year funding, insisting that absorption must be anchored on sustainable financing.

"The ministry cannot alter the contracts of UHC staff without involving county governments," CoG chair Ahmed Abdullahi said.

"The council will only accede to

variations if the equitable share of revenue is increased to cater for them."

On Thursday, however, President Ruto ordered the immediate absorption of the workers into permanent and pensionable terms. The directive contradicted the deal reached between the Health Ministry and CoG.

Speaking in Mombasa, where he

issued employment letters to some of the workers, Ruto demanded that both levels of government resolve the stalemate and expedite absorption.

"Hawa wafanyikazi tunataka kuwatoa kutoka kwa kandarasi tuwafanye permanent and pensionable. Mimi nauliza counties hawa wafanyikazi kuanzia mwezi huu wa tisa tu-

waweke permanent and pensionable because we have the resources," Ruto said.

His order came amid mounting pressure from UHC workers, who have staged several strikes over discriminatory terms compared to their colleagues on permanent and pensionable contracts.

The President also rebuked counties that have delayed stipends for Community Health Promoters, demanding that arrears be cleared within the week.

He praised Mombasa for leading in Social Health Authority (SHA) registration at 69 per cent, noting the county had already received more than Sh1.5 billion in SHA funds.

To ease tensions, the Ministry of Health and CoG had earlier agreed on a compromise: for the next 10 months, the ministry would pay the workers on enhanced terms starting September, after which counties would take over in the next financial year, once funds are allocated for the new package.

"In principle, the money we have this financial year is for county staff. But from September, they will be paid under SRC guidelines. Sh7.7 billion will be transferred and factored into the Division of Revenue Bill," Health CS Aden Duale said.

Meanwhile, lawmakers have intensified pressure on Duale over persistent failures in rolling out the SHA.

## (+) INSTANT ANALYSIS

UHC workers were initially recruited between 2019 and 2020 as part of the country's broader effort to roll out the UHC programme, aimed at expanding access to essential health services by deploying additional staff, especially in underserved rural and peri-urban areas.

## SUFFICIENT SUPPORT

# Mudavadi hints at end of Haiti mission, transition to UN force

ELIUD KIBII

KENYA has signalled the end of the Multinational Security Mission in Haiti and its transformation into a force.

This emerged through a press statement by Prime Cabinet Secretary and Foreign Affairs CS Musalia Mudavadi following a phone call with Christopher Landau, the US Deputy Secretary of State on the ongoing interventions in Haiti.

In the statement on Thursday, Mudavadi said while Kenya was committed to supporting the mission, predictable and adequate support for the MSS "or any other initiative", was imperative.

The two top diplomats agreed that the success of the MSS was dependent on the international community's readiness to contribute sufficient and predictable support for the mission.

This support, they noted, would assist in attaining the restoration of peace and security to Haiti and facilitate the necessary political

processes to reverse the prevailing instability and insecurity.

"Kenya is committed to and stands ready to continue making its contribution to the stabilisation of our brotherly state Haiti. We applaud the selfless efforts of our gallant Kenya Police contingent in the MSS in spite of the acute technical, logistical and financial constraints," Mudavadi said.

He called on the UNSC to pass the requisite resolutions to ensure current mission or any other initiative gets the needed funding.

Some officers have decried delayed payments, saying they are yet to receive dues for July and August.

Sources say other countries had been paid but Kenya is yet to pay their officers because of bureaucracy and failure to submit needed documents. One of the officers told the Star that with the mandate of MSS ending on October 2, they foresee a situation where Kenyan police officers might not be paid after the mission ends.

He, however, said officers from

Jamaica, Bahamas, El Salvador and Guatemala have all received their salaries upto date.

"The money was sent from Washington but reports indicate that the government does not have money and the banks cannot pay unless the money is released," the officer said.

Poor equipment and inadequate funding have heavily featured as a key challenge since the commencement of the mission.

The situation has resulted in casualties, with the latest victim being Corporal Kennedy Mutuku. Eight more officers were injured in the road crash in Pétion-Ville, Port au Prince, involving two armoured vehicles that were towing each other due to mechanical problems.

The number of deployed officers also falls short of the 2,500 officers initially envisaged, with just about 1,000 troops on the ground, most of them from Kenya.

The call came just a month ahead of the expiry of the MSS authorisation on October 2.



Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi before the National Assembly Regional Intergration Committee on August 7 /ENOS TECHE

Already, the US and Panama have sought authorisation from the Security Council for a reconfigured UN-authorized 5,550-member multinational force to combat armed gangs in Haiti, the other initiative Mudavadi could be alluding to.

Mudavadi's spokesperson Jacob Ngetich told the Star Kenya is seeking an extension and more commitment on the MSS mission. He also added that Kenya backs

the US-Panama proposal for MSS transition to a force.

Acting US Ambassador Dorothy Shea had on August 28 told the Security Council's open briefing on Haiti that alongside Panama, the US would share with members a draft resolution "to help address the growing violence by establishing a Gang Suppression Force". This is the force that could succeed the MSS mission.

# KENNY G ONE NIGHT ONLY



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## NEWS GENERAL



President William Ruto inspects a National Youth Service guard of honour at the NYS Paramilitary Academy in Gilgil, Nakuru county /PCS

## SAD STATE OF AFFAIRS

# Tough times for injured NYS personnel as state fails to release Sh7bn

SHA has taken over insurance scheme, which was under NHIF

JULIUS OTIENO  
@JuliusOtieno04

INJURED National Youth Service personnel and families of those who died in service are facing untold suffering following the government's failure to release Sh7 billion owed to them.

Senators have raised an alarm that, despite being covered under the NYS insurance scheme, the affected families continue to languish without compensation.

"I seek a statement from the Health Committee on a matter of national concern regarding the delay by the defunct National Hospital Insurance Fund scheme and its successor, the Social Health Authority, to settle claims under the NYS insurance scheme," Bungoma Senator David Wafula said. The scheme, initially managed by NHIF, was taken over by SHA after the health reforms.

However, Wafula said several NYS personnel and their families remain unpaid, with claims amounting to Sh7.07 billion.

"Several personnel of NYS and their families have borne untold suffering due to the failure by the defunct NHIF scheme and its successor, SHA, to pay their claims amounting to Sh7.07 billion," he said.

Wafula raised the matter on the floor of the House, where he petitioned the Health Committee to probe the issue.

He said the arrears have accrued under Civil Servants and National Youth Service enhanced group life, last experience, work injury benefits and group personnel accident insurance scheme in the past four years.

According to the lawmaker, the National Treasury recently disbursed Sh1.48 billion to SHA to facilitate part settlement of the claims.

However, SHA is yet to release these funds, worsening the situation for beneficiaries.

In the probe, the committee is seeking to establish the steps the Social Health Authority is taking to facilitate the prompt settlement of the outstanding payments.

The claims include 1,004 deaths amounting to Sh4.21 billion; 1,026 funeral claims amounting to Sh207.3 million and 1,267 injury claims amounting to Sh2,64 billion relating to NYS personnel.

"The committee should explain the inordinate delay by the Social Health Authority to release the Sh1.48 billion disbursed by the National Treasury for part settlement of the claims, including the timelines for the same," Wafula said.

Further, the panel will enquire whether SHA will factor accrued interest when settling the outstanding claims and if so, provide details on the applicable interest.

The authority will provide timelines for the full settlement of all outstanding claims under the scheme.

The government has rolled out its first comprehensive insurance cover for civil servants and the National Youth Service.

"The launch of the enhanced insurance cover with the inclusion of Work Injury Benefits and Group Accident Cover will not only have a profound impact on the well-being of civil servants and their families, enhance public service motivation and productivity, but also boost the general growth of our insurance industry," the then Treasury CS Ukur Yatani said.

Under the new scheme, civil servants and employees of the National Youth Service were entitled to a comprehensive insurance cover with a total annual premium of Sh6.07 billion per year.

## (+) INSTANT ANALYSIS

Following elaborate consultative meetings with relevant stakeholders including the Public Service ministry among others, it was agreed that in addition to enhancing the existing Group Personal Accident (GPA) cover and Work Injury Benefits Act (WIBA) cover, the provisions be extended to include a comprehensive Group Life cover to cater for all causes of death including death arising from critical illnesses such as COVID-19. The provisions were extended to all civil servants.

## CRITICAL STEP

# Kenya flags off Chinese language teachers for further studies in Tianjin

MOSES OGADA

THE University of Nairobi has flagged off its 2025 cohort of teacher trainees heading to China for further studies in the Chinese language.

Forty eight students of the Confucius Institute at UoN are heading to China, of which 20 are to return to the country as the first Chinese language teachers.

The group which left the country this Friday, follows another 52 who were flagged off by the Chinese Embassy in Kenya last week.

The scholarship programme has been hailed to mark a significant milestone in Kenya's educational exchange with China.

The event, held at the university's iconic facility at the Nairobi Arboretum, celebrated not only the largest single group of scholars sent to China but also the inaugural cohort of the pioneering 2+2 Joint Programme for International Chinese Language Education.

The atmosphere was electric with the dreams of 48 students poised to start on a transformative journey.

Their mission is clear; that is, to return as the first batch of registered Chinese language teachers in Kenya, filling a critical gap in the national curriculum.

For them, this was more than a scholarship, but the key to becoming architects of a new linguistic and cultural bridge between Kenya and China.

"What began with simple curiosity has now become a defining part of my journey. We began with eager minds, not knowing a thing about the language. But today, we can hold a simple conversation with a Chinese person, proving that language is truly a bridge that brings people together," Leah Muthoni, who is among the students travelling to China, said.

"This programme has transformed us from campus students to future teachers, equipped to play a role in shaping education and strengthening cultural ties... In two years, the young men and women you send to China today will return as the strongest bridge between China and Kenya."

The learners join the growing list of thousands of Kenyans who have

benefited from Chinese scholarships.

Confucius Institute participant numbers have soared from 86 in 2023 to a projected 245 by the end of the year. More than 2,000 have benefited from Chinese scholarships since Kenya and China established diplomatic ties.

Professor Wang Shangxue, director of the Confucius Institute, praised the progress as "our [Confucius Institute's] greatest achievement."

From 48 students and 17 educators in 2023, the exchange has exploded to 135 students and 50 educators this year.

This rise is powered by a collaboration agreement signed in December 2023 between the University of Nairobi and China's Tianjin Normal University.

The ceremony was attended by Kenya's top education leaders, each highlighting the programmes' profound national significance.

But as partners underscored, this is more than just numbers but about tangible, life-changing impact.

Carol Hunja, secretary of the State Department for Higher Education, expressed excitement that the agreement providing the scholarship opportunities had moved decisively from paper to practice.

"Most of our agreements with partners remain on paper," she said. "We are happy this is different and dreams are coming true."

She, along with others like Martin Kosgey of the Kenya National Qualifications Authority (KNQA), framed the scholars' departure as a "collective triumph" for Kenyan institutions.

Lilian Mwangi of the Teachers Service Commission said, "We don't have a single Chinese language teacher registered on our payroll."

She underscored the immense professional opportunity awaiting the returning graduates. "We look up to the young ones travelling."

Francis Mulaa, speaking on behalf of the University of Nairobi vice chancellor, said UoN Senate recently approved Chinese as a language option in the varsity's programmes.

"We aim to increase the employability of our graduates," he said, positioning the university as a trendsetter in Africa.



Ministry of Education secretary of higher education Carol Hunja (C) and People's Republic of China to Kenya charge d'affaires Zhang Zhizhong during the flagging off at UoN on Friday /DOUGLAS OKIDDY

## NEWS GENERAL



Former Migori Governor Okoth Obado at the Milimani Anti-Corruption Court on Friday  
/EZEKIEL AMING'A

Land Cruiser vehicles, a Sh40 million house in Loresho, a Sh88 million commercial block in Suna East, and two residential blocks valued at Sh57.6 million.

Prosecutors insisted the agreement was binding since the accused had already forfeited property without any compensation clause included.

Obado's defence team accused the EACC of overstepping its mandate and attempting to interfere with the ODPP's constitutional role.

"The EACC is attempting to usurp the powers given to the Office of the DPP. Article 157 is clear, only the accused, the DPP, or the court can terminate proceedings," the lawyers submitted.

The defence emphasised that the plea bargain had been entered into voluntarily and in line with the Constitution, making the objections irrelevant.

Despite the submissions, EACC maintained that the process was flawed.

Gichagi argued that under the Criminal Procedure Code, withdrawal of charges can only be effected through either Section 87, a formal withdrawal application by the DPP, or Section 137, a properly executed plea bargain agreement signed by all parties. "If the DPP wants to withdraw under Section 87, let them make a formal application. If it is under Section 137, the plea agreement must strictly follow the law," Gichagi said.

Obado, together with his relatives, associates, and companies, was charged in 2021 with the misappropriation of Sh73.4 million from Migori County through a network of proxy companies.

The case has attracted significant public interest given the high-profile nature of the accused, the amount of money involved, and the question of accountability in Kenya's use of plea-bargaining in corruption cases.

The case will return to court on September 30, 2025, for further directions, where the court is expected to clarify whether the contested plea bargain agreement will stand or if fresh applications will be required.

MENTION ON SEPTEMBER 30

# EACC and ODPP clash over withdrawal of Obado case

Case has attracted significant public interest given the high-profile nature of the accused

SARAH AWINJA  
@TheStarKenya

A Nairobi court has scheduled the plea bargain case involving former Migori Governor Okoth Obado for mention on September 30 at 8.15 am.

This follows a dispute between the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

The ruling was delivered on Fri-

day by principal magistrate Charles Ondieki at the Milimani law courts.

The magistrate directed that the accused persons and their co-defendants were at liberty to attend the session virtually or in person.

During the proceedings, EACC counsel strongly objected to the plea bargain filed in court, insisting the anti-graft agency had not been consulted or given a draft of the agreement.

"The commission has not signed

the agreement and was never given a draft to review, yet the prosecution and defence proceeded to file it," EACC counsel Gichagi told the court.

According to him, the plea bargain was irregular since the law requires the involvement of relevant agencies, particularly in corruption-related matters where public assets are at stake.

The prosecution, however, dismissed the objections, maintaining

that the plea bargaining process was transparent and consultative.

Prosecutors told the court three meetings had been held with the EACC and the defence before a consensus was reached.

They further revealed that assets worth Sh235.6 million had already been surrendered under the deal.

The forfeited property includes eight parcels of land spread across Nairobi and Migori, two Toyota

STAYED SALE

## Man in court to stop auction of his home over bank debt

PETER OBUYA

A man has rushed to court to reverse an alleged auction of his home in Nairobi over a debt owed to Kenya Commercial Bank.

In a certificate of urgency suit filed at the Milimani High Court's commercial division, James Mwangi Rukwaro argues that the bank working with Phillips International Auctioneers, sold his home despite a court directive that stayed any sale pending a ruling on September 19, 2025.

Rukwaro says the respondents undertook not to sell the suit property known as Apartment No. A5 Riverland Apartments on LR No. 330/695 pending the ruling.

"The said respondents breached the said implied undertaking given to this court by the respondent purporting to sell the said property through the firm

of Phillips International Auctioneers and thereafter purported to credit the plaintiff's bank account with a purported balance of proceeds of sale of Sh1 million.

The court had on August 13 asked the parties to file their final submissions in the matter and scheduled a ruling for September 19.

Rukwaro says he filed his submissions and served them on the respondents on August 20, only for them to purportedly sell his home two days later.

He wants the court to summon the bank, its chief executive Paul Russo, Cornelius Sikuku and the auctioneer to explain why they should not be committed to civil jail for contempt of court.

Similarly, Rukwaro is seeking orders to declare the purported sale of his home null and void and that any

processes to complete the alleged sale be stopped.

He also wants Russo ordered to pay a fine of Sh5 million and the bank a fine of Sh100 million for the contempt they allegedly committed.

"I worked hard for this property, and it is unfair for the bank to try and take it away in contempt of court orders," Rukwaro said.

He added that the bank and the auctioneer as its agent extremely undervalued his apartment by over Sh10 million compared to its value and market price.

He says at the time he received call from bank that they had initiated the sale of the house, the purported buyer had not come to view the house which until now is still under his control.

Rukwaro says the attempt to dispose him of his home is a violation of his rights and a betrayal of the court's



Milimani law courts /FILE

authority. He wants the court to nullify the auction, reverse the transaction and punish those responsible for contempt.

"Unless the orders sought are granted, the plaintiff and his family

will lose their home and there will be no need for this court to deliver a ruling on September 19 as scheduled as there will be no subject matter to be litigated on," Rukwaro says in his affidavit.

## NEWS GENERAL

## RESOURCE SHARING

# Call for better data systems to manage growing migration

*Protracted conflicts, combined with political instability, recurrent droughts fuel displacement*

BRIAN OTIENO  
@Yobramos4

MIGRATION of people in the Igad region is on the rise, underscoring the need for stronger data collection systems, harmonised statistics and evidence-based policies, a report has indicated.

Igad deputy executive secretary Mohamed Ware said reliable information is essential to guide collective action among the eight member states.

“It is through availability of accurate, reliable and timely data that we can develop evidence-based policies and national development plans to achieve the prospects of a resilient, peaceful, prosperous and integrated region where citizens enjoy a high quality of life,” Ware said.

He spoke on Thursday during the launch of the second edition of the Igad population and migration statistics report, which covers the period from 2010 to 2022.

The report indicates that in less than a decade, international migrants have increased by nearly 66 per cent, from 4.1 million in 2013 to 6.8 million in 2022.

Protracted conflicts in Sudan, South Sudan and Somalia, combined with political instability, recurrent droughts and food insecurity continue to displace millions.

By the end of 2022, the region, which includes Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda, hosted 4.3 million refugees, representing one in every six globally.



Igad's Oumalkaire Ahmed, Moaghd Ware and Rosemary Bowen in Mombasa on September 4 /BRIAN OTIENO

Host communities, under pressure themselves, are forced to share scarce resources, healthcare and education with those displaced.

The main migration pathways used include the Eastern corridor through Yemen to the Middle East, the Northern route through Sudan and Libya towards Europe and the Southern passage through Kenya and Tanzania to South Africa.

Charles Ogola, Igad secretariat's statistician at the health and social development division, said the region's population in 2022 was 283 million, a significant increase from 217 million in 2012.

The region covers about 5.2 mil-

lion square kilometres and forms a fifth of the African population. In 2022, its GDP was around \$338 billion (Sh43.7 trillion), with the working age population standing at around 169.7 million, of which 50.4 per cent are women. The labour force increased from 81.8 million in 2010 to 117.5 million in 2022.

“The working age migrants comprised 63.3 per cent of the total migrants,” Ogola noted when unpacking the report, adding that women and children form the majority of the refugees and asylum seekers.

Migrant labour force participation rate was at 69.6 per cent for men versus 47.6 per cent for women.

“That shows a big gender gap of about 22 per cent,” Ogola said.

Oumalkaire Ahmed, the Djibouti representative, said migration—whether cross-border, labour mobility or any other—remains at the heart of the region's development story.

“For us to manage this phenomenon effectively, we must understand it first, by ensuring we have credible information that is easily comparable and also very comprehensive.”

She called on member states to strengthen their partnerships and ensure the production of regular, more reliable data and effective reports that will support policy development and decision-making.

“Remember, migration is about the people, their aspirations, their challenges and contributions. So we need to have robust data so that we can have policies that harness the protection of migrant workers,” Ahmed said. Kenya National Bureau of Statistics director general Macdonald Obudho said migration is a phenomenon that transcends borders, driven by a complex interplay of economic, social, political and environmental factors.

In a speech read on his behalf by the KNBS acting director of population statistics Rosemary Bowen, Obudho said migration in the Igad region presents not only a challenge but also an opportunity because it is a driver of growth, cultural exchange and regional integration.

“However, it also presents significant governance challenges, particularly in ensuring safe, orderly and regular migration while addressing irregular migration and its associated risks,” the DG said.

Kenya, he said, has long been a hub for migration, serving as a place of origin, transit and destination for migrants and refugees.

Obudho said the report highlights the need for harmonised definitions, methodologies and data collection systems to ensure the production of reliable, timely and comparable migration statistics.

“As we launch this report, let us commit to implementing its recommendations and filling the gaps where necessary,” the director general said.

“Let us strengthen our national statistical systems, enhance regional cooperation and invest in the capacity of our institutions to collect, analyse and utilise migration data.”

## (+) INSTANT ANALYSIS

Kenya National Bureau of Statistics director general Macdonald Obudho said migration is a phenomenon that transcends borders, driven by a complex interplay of economic, social, political and environmental factors.

## TENSION

## Two killed in fresh Madogo clan clashes as leaders call for calm



Tana River's Madogo MCA Juma Ali during a community meeting /KNA

KNA

LOCAL leaders and community elders in Madogo, Tana River county have urged residents to help solve rising cases of crime and stop blame games.

This follows inter-community conflicts, which started after a man was killed by criminals during a robbery incident and in retaliation, another person was killed a day later.

Traders are also counting losses because over the past one week, there has been minimal business activities as fears spread across the town, forcing people to retire to their houses early.

Madogo MCA Juma Ali urged the residents to treat criminals as individuals and stop blaming actions by one person to an entire

innocent community. “Over the past few days, we have had tension in Madogo after someone was murdered and days later, another person was also killed. These incidents should not stir tribalism because those people were killed by criminals and not a certain tribe,” he said.

“There are criminals everywhere and when a criminal kills someone, it is not the tribe of the criminal that has killed, but rather the individual. We want the government to do thorough investigations and arrest those crooks.” Abdirahman Abadiba, a Munyoyaya community elder in Madogo blamed some parents for overlooking their children's suspicious activities and protecting them when caught in criminal activities.

He said there are many children in the area who have dropped out of school and joined criminal gangs, but their parents have done very little to warn them against crime.

“Let us co-exist peacefully and stop discriminating against people on the basis of tribe, race or religion,” Abadiba said.

## Gold mine collapse kills man in Migori

CYRUS OMBATI

A miner died after a gold mine pit collapsed in Kanyasrega village in Awendo, Migori county on Wednesday evening.

Police said Gordon Oluoch, 32, was in the pit alone while his colleagues pulled out the gold deposits he had dug out when it collapsed and trapped him.

He died in the pit before he was rescued. The body was retrieved and moved to the mortuary.

This is the latest such incident in the area which has deposits of gold and attracts locals to venture into it to make a living.

Dozens of miners have died in similar incidents in Siaya, Kakamega, Moyale and West Pokot amid a campaign to make the sites safer for mining.

The miners are accused of using heavy tools to excavate the products which weakens the walls, leading to their collapse.

## VOICES

## FLASHES OF GENIUS: WHY HEALTHCARE BREAKTHROUGHS STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE

*LMICs don't lack creativity, they are overflowing with it. But systems fail to recognise and elevate low-cost, high-impact solutions. Frugal innovation thrives in silence, unaided by policy, funding, or infrastructure*



A woman feeds expressed milk to a baby in an incubator at Webuye District Hospital on December 29, 2021. /ENOS TECHE

In many low- and middle-income countries, healthcare innovation is treated like a fragile sapling planted in concrete. The will to innovate exists, but the environment is infertile, promising ideas wither before bearing fruit. While health conferences tout “innovation” as the panacea for broken systems, the ground realities are fragmented systems, underinvestment and missed opportunities.

In LMICs, health innovation is often shackled by donor checklists from projects born from the whims of funding cycles. External dependency produces pilot projects that bloom briefly but die quietly once funding ends. Consider mobile health applications across Africa, backed by donors but disconnected from public health infrastructure. When the funding dries up, they evaporate.

LMICs don't lack creativity, they are overflowing with it. But systems fail to recognise and elevate low-cost, high-impact solutions. Frugal innovation—making the most of minimal resources—thrives in silence, unaided by policy, funding, or infrastructure. From Steven Johnson's book “Where Good Ideas Come From”, good ideas germinate slowly through “slow hunches” requiring incubation over time rather than sudden “Eureka” moments.

Across LMICs, the absence of investment in research and development results in ideas dying in the womb. Sub-Saharan Africa invests less than one per cent of its GDP in research and development (R&D), against the global average of 2.3 per cent. What little funding exists is tied to externally dictated research agendas that rarely prioritise locally driven innovation or needs.

In Africa, a low-cost neonatal incubator prototype designed locally stalled because

By Cosmas Mugambi

*Across LMICs, the absence of investment in research and development results in ideas dying in the womb. Sub-Saharan Africa invests less than 1% of its GDP in R&D, against global average of 2.3%*



no local funding body existed to support it. When innovations cannot move beyond early-stage development, the pipeline dries up, literally, the valley of death. Without investment in R&D, LMICs remain consumers of innovation rather than producers, importing expensive non-compatible solutions.

When great ideas emerge, they are suffocated by fragmented systems and institutional neglect. LMICs lack innovation ecosystems, spaces where innovators can collaborate from ideation to scale-up. In East Africa, innovation space is illustrative; multiple mobile maternal health solutions have been piloted with no scale-up. Without coordinated testing of platforms, procurement pathways, or regulatory clarity, these ideas often expire before they can have an impact.

Contrast this with Rwanda's collaboration with Zipline for drone-based medical deliveries, where political will, regulatory agility, and private sector collaboration created the right ecosystem for innovation to thrive. Such models remain the exception, not the norm.

Worse still, the intellectual energy of innovators migrates abroad, contributing to the continent's innovation brain drain. In most LMICs, policymakers are disconnected from

researchers, health systems ignore innovators and academic institutions receive no incentive to collaborate across sectors. Without a fertile ecosystem, innovation remains a stunted tree struggling to grow.

LMICs invest heavily in education, only to lose their best minds to systems that reward innovation elsewhere. Talented health professionals and tech entrepreneurs often leave due to stagnation, lack of opportunity or political interference. Lead developers emigrate due to professional marginalisation, with institutional continuity plans. The brain leaves, and so does the innovation. What a leak in talent!

In most LMICs, regulatory systems are designed to gatekeep imports, not to cultivate invention. Licensing is slow, guidelines are vague or outdated, and intellectual property protections are weak and expensive. Local innovators navigating approval is like walking a tightrope blindfolded.

Meanwhile, European platforms offering similar services are fast-tracked under bilateral arrangements, resulting in the suffocation of local innovation under bureaucracy while foreign solutions arrive wrapped in ribbon.

LMICs refuse to procure the very innovations developed within their borders. Local

products must clear more hurdles than foreign imports, despite being more affordable and culturally attuned. During the Covid-19 pandemic, manufacturers in LMICs produced affordable WHO-standard PPEs and sanitisers, but received no orders at home. In Senegal, a \$1 locally developed Covid-19 rapid test faced hesitancy in procurement locally.

Reverse innovation—exporting solutions from LMICs to high-income countries—remains rhetorical. Innovations from LMICs rarely make it to global markets due to structural biases in international procurement, stringent IP regimes and regulatory scepticism.

African engineers developed cost-effective emergency ventilators during the Covid-19 pandemic, but no procurement body in the Global North took them seriously. The lesson: you can innovate, but do not expect the world to care.

Innovation in LMICs is not absent. It is abundant, but orphaned, undernourished and undervalued. For it to thrive, LMICs must stop treating innovation as a series of donor-funded sprints and start building long-term systems for endurance.

That means investing in R&D, creating test beds in local hospitals, designing procurement systems that reward homegrown solutions and valuing frugal ingenuity as much as polished platforms. Innovation must be something we grow with our hands, rooted in our own soil, solving our own problems and inspiring the world.

*Health leadership scholar at the University of Oxford's Saïd Business School and the Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences.*



## Editorial

### MAKE IMPEACHMENT OF GOVERNORS HARDER

Kenya's impeachment framework needs a rethink. Since devolution began in 2013, 11 governors and four deputies have faced impeachment motions by MCAs. Yet only two, Mike Sonko and Ferdinand Waititu, were ever removed from office. All others were rescued by the Senate or by the courts.

This vast imbalance reveals that impeachment has become a creature of politics, rather than an instrument of justice. The frequent motions suggest misuse. Lawyer Elisha Ongoya put it bluntly: "MCAs are using the power to impeach a sitting governor as their bargaining tool. You either give us what we want or we impeach you." That is not oversight. That's blackmail.

That is why this system needs reform. For instance, a new bill proposes barring MCAs from initiating impeachment in the first six months of a governor's term. That would at least give leaders a chance to settle in and serve without fear of immediate ouster.

Senators should ensure such a bill sails through because many of them also harbour ambitions to become governors.

MCAs' duty is to ensure good governance. But too often the impeachment route is used to settle political scores rather than to uphold the constitution.

Let us make the impeachment process more deliberate. Add timelines. Demand stronger evidence. And require genuine, not partisan, grounds. Only then can impeachment be restored to its noble purpose, and safeguard our counties, not destabilise them.

#### HISTORICAL QUOTE

*"Action indeed is the sole medium of expression for ethics."*

**JANE ADDAMS**

The American pacifist, social activist, feminist, author and Nobel laureate was born on September 6, 1860

# KENYAN Quiz!

**Just how knowledgeable are you  
about Kenya and most things  
Kenyan?**

*Let's find out...*

- » How much did President Ruto buy a bull for at the Mombasa Agricultural Show on Thursday?
- » Name Kenya's most dangerous road by pedestrian deaths.
- » Who is the captain of the national football team Harambee Stars?
- » Who is the Cabinet Secretary for Mining?
- » Which town houses the headquarters of Tharaka Nithi county?
- » How many presidents have ruled Kenya since Independence?
- » What does the abbreviation KEPHIS stand for?
- » Who is the governor of the Central Bank of Kenya?
- » Name Kenya's second-highest court?
- » Which celebrity has been in the news recently over debt owed to Harambee Stars players?

**HOW DID I DO?**

EMAIL 'ANSWERS'

TO STARWEEKEND@RADIOAFRICAGROUP.CO.KE

AND WE WILL SEND YOU THE ANSWERS

**6-10**

"KNOWLEDGE IS POWER.

KEEP IT UP"

## NEWS BUSINESS

## TIES

## Kenya, China seek to deepen ties in fresh deal

JACKTONE LAWI

KENYA and China are looking to expand ties in research, trade and knowledge sharing after the two nations' business chambers entered into a partnership.

In the plan, China Chamber of Commerce for Import of Machinery and Electronic Products (CCCME), Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Kenya Investment Authority will jointly work together.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) paves the way for enhanced collaboration through knowledge sharing, trade facilitation and joint research, as China looks to

cement its position as Kenya's largest trading and investment partner.

Kenya-China bilateral trade surpassed \$8billion (Sh1.03 trillion) in 2024, driven largely by imports of industrial equipment, electronics and construction materials.

The new MOU that was signed on the sidelines of a three-day fair, organised by Afripeak Expo Kenya is expected to open more doors for joint ventures, industrial upgrading, and technology transfer.

Afripeak Expo Kenya managing director, Gao Wei, said the event is aimed at connecting Kenyan businesses with global suppliers.

"The Kenya International Industrial Expo is more than an exhibition, it is

a platform for innovation, partnership and industrial transformation.

This year, we expect greater engagement as global exhibitors bring tailored solutions to meet Africa's evolving industrial needs," he said.

The three-day fair, organised by Afripeak Expo Kenya Ltd in partnership with the Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Kenya Investment Authority, has attracted more than 200 Chinese exhibitors and over 6,000 visitors.

Running under the theme "Investing in Tomorrow – Trading for Prosperity," this year's expo features cutting-edge solutions across construction, manufacturing, energy, green technologies, automotive, ICT

and agriculture. Organisers say the platform aligns with Kenya Vision 2030 and the government's Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda by supporting SME growth, technology transfer and sustainable industrial practices.

Kenya's strategic location and

integration within the East African Community (EAC) and the African Continental Free Trade Area (Af-CFTA) positions it as a gateway to Africa's 1.3-billion-person market.

The expo aims to leverage this advantage by attracting regional buyers, investors and policymakers.



China Chamber of Commerce for Import and Export of Machinery and Electronic Products vice president Shi Yonghong and KNCCI acting CEO KK Mutai /DOUGLAS OKIDDY

## TREND

## Most Kenyans spend up to six hours on social media daily

Survey shows WhatsApp, Facebook and YouTube most used platforms

MARTIN MWITA  
@MwitaMartin

MOST Kenyans spend between three to six hours on social media platforms daily, an industry survey indicates, a trend also replicated in Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa and Uganda.

This, as WhatsApp, Facebook and YouTube remain the top three most used platforms, followed by TikTok, Instagram and X (Twitter), the Smartphone and Social Media Usage 2025 survey buy global research firm- GeoPoll indicates.

Other platforms are LinkedIn, Snapchat, Pinterest, Threads and Reddit, with smartphones being the most used gadget (98%).

Between 2023 and 2025, social media usage in Africa has evolved from platform-specific engagement to near-universal adoption, with 98 per cent of respondents in 2025 reporting active use.

"While Facebook maintained its dominant position with 82 per cent usage in both years, WhatsApp surged ahead in 2025, becoming the most-used platform at 90 per cent, highlighting a shift toward private messaging and real-time communication," GeoPoll says in its report.

TikTok and Instagram also experienced notable growth, rising from 60 per cent to 72 per cent and 54 per cent to 60 per cent, respectively, driven by their visual and interactive content formats. Meanwhile, Twitter/X remained stable at 49 per cent. Platforms like LinkedIn, Snapchat, and Pinterest showed steady increases, reflecting growing interest in professional networking, ephemeral content and inspiration-based media.

GeoPoll, powered by TuCho conducted a study between July 22 and 25th via GeoPoll's mobile web platform, reaching a total of 3,945 respondents across four African countries: Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda and Kenya,



Social media users /VICTOR IMBOTO

Overall usage shows that 31 per cent of users engage for one to three hours. In addition, 20 per cent of users report spending six to nine hours on social media, while nine per cent dedicate nine to 12 hours.

A smaller segment, around seven per cent, spends more than half of their day on social media, with this data highlighting the significant amount of time many individuals invest in these online interactions.

In terms of how phones are used, browsing the internet emerged as the top activity (85%), followed closely by making voice and video calls (80%), and sending text messages (SMS) (80%). Other common uses include accessing social media platforms (78%), using chat apps such as WhatsApp (74%), and sending or receiving emails (71%).

As part of the broader social media usage trends, WhatsApp stands out not only as the most widely used platform but also as one of the most versatile. The majority of respondents (91%) use WhatsApp primarily for personal and group messaging, reinforcing its role as a central tool for everyday communication.

Additionally, 79 per cent of users share daily moments via status updates, while 78 per cent use it for voice and video calls, showcasing its multi-functional capabilities.

Media sharing is also prevalent, with 69 per cent of respondents engaging in this activity, and 64 per cent report using WhatsApp for business purposes, such as showcasing product catalogs and interacting with clients.

When asked whether they had ever purchased a product advertised on social media, a substantial 80 per cent of respondents answered "yes", indicating that social media plays a significant role in influencing consumer behavior.

"This strong majority highlights the effectiveness of social media platforms as marketing and e-commerce channels, particularly in shaping buying decisions through targeted ads, influencer promotions and engaging visual content," the report states, as Kenya remains among countries with a high smartphone and internet penetration in Africa.

Smartphone penetration in Kenya was 80.8 per cent as of March 2025, according to the Communications Authority of Kenya, representing over 42

million smartphone devices on active networks. This figure is a result of ongoing growth, driven by factors such as service provider promotions, the increasing availability of affordable devices through financing (Lipa mdogo mdogo) and a growing demand for high-speed internet for digital services like e-learning and e-commerce.

## SOCIAL MEDIA IMPACT

When asked about the impact of social media on their overall well-being and mental health, the majority of respondents reported a positive experience. Specifically, 60 per cent described the impact as very positive, while an additional 23 per cent felt it was somewhat positive.

About 16 per cent remained neutral, suggesting a balanced or mixed experience with only a small fraction perceived any harm, with two per cent indicating a somewhat negative impact and one per cent reporting a very negative effect.

Overall, the data suggests that most users associate their social media use with enhanced well-being and mental health. The recent study also reveals that more than half of the respondents (53%) have taken a break from social media at some point due to its negative impact on their well-being, while 48 per cent have never paused from social media usage.

## (+ INSTANT ANALYSIS

A global analysis using nationally representative data from the 2020 Wellcome Global Monitor (among residents of 15 years and above in 113 countries), found that social media use increases the risk of self-reported generalised anxiety and depression worldwide—including in low, middle and high-income settings.

## DECISION

## Kenya Re board suspends MD Wachinga for 21 days

MARTIN MWITA

KENYA Reinsurance Corporation Limited (Kenya Re) has suspended its managing director Hillary Wachinga for 21 days, with effect from September 3, in a decision made by the board "following a preliminary review of internal matters, which is ongoing."

Company secretary Charles Kariuki, in a statement, said the board believes the action is in the best interests of the listed reinsurer and its stakeholders, to allow for a thorough and impartial assessment.

"The board has appointed Nicodemus Gekone, currently the general manager property and investments, to serve as the acting managing director during this period. The board has full confidence in Mr. Gekone's ability to provide steady leadership during this period," the statement reads in part.

This, as the board of directors reaffirmed its "unwavering commitment" to the highest standards of corporate governance and to protecting the interests of all its shareholders and stakeholders.

"We remain focused on executing our long-term strategy and assure our stakeholders that our foundations remain strong and our business operations continue uninterrupted," it said, "The board will provide further updates as appropriate. We thank you for your continued trust and support."

Listed on the Nairobi Securities Exchange, Kenya Re is the oldest reinsurer in Eastern and Central Africa. It was established through an Act of Parliament in December 1970 and commenced business in January 1971. Its core activity is providing reinsurance services for most classes of business.

Since its inception, Kenya Re has progressively and consistently continued to provide reinsurance services to more than 482 companies spread out in over 83 countries in Africa, Middle East and Asia.

## SASA CONSERVATION

# Why giraffe species matter: Scientists make their case

Distinguishing them is key to Red List assessments, targeted action and cross-border control



**BONFACE ORUCHO FOR BIRD STORY AGENCY/** At Naboisho Conservancy in Narok, Jowel Mulama spends his mornings scanning the savannah, watching wildlife move slowly across the grasslands. Among them, giraffes have always stood out.

“They are gentle but at the same time commanding,” he said on a call. “Every time you watch them, you notice something new: their grace, their height, the way they interact. To me, giraffes have always been different from any other animal.”

For Mulama, the new scientific classification is more than just a technical change.

“This is a unique reclassification because for the longest time, a giraffe has just been a giraffe,” he said.

“Not many people pay attention to them the way they do to elephants or lions. But this shows how much more there is to learn.”

Now, science has caught up with what field researchers and local communities have long suspected.

After more than a decade of DNA sampling, morphological studies and tracking giraffe movements across Africa, experts have reached a groundbreaking conclusion: giraffes are not one species but four.

On August 21, the International

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*This taxonomic revision reflects the best available science and provides a globally standardised framework to inform conservation*

Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) formally recognised Northern, Reticulated, Masai and Southern giraffes as distinct species.

The announcement was made by the IUCN Species Survival Commission’s Giraffe and Okapi Specialist Group in Windhoek, Namibia.

The group’s co-chair Michael Brown welcomed the development.

“This taxonomic revision reflects the best available science and provides a globally standardised framework to inform conservation,” he said.

The decision overturned decades of classification that treated giraffes as a single species with nine subspecies.

Experts describe it as “the most significant shift in giraffe taxonomy” in more than a century, one that will reshape protection strategies for the world’s tallest land mammal.

“Recognising these four species is vital for accurate Red List assessments, targeted action and

coordinated management across borders,” Brown said.

Namibia has provided one of the clearest success stories.

According to Explorers Against Extinction, the country is home to about 15,000 Angolan giraffes and a smaller population of South African giraffes.

In the remote Kunene region, giraffe numbers have risen fivefold since the early 2000s, supported by communal conservancies and long-term monitoring.

In northwest Namibia’s arid landscape, from the Kunene River south to the Hoanib, conservation has raised the desert-dwelling Angolan giraffe population from about 450 individuals in 2022 to 472 by mid-2024, according to the GCF.

Much of this recovery is rooted in Namibia’s communal conservancy model, introduced in 1996.

The framework grants local communities management rights over natural resources and wildlife.

Today, 86 communal conservancies cover more than a fifth of the

country, creating vast landscapes managed for eco-tourism, habitat protection and conservation.

The model generates more than \$5.5 million annually for local communities, revenues reinvested into anti-poaching, schools, health services and wildlife protection.

The Masai giraffe (*Giraffa tippelskirchi*) is also holding steady, with about 43,900 spread across Kenya and Tanzania.

Translocation projects beyond its core range, including in Rwanda and Zambia, have restored small populations, highlighting the role of cross-border collaboration in conservation.

The Reticulated giraffe (*Giraffa reticulata*) is also a case of recovery.

Once facing sharp declines, it now numbers around 20,900.

Much of this rebound is tied to community conservancies in northern Kenya, where local stewardship and eco-tourism revenues create strong incentives for protection. Conservationists describe it as one of Africa’s more visible success stories.

The Northern giraffe (*Giraffa camelopardalis*) remains the most threatened, with only about 7,000 left. Yet even here, community action has driven progress.

In Niger, the West African giraffe has climbed from just 49 individuals in the 1990s to nearly 660 today, according to the GCF.

The recovery is anchored in community patrols and the establishment of a ‘Giraffe Zone’ east of Niamey, where local people share farmland with giraffes and benefit from eco-tourism.

To reduce the risks of having all the giraffes in one place, conservationists launched Operation Sahel Giraffe in 2018, moving eight giraffes more than 800km to the Gadabedji Biosphere Reserve.

A second relocation in 2022 transferred four more females, establishing a new wild population.

Local engagement remains central in Africa’s giraffe conservation story.

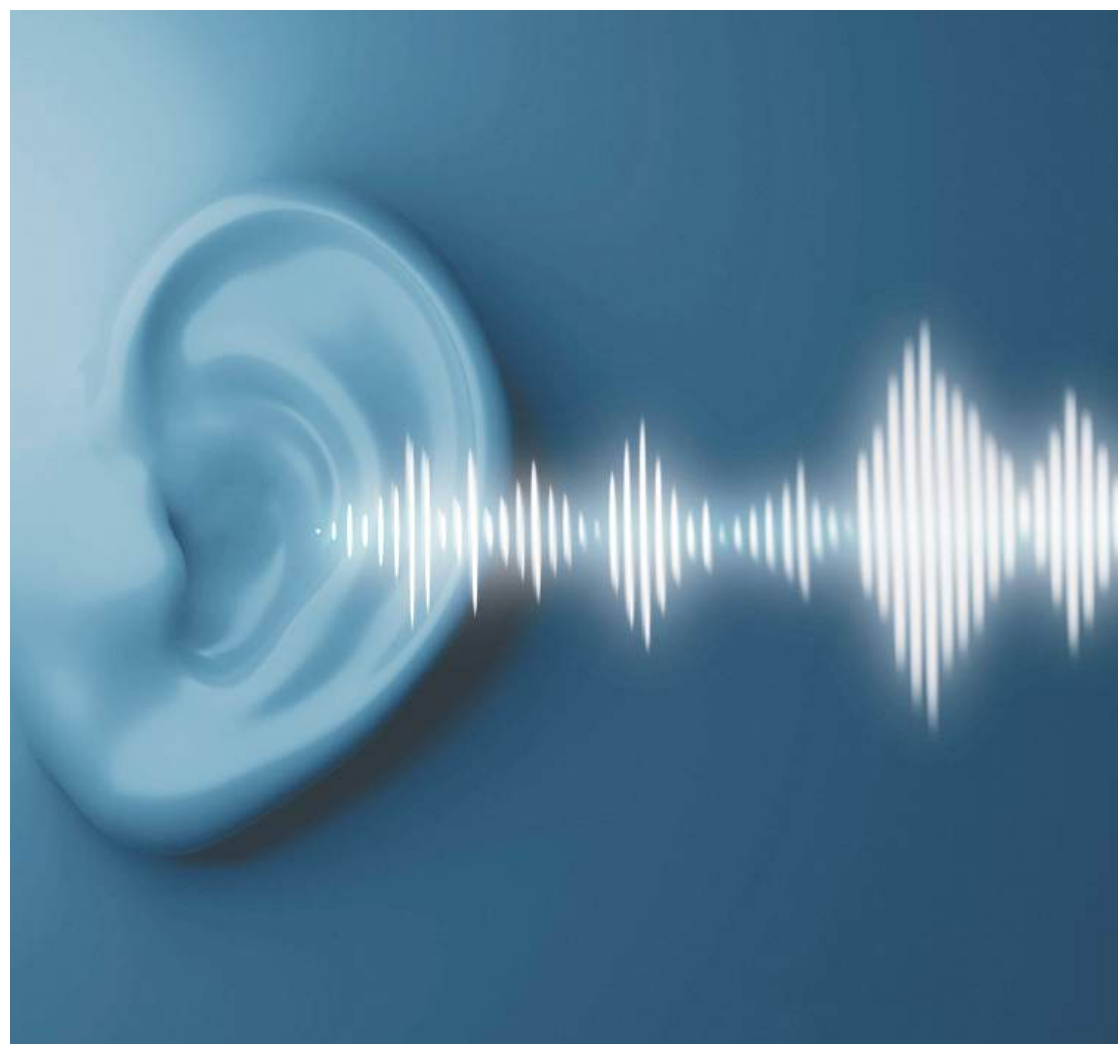
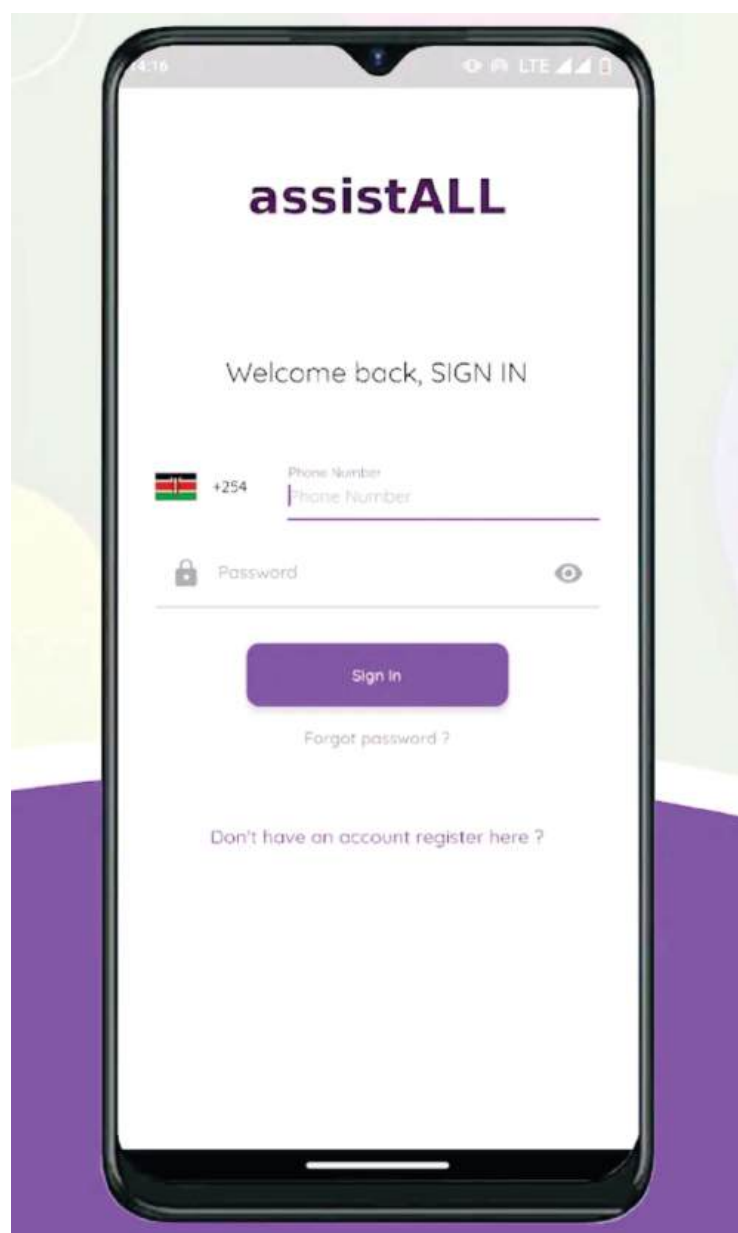
Community guides working under the Association for the Valorisation of Ecotourism in Niger lead giraffe tourism and monitoring, while initiatives like “One Student, One Acacia” encourage schoolchildren to plant trees to restore giraffe habitat.

**‘THIS RECLASSIFICATION IS A UNIQUE THING BECAUSE FOR THE LONGEST TIME, A GIRAFFE HAS JUST BEEN A GIRAFFE’**

## SASA INCLUSIVITY

# The app bringing healthcare closer for the deaf patients

assistALL gets sign language interpreters to liaise with doctors within seconds of logging in



**KEMUNTO OGUTU/** Dominic Mbogho still remembers the night the maternity ward fell quiet.

A young mother in hard labour clenched the rails of her bed, unable to voice the pain twisting through her body. Her sister stood beside her, frantically signing: a relay of gestures to describe contractions, fear and the question every midwife must answer: How much longer?

“It struck me then how fragile everything becomes when you can’t talk to each other,” says Mbogho, a nurse at Nairobi’s Pumwani Maternity Hospital. “You can’t treat what you don’t understand.”

For years, Mbogho, like many of his colleagues, relied on hastily scribbled notes, family members or sheer guesswork to understand and piece together a deaf patient’s medical history. Now, he holds up a phone and taps an icon labelled assistALL. Within moments, a live sign-language interpreter fills the screen.

“You log in, call and suddenly, you understand your patient directly,” he says. “No more guessing, no more misdiagnosis. It’s a relief for us and a lifeline for them.”

This is the promise behind Nairobi city county’s new pilot of assistALL, a Kenyan-built app that streams Kenya Sign Language interpreters to hospital wards and consulting rooms at the touch of a button.

**‘SOME DOCTORS WRITE IN KISWAHILI, AND I CAN’T UNDERSTAND. IF THEY SWITCH TO ENGLISH, THE SENTENCE STRUCTURE IS HARD BECAUSE KENYAN SIGN LANGUAGE’S IS DIFFERENT. MANY TIMES YOU LEAVE WITHOUT REALLY KNOWING WHAT MEDICINE YOU’VE BEEN GIVEN’**

The six-month pilot, which began last week, covers all 118 county-run facilities and will remain free for healthcare staff until December.

assistALL is not untested in the hospital setup. County hospitals in Busia and Mandera have been using it for almost a year now. But Nairobi, a metropolis of nearly three million people, many living in congested informal settlements, is where the stakes are highest.

Each day, thousands file through its clinics, dispensaries and referral hospitals. Among them are an estimated 150,000 deaf Kenyans, whose clinical encounters frequently stall at the reception desk.

Globally, poor communication is linked to longer hospital stays, inappropriate treatment and avoidable deaths. For deaf patients, the risks multiply.

#### CHANGING THE NARRATIVE

Ruth Wairimu, a deaf news host at Signs Media, the company behind assistALL, grew up dreading medical visits.

She recalls the numerous times when communication was a barrier between herself and her doctors, often making her treatment experience more difficult. Doctors would be forced to resort to writ-

ing as a form of communication.

“Some doctors write in Kiswahili, and I can’t understand,” she explains through an interpreter. “If they switch to English, the sentence structure is hard because Kenyan Sign Language sentence structure is different. Many times you leave without really knowing what medicine you’ve been given.”

Signs Media founder and MD Luke Muleka has a deeply personal connection to disability inclusion.

“Disability inclusion has been at the heart of my upbringing,” he said.

“When I was born, the sister I followed was deaf and epileptic. This has always been a journey for me, trying to figure out how to give her a better, more inclusive life than what she had before.”

This motivation led to the creation of Signs TV, a sign language television station launched in 2017 that has been broadcast ever since.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Luke and his team noticed a critical challenge for the deaf community: accessing sign language interpretation while healthcare workers and interpreters were masked and shielded.

“Face masks, gloves and face shields, all prescribed by WHO,

became barriers,” Muleka said.

“Sign language is an expressive language. The formation of the face and lips, especially for those who lip-read, is crucial. Communication is direct through the eyes and facial expressions.”

Recognising this problem, they saw the need to bridge the gap by bringing sign language interpretation into the virtual space.

“We launched an app with the six interpreters we had at the time. By the end of Covid, that number had grown to 20,” he said.

As usage of the app grew, they began looking at broader challenges the deaf community faces beyond the pandemic, in healthcare, education, employment, financial inclusion and access to conferences.

“Deaf people have often been denied access to conferences because they want to bring a sign language interpreter. What if they could have a virtual interpreter instead?”

This insight motivated them to evolve the app into a robust platform. Initially supporting only two to 10 simultaneous calls, it can now handle around 100 calls at once.

Muleka highlighted a key challenge: economic empowerment



for persons with disabilities, especially deaf people, many of whom use basic phones rather than smartphones.

“We realised instead of expecting deaf people to carry the app, why not equip healthcare providers with it? They have smartphones, and wherever they work, there’s usually internet access.”

With the app, users dial through Nairobi county’s system for free sign language interpretation. However, if a deaf person tries to use the app independently and is not registered with the county’s system, there is a cost.

He said virtual interpretation reduces the logistical challenges of in-person interpreters to almost negligible levels.

“A regular customer pays Sh30 per minute, billed per second.”

#### EXPANDING ACCESS

Nairobi medical services director Dr Essam Said said the assistALL app is being rolled out to health facilities across the county.

The city faces a heavy healthcare burden, serving nearly 3 million people, many living in informal settlements.

“We are excited about this partnership and invite all stakeholders, local and international, to come together to create innovative ways to ensure all Kenyans can access quality healthcare as guaranteed by the constitution,” he said.

With 118 operational facilities and about 5,000 staff, Dr Said said it’s impossible to train everyone to interpret sign language.

The app will allow services to be available 24/7 for people with hearing impairments without relying solely on human interpreters.

“Before, we assigned interpreters to assist patients, but As-

assist All helps us scale access to these services, while managing the high costs of capacity building,” Dr Said said.

He said Governor Johnson Saka-ja’s administration is committed to bringing dignity and hope through innovative healthcare solutions.

“This app benefits not only clients with hearing impairments but also creates job opportunities, which is very important as our country grows,” he said.

For Muleka, partnership is the only route to scale. “Healthcare is Sustainable Development Goal 3, but partnership is SDG 17,” he says.

“You need both.” Under the pilot, Nairobi residents who register through county systems will access the interpreter pool at no cost. Independent users can still dial in, paying Sh30 a minute, billed per second.

assistALL’s interface is deliberately simple: a large video window, mute and end-call but-

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*We are excited about this partnership and invite all stakeholders, local and international, to come together to create innovative ways to ensure all Kenyans can access quality healthcare as guaranteed by the constitution*

tons. Wairimu remembers her first test call.

“You press the button and within seconds, there is someone signing back,” she says.

“The doctor can ask, ‘Where is the pain exactly?’ And I can answer in my language.”

Would she still prefer a live interpreter? “Yes,” she nods, “but interpreters are busy or far. The app is always there, even at 2am.”

That constant presence is what excites physiotherapist Bala Konsept. Three weeks ago, she treated a volleyball player at Nyayo National Stadium who happened to be deaf.

“One woman typed on her phone, but when I asked the player to describe the pain further, she couldn’t,” Konsept says.

Without an interpreter around, she had to offer treatment based on what she could make of the typed conversation.

#### QUALITY CONTROL

Signs Media quality control officer Minnie Mbese plays a central role in safeguarding the integrity of the sign language services offered.

“For our interpreters, it’s not just about signing up,” she says. “We do rigorous background checks before anyone is allowed to interpret through the app.”

Every prospective interpreter submits their credentials, including a CV and training certificates, before facing a panel interview that includes deaf professionals.

“We assess not just fluency in signing but also their ability to voice for the deaf and maintain accuracy,” Mbese says.

So far, while more than 500 interpreters have registered on the platform, only about 30 have passed these stringent checks.

“We also record interpretation sessions, not for surveillance but for quality assurance,” she says.

“If a deaf user reports a concern, we can review the recording to ensure the service met our standards.”

While the goal is to have seamless app functions, Mbese says technical glitches do happen (“It’s human-made, after all”) but a dedicated developer works around the clock to fix bugs swiftly.

Daily app testing by the admin team also helps ensure reliability.

And if a call drops? “You can reconnect with the same interpreter or pick another one from the approved list. The goal is uninterrupted, dignified access to communication,” Mbese says.

Her message to the deaf community is simple but urgent: “Please, try the app. It’s the first of its kind in Kenya and Africa. Whether you’re in a hospital, police station or any public service point, it’s here to help you be heard.”

Yet technology alone cannot erase systemic gaps. Mbogho still advocates teaching basic signs to every medical personnel.

“If only one person knows sign language and they’re off duty, we’re stuck,” he says.

Outside hospitals, assistALL is finding unexpected uses. Families use it to practise sign language with deaf children. Jobseekers deploy it in interviews. Couples borrow interpreters for dates. “Deaf people don’t live in isolation,” Muleka says. “They want to study, work, fall in love.”

Economic inclusion is the next frontier. Signs Media is testing a lighter version that runs on basic handsets through Unstructured Supplementary Service Data.

“If you can book mobile mon-

**‘WE REALISED INSTEAD OF EXPECTING DEAF PEOPLE TO CARRY THE APP, WHY NOT EQUIP HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS WITH IT? THEY HAVE SMARTPHONES AND USUALLY INTERNET ACCESS’**

ey on a feature phone, you should be able to book an interpreter,” Muleka says.

For Nairobi’s health service, the question is whether digital interpretation can outlive donor interest. In many counties, assistive technologies flare brightly at launch only to dim with budget cycles.

Dr Said is adamant this pilot will avoid that fate. He said sustainability is central to every partnership.

“Whenever Nairobi county’s health, wellness and nutrition sector sits with partners, there’s always a discussion about sustainability and how this app will continue to operate,” he said.

He outlined a risk mitigation approach. “Our first step is to gather information during this pilot, understand the challenges that arise and then scale up from there.”

A whole-of-government approach, he said, is important. “Once we have the data, we will engage with the national government and the Social Health Insurance system (SHA) to empower sustainability through integrated health financing.”

He expects challenges to arise but remains optimistic. “We are very excited to address these challenges holistically and move forward together.”

## SASA MUSINGS OF A MODERN MUM



# The newborn bubble and the countdown to inevitable end

The luxury of postpartum care does not exist for those living far from home

**NABILA HATIMY/** I don't know what day it is. I don't know what the date is. The only thing I know is the new information I gather about my new baby on a daily basis.

From the daily cues, I can learn if he is eating more or sleeping less. What works for him, what doesn't.

Last night as I lay in bed breastfeeding him for the umpteenth time, I thought about the last time I had a full night's sleep. It was three Sundays ago. Then why does it feel like forever ago? I can barely remember a time when our new addition was not in our lives.

My newborn has been with us for three weeks, yet it feels longer. Currently my world revolves around him. What I eat, when I sleep and so on.

Not only that but I live in this giant loop of everyday activities: eating, breastfeeding, sleeping, changing diapers... and before I know it, the day

is gone and I get to repeat the cycle all night and all day long. It's as though I woke up in the movie 'Groundhog Day'. Every day I wake up, my days look exactly the same.

Most of us born and raised in certain cultural backgrounds believe in the postpartum recovery process often gained through confinement.

A mother and her newborn will often stay over at her maternal family to be taken care of as she recovers from the traumas of birth.

Sometimes, the family members will stay with the new mother at her marital home as they help to take care of the grown children and household duties.

The month post-birth is crucial for a new mother and baby to rest and recover from child birth. During this time, the mother is discouraged from doing any household or wifely duties to allow the body time

to heal. The mother also gets to bond with the new infant without worry.

Unfortunately those of us who live in the diaspora or far from our families are not in a position to enjoy such luxuries. Luckily, in some countries, they recognise how much a woman needs to rest post-birth, and thus allow the woman a longer stay in the hospital.

I spent five days in the hospital post-birth and I have been lucky to have a partner who has shouldered most of the responsibilities in the home, including taking care of the toddler.

As the days dwindle past and my partner's leave is slowly coming to an end, I can't help but panic at losing my newborn bubble. The days of focusing solely on my needs and the baby's needs are fast coming to an end. Before I know it, I will be forced to embrace my new role in life as a stay at home mother of two.

**AS THE DAYS DWINDLE PAST AND MY PARTNER'S LEAVE IS SLOWLY COMING TO AN END, I CAN'T HELP BUT PANIC AT LOSING MY NEWBORN BUBBLE**



## FACT-CHECK

FACTS

VS

MYTHS

# ALTERED: Video of Uhuru purportedly advising Rigathi on 2027 political merger is doctored

**T**his video on Facebook, claiming to show former Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta urging former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua to unite with politicians Fred Matiang'i and Kalonzo Musyoka for the 2027 election, is **ALTERED**.

The text accompanying the video states, "Former president Uhuru Kenyatta to Gachagua." In the clip, Uhuru purportedly says: "Rigathi Gachagua, please unite with Fred Matiang'i and Kalonzo Musyoka, and that is the only way you can defeat Kasongo in 2027."

Kasongo is a nickname some Kenyans use to refer to incumbent President William Ruto. Originating from a popular Lingala song, it is often used in memes and satirical posts to mock or criticise Ruto's administration.

But is the video authentic?

PesaCheck conducted a Google reverse image search on a screenshot from the video, which led to the original footage of Kenyatta discussing communication during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Both the authentic and altered clips bear the NTV logo. In the original video, Uhuru talks about the communication strategies the government adopted during the pandemic.

At no point does Kenyatta make political endorsements or mention

Gachagua, Matiang'i, Musyoka or the 2027 election.

A close examination of the altered clip reveals clear mismatches between Uhuru's lip movements and the audio. These inconsistencies are typical signs of AI-based manipulation, often referred to as poor lip-synching.

To further verify the claim, PesaCheck ran the video through the Hive Moderation detection tool. The analysis returned an aggregate score of 99.8 per cent AI-generated content, revealing that while the video itself is authentic, the audio is likely to be AI-generated.

This confirms that the speech attributed to Uhuru was artificially created and overlaid on the genuine footage. There are no credible media reports or official statements to support the claim that Uhuru made such remarks.

PesaCheck also contacted Kanze Dena, the director of communications at the Office of the Fourth President, who termed the claim "fake" in a phone call.

PesaCheck examined a video shared on Facebook claiming to show former President Uhuru Kenyatta calling on Rigathi Gachagua to unite with Fred Matiang'i and Kalonzo Musyoka for the 2027 election and found it to be **ALTERED**.

By PesaCheck



# NEWS PICTORIAL



Nang'la Ekomwa, peace committee chairperson for Sarima in Loiyangalani subcounty, during a public forum /KNA



Kisumu youth affairs, sports and culture executive Beatrice Odongo and county commissioner Benson Leparmorijo during the Youth Innovation and Creativity Model Day organised by Nyalenda Young Turks community based organisation at the Youth Empowerment Centre in Kasagam police station /KNA



Media personalities DJ Soxyy, Femi One, Mashirima Kapombe and Kambua pose for a photo during a roundtable maternal health initiative spearheaded by Better4Kenya at Dusit Princess Hotel on Thursday /DOUGLAS OKIDDY



Peace ambassador Joshua Kaputa hands food items to women from Majengo and London estates in Narok town /KNA



Controversial preacher Paul Mackenzie and lawyer Lawrence Obonyo at the Tononoka Children's Court. Kenya Prisons Service has dismissed claims by Mackenzie that his life is at risk in Shimo la Tewa Maximum Prison, where he is being held in connection with the Shakahola cult massacre /KNA



Gender, youth, sports and social welfare executive Sharon Mutua (right) and Lilian Njiru, Bamburi's corporate affairs manager, engage trainers at Kyemutheke Vocational Training Centre in Machakos /KNA



Kuresoi North MP Alfred Mutai (centre) and Environment and Climate Change PS Festus Ng'eno in Bararget Forest, Kuresoi North subcounty. The government has stepped up efforts to revive the Mau Forest complex with the launch of an integrated conservation and livelihoods programme aimed at protecting the country's largest water tower, while boosting the economic well-being of local communities /KNA



Education Cabinet Secretary Julius Ogamba addresses the media at Maasai Mara Technical and Vocational Institute in Narok after presiding over the 'Elimu Mashinani' forum at Maasai Mara University /KNA

**SASA** DIARY OF A PERPETUAL BACHELOR

# Liar? But it's human nature

The ability to tell a lie is what keep relationships going, but don't get too good at it



**DAVID MUCHAI** / Diary,

Mark Twain said, “Man is the only animal that blushes — or needs to.” More importantly, he also said, “Of all the animals, man is the only one that lies.”

According to the fabled writer, what separates us from animals is our ability to be deceitful. That is a very strong argument against stuff like relationships, which rely on trust, which means telling the truth.

It's impossible to live a life completely devoid of lies. Let's start with the innocent, harmless fibs.

“How do I look in this dress?” If you know she really wants that dress, the only answer is, “Fabulous, darling,” even if you know she looks like ham wrapped in satin.

What about that time your significant other asks, “Do you think my friend is beautiful?”

It doesn't matter that the friend she's referring to is Sarah Hassan. If you say something insinuating, even slightly, that there is the slenderest possibility that a tiny part of her friend might be minimally likeable, you're in trouble.

“What, babe? Seriously, I can't tell you I've noticed her.” That's the right answer. It doesn't matter that when she's around, all you do is gawk at her.

Human beings have been so accustomed to lie that we only tell the truth if it's absolutely not necessary to lie, or there is no lie

appropriate for the occasion. A woman will buy a new dress and wear it to a party. Then a person will compliment her: “What a beautiful dress! I'm so jealous of how you know what will fit you just so.”

She'll blush and say, “Oh, you mean this old thing? I usually rummage in the closet and slap whatever catches my eye.”

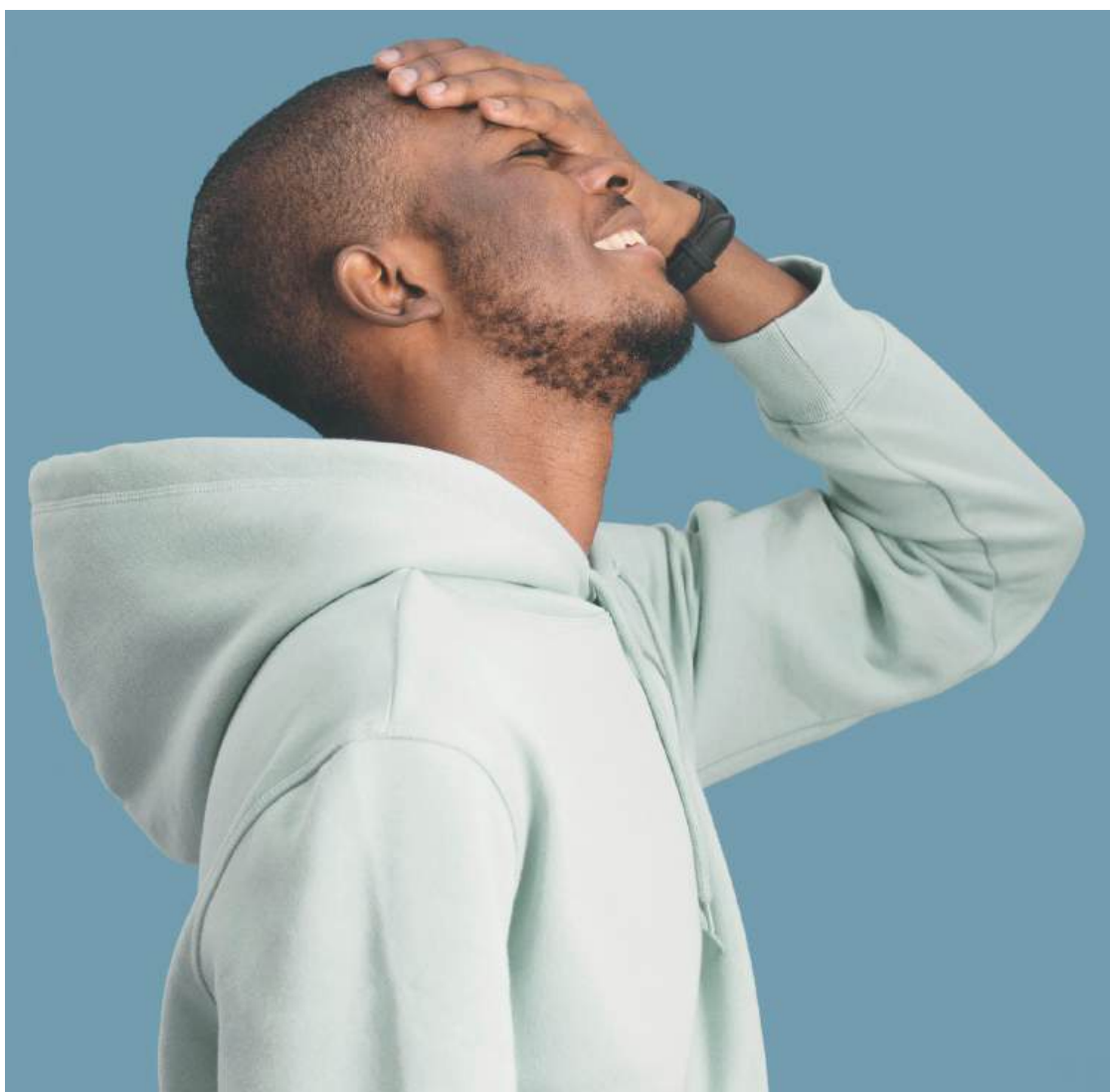
And that's from a woman who spent three hours in the mall, trying on a hundred different dresses, and only after the shop owner was wheeled away in an ambulance after finally going insane did the woman settle on one.

The day I find a man who tells the truth about his bank account balance, that's the day I'll know we have aliens walking among us and they are yet to be fully familiarised with our customs.

Doesn't matter whether a man is dirt poor or a billionaire (Trump, anyone?), every man is richer than he really is. So is the size of his manhood.

Two things keep relationships going: the ability to tell a lie, and the quality of the said lie. You must be good in at least one of them, otherwise you'll be labelled stuff like loser and deadbeat.

If you are too good in at least one of them, that's bad. You get labelled a player. You also cannot be good at both of these qualities. The ability to always tell a very good lie makes you a psychopath.



## NEWS COUNTIES

## FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE

# Usaid issues Sh12.8m tools to empower Kisumu families

Owili says Usaid's support is helping bridge gaps caused by limited county resources



Kisumu Deputy Governor Mathew Owili hands over business assets to a beneficiary under the Usaid 4TheChild project in Kisumu /FAITH MATETE

FAITH MATETE  
@faymatete

VULNERABLE households in Kisumu county have received a major boost after the Usaid 4TheChild project flagged off the distribution

of productive business assets worth Sh12.8 million to help families achieve financial independence.

The investment is part of a wider initiative covering several counties, but Kisumu alone accounted for Sh9 million in allocations due to its high

number of beneficiaries. Speaking during the handover on Thursday, George Okoth, chief of party for Usaid 4TheChild, said the assets were tailored to each household following an assessment of needs.

"We ensure each family gets sup-

port that addresses their unique situation. In Kisumu, we are serving more than 30,000 beneficiaries, including more than 6,000 children living with HIV and 14,206 adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) under the Dreams programme," he said.

Okoth said while the US government recently suspended aid to 82 countries in Africa, Kenya remains among the 11 projects still funded, allowing vulnerable communities in Kisumu to continue receiving critical support.

He also thanked the US government and Moi University College of Health Sciences, the project's implementing partner, for sustaining the interventions.

Kisumu Deputy Governor Mathew Owili lauded Usaid's support, saying it was helping to bridge gaps caused by limited county resources.

"With Usaid's partnership, caregivers have been trained and equipped with tools to run businesses that sustain families affected by HIV. Because of this intervention, Kisumu has achieved a 95 per cent viral suppression rate among children, which is a significant health milestone," he said.

Owili highlighted the Dreams programme as critical for empowering adolescent girls and young women.

"The project is not only giving them start-up kits like salon equipment and irrigation tools but also shielding them from exploitative relationships. It's better to give them the fishing line and hook than to keep giving them fish," he added.

According to Owili, today's distribution targeted 433 households and

312 AGYW. Since October last year, the project has also paid Sh17 million in school fees for children in Kisumu.

The Usaid 4TheChild project, which runs from 2021 to 2026, also covers Siaya, Kakamega, Busia and Bungoma counties.

For many of the girls, the project is already changing lives.

Cynthia Awuoro, a young mother from Nyalenda, said the Dreams programme had given her independence.

"I have gained several skills and now with the start-up kit, I can generate my own income. I won't depend on my parents, I can take care of myself and my child," she said.

Beneficiary Irene Akinyi said, "With the equipment I've received a hair dryer, pedicure foot spa and UV machine. I can now earn my own money through beauty services. I no longer have to depend entirely on others to meet my personal needs."

More than 700 business tools are being distributed under the programme, ranging from salon kits, food vending equipment to farming tools such as wheelbarrows and shade nets. The goal, project officials said, is to strengthen families' ability to meet health, education and social needs through sustainable enterprises.

"This strategic investment is not just about tools. It is about dignity, self-reliance and giving families the means to secure their future," Okoth said.

## (+) INSTANT ANALYSIS

The Sh12.8 million Usaid investments in Kisumu is a lifeline for vulnerable families. By providing business assets tailored to household needs, the programme shifts families from dependency to self-reliance, ensuring they can meet daily expenses, pay school fees and access healthcare. For adolescent girls and young women, the Dreams initiative offers economic empowerment and protection from harmful relationships. The impact is immediate families gain income, dignity and stability while the long-term effect is a stronger local economy and improved health.

## STABILISE PRICES

# Agency buys 150 tonnes of paddy rice to cushion West Kano farmers

FAITH MATETE

THE Lake Basin Development Authority has collected 150 tonnes of paddy rice from the West Kano Irrigation Scheme in a new intervention aimed at stabilising market prices and preventing post-harvest losses among farmers.

LBDA managing director Wycliffe Ochiaga said the initiative is part of a broader plan to strengthen the rice value chain while shielding farmers from exploitation and wastage.

He said the programme supports the government's Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda, which seeks to boost agricultural output, uplift rural economies and enhance household incomes.

Ochiaga said the rice collected

under the programme is processed immediately at LBDA's Kisumu plant, guaranteeing farmers quick returns and reducing the risk of stockpiling.

He said similar mop-ups, amounting to nearly 1,000 tonnes in earlier phases, have already been carried out in the region.

The operation will be extended in the coming weeks to other rice-growing schemes under the authority in Kano, Chiga, Kimira-Oluch in Homa Bay, Nyatike in Migori, and Budalang'i in Busia.

"This is the busiest harvest season for many farmers. By offering fair prices and handling transportation, we are ensuring that farmers focus on production while avoiding losses," he said.

The West Kano Irrigation Scheme

is one of the most productive rice zones in western Kenya.

To support it, LBDA operates a Kisumu-based milling plant with a capacity of four tonnes per hour and maintains go-downs for storage.

The authority also avails drying yards free of charge, which Ochiaga said enables farmers to deliver grain at the right moisture levels for milling and packaging.

"This approach improves quality, minimises waste and helps position locally grown rice as a strong competitor in national and regional markets," he said.

Beyond the mop-up programme, LBDA is training farmers on better post-harvest practices, distributing improved seed varieties and promoting modern production techniques.



A rice farm in Ahero, Kisumu county /FAITH MATETE

Ochiaga emphasised that the authority's ultimate goal is not only to raise rice yields but also to make the venture profitable and sustainable for farming households.

He further credited the joint effort between LBDA field teams, county governments and farmer groups for

the success of the exercise and assured more resources will be mobilised as harvesting peaks.

The authority expressed confidence that the measures will improve farmer earnings, strengthen food security, and contribute to economic growth across the Lake Basin region.

## NEWS COUNTIES



Samburu Woman Representative Pauline Lenguris, Nyeri Town MP Duncan Mathenge and Tumutumu Mission Hospital chief executive officer Kinyua Mukindia and other hospital staff on a fact-finding tour of the facility by members of the National Assembly Health committee on Thursday /KNA

## DIRE SITUATION

# Nyeri hospital risks closure over delays in SHA funding

*Tumutumu Mission Hospital is facing a cash crunch and is owed Sh247 million*

KNA  
@TheStarKenya

PROVISION of health services at the Tumutumu Mission Hospital in Nyeri may soon grind to a halt following slow disbursement of funds by the Social Health Authority (SHA).

The 115-year-old Level 5 hospital which is affiliated to the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA), needs more than Sh200 million owed by the Ministry of Health paid up to facilitate its services.

Part of the Sh247 million claims comprise of Sh148 million worth of claims that were yet to be settled by SHA while the remaining Sh89 million are arrears inherited from the now defunct National Health Insurance Fund.

So dire is the cash crunch at the facility that the hospital has defaulted in remitting statutory deductions of its more than 400 employees.

The hospital has now resorted to using bank loans and donor money to pay salaries to its staff and handling its critical core mandate of providing health care to the public.

“We have gone through a financial paralysis for quite some time. We provide services to the tune of Sh35 million and sometimes Sh40 million a month but the reimbursement we get from SHA is both intermittent and

inadequate. Out of the Sh140 million we were expecting cumulatively, the hospital was only reimbursed Sh4 million. This one created a financial gap which almost brought the hospital to its deathbed,” said the hospital’s chief executive officer Kinyua Mukindia on the side-lines of a visit to the facility by the National Assembly’s Committee on Health.

He said owing to its dire financial

“

KINYUA MUKINDIA

*We have gone through a financial paralysis for quite some time. We provide services to the tune of Sh35 million a month but the reimbursement we get from SHA is intermittent*

situation which has seen it deplete all the available funds at its disposal, the continued provision of quality and quantitative health care may not be possible beyond September 10 in the absence of intervention from the SHA.

The CEO therefore appealed to the government to release the funds as a matter of urgency just as the architecture of SHA was crafted.

“For the first time in the history of this hospital, we have not been able to remit staff deductions for four months not by design, not that we wanted to be that way, but because SHA has not been resourcing the hospital adequately. For the first time in the 115-year history of this hospital, we are now depending on government overdrafts and loans from financial institutions so that we can remain afloat. I believe this was not what was intended,” he told the parliamentary committee led by Nyeri Town MP Duncan Mathenge and his Samburu counterpart Pauline Lenguris.

The visit unearthed a series of challenges with the SHA system which is a month shy of its first-year anniversary since it was rolled out in 2024.

For instance, the committee discovered that a good number of claims had been rejected unilaterally by the SHA system.

The facility also lacked a feedback mechanism to engage SHA either

physically or online, on the steps to be taken to amend the rejected claims.

Additionally, the facility was unable to ascertain the status on the processing of already logged claims leaving them in the dark on whether or not they would be reimbursed their money by SHA.

“There are issues in how the systems are processing the claims from the time the patient enters the hospital, to the time they leave the hospital and the time the claims are forwarded to SHA through the system and the interaction between the hospital and SHA up to the point where the payments are made. The payments are not timely; they are lagging behind by about 40-50 per cent behind schedule,” Mathenge said.

“In this hospital, we can authoritatively say that from our interaction with them, we have not been able to come across any element of fraud. It is a question of either documents that have been uploaded and are apparently not visible by the SHA system or an issue of request for the provision of additional documents yet the system is not allowing for attachment of the additional document to be added or resubmitted,” added the legislator.

Mathenge attributed the delays to inefficiencies by SHA to reimburse the facilities in good time despite the hospitals providing services.

He said the committee would be convening a meeting with the Ministry of Health and SHA to streamline bottlenecks in the reimbursement process that are now threatening to cripple the entire healthcare system.

“The question of the flow of finances through the system is a major thing that is being acknowledged by both sides. On one hand, SHA contributors are paying the premiums, and then they come and receive services. Hospitals discharge the patients having received the services but the money takes quite a while to come to the hospitals from the authority. We have scheduled a meeting on September 9 with both SHA and the ministry and the fact finding will help enhance and occasion a more meaningful and a deeper conversation about what needs to be done,” Mathenge said.

In order to improve the implementation of SHA, the legislator said the committee would table a raft of recommendations to the Health ministry some which include critical assessment of the adequacy of the current health budget in sustaining Universal Health Coverage.

Mathenge said the committee would also be proposing an evaluation of the health SHA premiums where possible as a way of ensuring healthcare is sustainably funded.

“From the performance of the roll out of SHA since October last year up to this point, there are indicators that the financial flows are sustainable and if they are not, then we will need to rethink either in terms of increasing provisions in the budget to support Universal Health Coverage or revise the contributions in one way or another so that by the time services are being rendered, at the end of the contractual 90 days credit period, ideally the full amount due to the service provider should be paid,” Mathenge said.

## NEWS COUNTIES

## ISRAEL-KENYA PARTNERSHIP

# New model farm in Kimana to improve onion farming

Training will help farmers transition from traditional to modern market-oriented agriculture



Farmers on Kimana model farm in Kajiado county /HANDOUT

GORDON OSEN  
@gordon\_osen

A new era for smallholder agriculture is on the horizon with the launch of an Israeli-backed model farm in Kimana to improve onion production.

Located on a 10-acre plot, the Model Onion Farm is a demonstration and training hub set up to address challenges in onion farming. These include low yields, lack of access to quality seed, post-harvest losses and poor agronomic practices.

The model farm is spearheaded by David Kamau, a graduate of the Mashav programme, an 11-month field internship in Israel.

Mashav is Israel's Agency for International Development Cooperation. It was established in 1958 and focuses on sharing Israeli expertise in sectors such as agriculture, water, health and education with developing countries.

In a statement on Friday, the Embassy said the goal is to build the capacity of farmers in Kajiado and beyond to transition from traditional methods to modern, market-oriented agriculture.

"The Kimana Model Farm, spearheaded by Kenyan Mashav alumnus David Kamau, will serve as a demonstration and accredited training center for farmers in the region," the statement read.

The programme will focus on the application of Israeli irrigation systems, crop management techniques and post-harvest practices.

The farm will serve as a catalyst for youth engagement in agriculture by

offering practical, hands-on training, "with the goal of producing agricultural outputs that meet international export standards," the statement reads.

Deputy Ambassador of Israel to Kenya, Ariel Arviv, highlighted the long-term vision for the farm and its role in creating employment and fostering knowledge transfer.

"Looking ahead, the future plan of this farm is to expand into a fully operational 10-acre model farm. This will not only increase production to meet growing market demand, but will also provide greater employment opportunities for the local community, especially young people," she said during the launch.

She added: "Beyond jobs, the farm will serve as a hands-on training centre, where farmers from across Kajiado county can learn modern methods of cultivation, irrigation and post-harvest handling, ensuring knowledge transfer for years to come."

The project is part of the broader efforts by Mashav to support its alumni in applying the skills acquired during their training in Israel.

The agency provides grants of up to \$10,000 to alumni projects upon their return and offers ongoing technical assistance through agricultural experts based at the Embassy in Nairobi.

"The Kimana project is one such initiative, combining the knowledge and dedication of alumni with the support of financial and technology partners in Kenya," the embassy noted.

The field internship programme has trained over 1,000 young Kenyans since its inception. Participants receive hands-on experience on Israeli farms and are taught both agricultural production and entrepreneurship. Many graduates have gone on to establish farms, agribusinesses and training centres.

"This project stands as a model of collaboration between Mashav alumni, local communities and institutions to address food security challenges while opening opportunities for young agripreneurs in Kenya," the statement added.

## REVIVAL

## New ginneries fuel comeback of cotton farming at the Coast

KNA

COTTON farming at the Coast is poised for revival as two modern ginneries in Kwale and Lamu will provide farmers a ready market and economic opportunities.

The Kwale ginnery, with construction spearheaded by the national government, is nearing completion. The Thika-based textile giant, Thika Cloth Mills (TCM), has already opened another ginnery in Lamu.

The two projects are expected to benefit farmers in Kwale, Kilifi, Lamu and Taita Taveta, long crippled by lack of a ready market and high transport costs to distant ginneries in Kitui, Meru and Makueni counties.

"This is just the beginning of a cotton revolution in the Coast. We can now farm cotton with confidence, knowing we have a ready buyer and that it will put food on our tables," farmer Asthman Mwadime in Kwale said.

Jackson Ndurya, chairman of the Kwale-based Cotton Farmers Cooperative Society (Pavi), said the ginnery would restore farmers' faith in cotton farming.

He urged the government to fast-track its completion. The factory building awaits installation of modern machinery.

"Previously, we spent too much on transport," Ndurya said. "Lack of

a nearby market discouraged many farmers who ended up ditching the crop. Now we'll deliver cotton right here at home and that will encourage more farmers to return to cotton."

Farmers welcomed the ginneries, saying they would also help in value addition, producing cottonseed oil, animal feed and biodiesel, which will expand agribusiness.

Thika Clothes Mill development manager Hesmond Olweny said their investment in Lamu anchors the textile value chain by ensuring a steady supply of lint for the industry.

He said TCM, in partnership with the government, has been supplying farmers with seeds, pesticides and technical support while raising farm-gate prices from Sh52 to Sh72 per kilo, following a presidential directive.

"Although global cotton prices are lower, we remain committed to this rate because we believe in the Buy Kenya, Build Kenya initiative," Olweny said.

Kilifi farmers also expressed optimism. Magarini Cotton Farmers Cooperative chairman Raymond Charo urged timely distribution of



Hesmond Olweny, development manager at Thika Clothes Mills, and Jackson Ndurya, chairperson of Cotton Farmers Cooperative Society PAVI (R) with farmers in Kwale /KNA

certified seeds. "Momentum will be lost if farmers don't receive seeds on time," he said.

With Kwale and Lamu in the fore-

front, stakeholders say the Coast region is on the verge of a cotton boom that could position Kenya as a global textile player.

## NEWS REGIONAL

## ESSENTIAL SUPPLIES

# Rescue workers use donkeys to reach remote Sudan landslide site

BBC

AID workers on donkeys have delivered the first humanitarian supplies to survivors of a landslide that reportedly killed hundreds of people in a remote mountain village in Sudan's western Darfur region.

Heavy rains and flash floods that hit Tarasin village triggering the disaster on Sunday have continued, meaning donkeys are the only way to reach the affected families.

"Families in Tarsin have lost everything. It took our team more than a full day on a rocky, muddy, and hilly route to reach this devastated community," said Francesco Lanino, from aid agency Save the Children.

It remains unclear how many people died.

The armed group in charge of the

area put the number at 1,000, however the health ministry says only two bodies have been recovered.

On Thursday, local civilian leaders said they had recovered and buried the bodies of hundreds of people.

"We recovered 370 bodies and buried them. Others are still trapped under the rocks and some were carried away by floodwaters," said Ibrahim Suleiman, one of the local leaders in Daramo locality, in a video seen by the AFP news agency.

The footage shared by the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A), which controls the area showed residents and rescuers gathered at a makeshift burial site, praying for the victims laid to rest, according to AFP.

Mujib al-Rahman al-Zubair, an-

other local leader, said in a video shared with the Associated Press on Thursday that rescuers had found 375 bodies, while more remain trapped underground.

The SLM/A has remained neutral in the civil war which has been ravaging Sudan for more than two years and many people have escaped to the Marra Mountains area where the landslide occurred to escape the fighting.

Antoine Gérard, the UN's deputy humanitarian co-ordinator for Sudan, earlier gave the figure of 370 deaths, but said that it was hard to assess the scale of the disaster or the exact death toll as the area was so hard to reach.

The UN said an inter-agency assessment "will seek to provide verified figures in the coming days".

On Thursday, an emergency team

of 11 staff riding donkeys delivered medical supplies, food, water and tarpaulins to the affected communities in a journey that took over six hours, Save the Children said in a statement.

The team includes medical staff, child protection experts and a mental health team, the agency said, adding that up to 1,000 people had been affected.

Mobile health clinics and emergency medical teams have also been deployed to provide immediate care on the ground, with UN agencies and partners preparing to send more supplies to meet ad-

ditional needs. "Tarsin is one of the most isolated villages in one of the most remote parts of Sudan. Heavy rains and flash floods have made the response extremely challenging," said Lanino, the deputy country director of programmes and operations for Save the Children in Sudan.

In a statement, the SLM/A said the "catastrophic humanitarian" situation in Tarasin required urgent international intervention.

The ongoing conflict in Sudan has also severely hampered rescue efforts, according to another aid organisation, World Vision.



Aid workers on donkeys /SAVE THE CHILDREN

## REPRESSION

# A bullet went through my skull, narrates TZ abduction survivor

*Sativa says he was handcuffed, blindfolded and brutally beaten with a machete*

BBC

IN the wake of his abduction on a highway in Tanzania's main city Dar es Salaam, social media activist Edgar Mwakabela, better known as Sativa, says he came close to death.

He describes in an interview with the BBC how, after kidnapping him on June 23 last year, his captors interrogated him and then ferried him across the country to the remote Katavi region near the Congolese border, more than 1,000km away.

Sativa says he was handcuffed, blindfolded and brutally beaten, including being struck repeatedly on his head, back and legs with the flat side of a machete.

"It was extremely painful."

He tells the BBC that those who abducted him wanted to know who was facilitating his activism, and why he was criticising the ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi party, in power since 1977.

Sativa believes those who held him were police officers or other operatives linked to the authorities.

However, the government denies that it targets critics of the state.

Sativa says that on the fourth day after being taken, the violence continued as his captors transported him to the Katavi National Park, full of dangerous wild animals, and dragged him towards a river.

He believes it was clear that his captors had no intention of letting him live.

Then, he says, came the chilling order shouted from a vehicle behind them: "Shoot him!"

A trigger was pulled. A bullet



Social media activist Edgar Mwakabela, better known as Sativa /BBC

went through his skull. His jaw was shattered.

Sativa's captors left – he thought he had been left for dead.

As October's general election edges closer, abductions have become more common, mostly targeting anti-government critics and opposition voices.

Every other week, police or social media posts announce a missing person. Some are never found and others reappear with disturbing accounts of violence or torture – and some have been found dead.

Sativa's case offers a rare account from a survivor.

Despite suffering life-threatening injuries, he regained consciousness and crawled to a road where wildlife rangers rescued him.

He would require long and spe-

cialised treatment, and his survival has been described as "extraordinary".

The police did not respond to BBC requests for an interview, but in a video statement released to media houses in June, their spokesperson, Deputy Commissioner David Misime, said they do act on information about those missing and conduct an investigation.

The BBC has spoken to families of people reported missing and those who have died, and they have relayed their agony over missing loved ones.

Portrait artist Shedrack Chaula, 25, is among those still missing.

He has not been seen or heard from in over a year. In June 2024 he posted a TikTok video that went viral of him burning President Samia

Suluu's photo and insulting her.

He was arrested, convicted of cyber-harassment and released after paying a fine. A month later, he was abducted by unknown individuals.

"We don't know when or if he will be found. When he was arrested, at least we knew where he was. Now, even the authorities say they don't know," his father, Yusuf Chaula, tells the BBC.

He says that in August 2024, three men arrived in a car with tinted windows and seized him. They did not identify themselves or explain why or where they were taking him.

"We have made every effort. We are exhausted. We visited every detention facility. We went to prisons and police stations at different levels – local, district and regional," he says.

The police have insisted that an investigation is in progress.

"If we knew where he is, or where he is being held, or even if we knew he had died and been buried somewhere, at least we'd have a grave to visit," Chaula says mournfully, grappling with the torment of unanswered questions and the absence of closure.

In June, UN experts reported that over 200 enforced disappearances have been recorded in the country since 2019.

They expressed alarm over the "torture to silence opposition and critics" ahead of the elections, and called on the government to "immediately" stop it.

Rights groups Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch

recently accused the government of being behind arrests, abuse and forced disappearances.

The authorities have denied the allegations. The police have identified at least a dozen abduction cases since last year some of which have since been resolved, with many going back to 2019.

On June 18, the police announced that investigations had led to the discovery of some victims who were still alive.

They added that some cases involved self-staged abductions, while others arose from romantic relationships gone sour, superstitious beliefs and property disputes.

"The police force urges relatives, friends and the public to remain calm as security forces continue their investigations to uncover the facts surrounding these incidents," Deputy Commissioner Misime said.

The president has urged the police force to end the troubling incidents of people going missing – a directive many Tanzanians hope will lead to justice.

In May, activist and opposition politician Mpaluka Nyangali, widely known as Mdude, was abducted from his home in Mbeya, southern Tanzania, in a violent incident witnessed by his wife and young child.

There were blood stains at the scene, showing the brutality of the attack. Since then, members of the main opposition Chadema party have launched a search across Mbeya and have held prayer vigils demanding answers from the police, whom they suspect to be complicit in the incident.

To date, Mdude's wife, Siji Mbugi, has not heard from him.

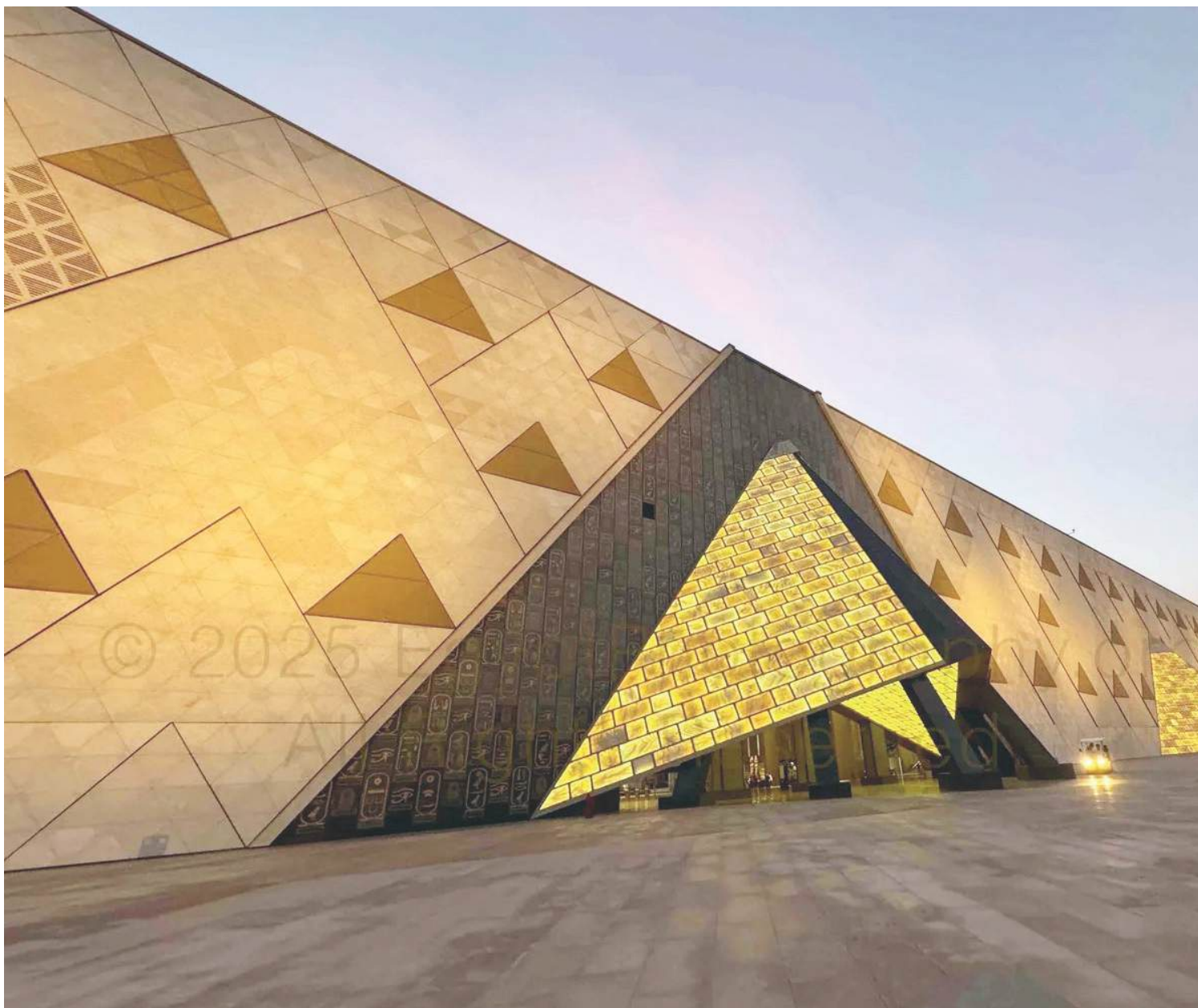
"I beg for the release of my husband, I believe he is being held by police and the authorities. Mdude has done nothing. He has never stolen anything from anybody, I beg for his release. If he had issues then take him to court," she says.

On July 9, the High Court in Mbeya dismissed a case that she filed over her husband's disappearance.

## SASA CULTURE

# TikTok livestreams grand opening of Egypt museum

Move aims to make pharaohs and ancient treasures go viral on the popular app



**CONRAD ONYANGO FOR BIRD STORY AGENCY/** After decades of delays, the Egyptian government has confirmed this November 1 as the official opening date for the world's largest archaeological museum, the Grand Egyptian Museum.

The North African country is betting big on the \$1 billion complex and a partnership with short form video platform, TikTok, to cement its cultural influence and prop up its tourism ambitions.

In mid-August, the Egyptian government signed a deal with United Media Services and TikTok, making the short video platform the official digital partner for the opening.

The strategy is to repackage heritage storytelling for the growing digital savvy generation of travellers who increasingly turn to social media for inspiration.

"We are proud to be the official digital partner for one of the most significant cultural events of 2025," TikTok North Africa's head of public policy Wael Ezzat said in a LinkedIn post.

"This partnership underlines TikTok's vision of merging her-

“

*The opening will be marked by international attendance and special cultural activations*

itage with technology to deliver inspiring experiences to audiences everywhere."

As part of the collaboration, TikTok will livestream the opening ceremony worldwide via TikTok LIVE, allowing millions to witness the historic moment in real time.

Egypt's Ministry of Tourism and Antiques has moonlighted on the facility's planned grand opening, promising a 'historic moment' that reflects the museums scale and its symbolic importance.

"The opening will be marked by international attendance and special cultural activations, celebrating Egypt's timeless heritage on a global stage," the ministry said on GEM's official ticketing site.

By enlisting TikTok as its digital partner, Cairo is betting that the grandeur of ancient Egyptian Kings like Tutankhamun's

treasures and the symbolism of Ramses II, whose reign many historians consider the pinnacle of Egyptian art and culture, will go viral and attract bookings. Tourism is Egypt's third-largest source of foreign exchange after remittances and hydrocarbons.

The sector brought in 14.9 million visitors in 2023, generating \$13.2 billion in revenue, and Cairo has set a target of doubling arrivals to 30 million by 2031.

The museum, located within sight of the Sphinx and designed to host more than 100,000 artefacts, is expected to attract between 5 million and 7 million visitors annually once fully operational.

The Sphinx, which depicts a mythical creature with the head of a human and the body of a lion, is one of the largest sculptures in the world and an iconic symbol of ancient Egypt.

## FINAL TOUCHES

The Grand Egyptian Museum is currently offering limited access to test site readiness and the visitor experience ahead of its official opening.

It will close entirely from October 15 to November 4, 2025 to complete organisational and logistical preparations.

"Admission is currently limited to the Main Galleries, Grand Hall, Grand Staircase, commercial area and exterior gardens," read a notification on GEM's website.

"Access to the Tutankhamun galleries and Khufu's Boats Museum is restricted until the official opening."

Officials said the museum will reopen to visitors on the morning of November 4 to offer full tourist experience for the first time.

"The museum will resume visitors starting on the morning of November 4, which marks the 103rd anniversary of the discovery of the Golden King Tutankhamun's tomb, during official working hours, so that visitors can enjoy the full tourist experience of the museum," added the notice.

TikTok is also rolling out exclusive creative tools, including a customised Grand Egyptian Museum filter, virtual gifts inspired by Egyptian symbols such as the pyramids and editing templates built around Egypt's cultural heritage to amplify the event.

The discovery of Tutankhamun's largely intact tomb in 1922 is considered one of the most significant archaeological discoveries in the modern era.

The full Tutankhamun collection of 5,300 items will be displayed for the first time in its entirety with the aid of augmented reality and spatial mapping.

TikTok will also host a 'Night at the Museum' activation, offering international creators a rare chance to explore the complex after hours with local guides and broadcast their experiences directly to global audiences.

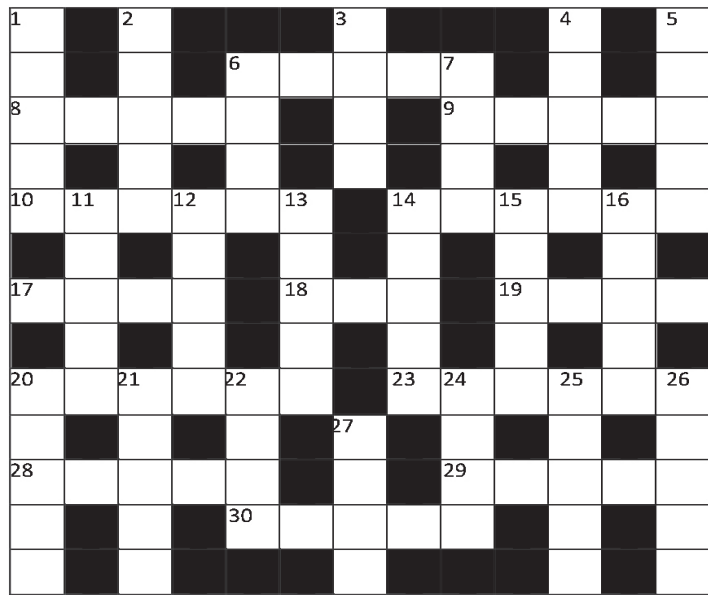
Such partnerships leveraging digital platforms reflect a growing trend of tourism boards across Africa using social media platforms to expand reach.

Kenya's tourism agency partnered with TikTok in 2022 to livestream the wildebeest migration, attracting millions of online viewers.

It appears Cairo hopes GEM will offer a similar draw but on a far larger scale, reinforcing Egypt's role as one of the most-visited cultural destinations in the whole world.

# COFFEE BREAK

## CROSSWORD / PUZZLE



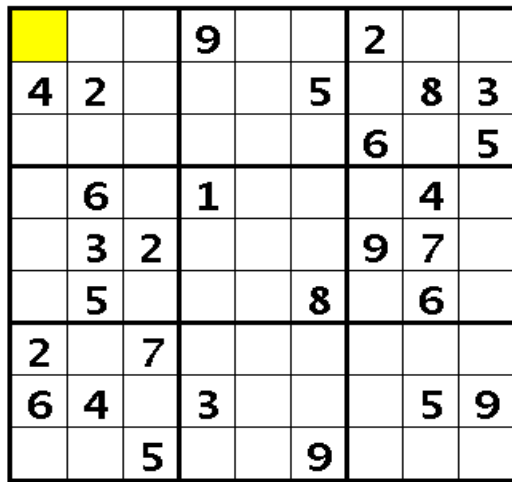
### DOWN

1. What are the large, level basalt plains on the surface of the moon called (5)
2. Australian political party (5)
3. Constituency in Tana River County (4)
4. Senator for Mandera County (5)
5. Principle (5)
6. A support for two adjacent bridge spans (4)
7. Former senator for Mombasa County (4)
11. Constituency in Migori County (5)
12. Giraffe-like animal (5)
13. Give another name for the constellation the rem (5)
14. Turn upside down (5)
15. Constituency in Nandi County (5)
16. Hives (5)
20. Constituency in West Pokot County (5)
21. Constituency in Migori County (5)
22. Fertilizer (4)
24. Which asteroid comes closer to the Earth than any other (4)
25. Former Governor for Nairobi County (5)
26. Daub (5)
27. Constituency in Kirinyaga County (4)

### ACROSS

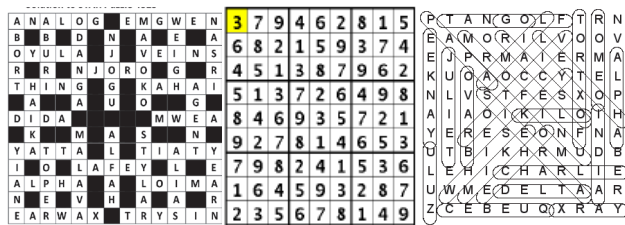
6. What is the sun's most distant planet (5)
8. Constituency in Kilifi County (5)
9. This moon of Saturn discovered in 1789 has a crater which is one third of the diameter of the satellite (5)
10. What is the luminous phenomenon which appears in the upper atmosphere near the Polar Regions (6)
14. Name the seventh planet from the sun (6)
17. What red giant in the constellation Cetus was the first known long-period variable star (4)
18. Anger (3)
19. Grudge fight (4)
20. What is the brightest star in the sky (6)
23. What is the name of the smaller of the two moons of Mars (6)
28. Constituency in Kilifi County (5)
29. Chief Administrative secretary for transport and infrastructure (5)
30. Elaborate songs for solo voices (5)

## SUDOKU / SIMPLE



Fill the grid with digits so that each column, each row, and each of the sub-grids that compose the grid all contain all of the numbers from 1 to 9 one time.

### Friday solutions



## WORD SEARCH

Z M D E O P H E L I A T H Y D E A T H  
P T A R R E R S U I D U A L C L E U D  
P O N R O O L I A Y S S E O T H T G F  
Y E L A C W N T N A H G I H N G E N R  
D Q W O R E S I R C N U H C E G L I A  
E R U G N C L B S E E I E N R I M K N  
G S N E I I N L V L M L L A L C A E C  
A K C R E I U E U E E D V L C H H D I  
R U A T T N R S S S D E T E I A P I S  
T L C R H T P S Y O D N H M R L O C C  
S L O U E R E O K I R S A C S I I O  
E F O D I N B C G W N T H M O C S G G  
T S C E G T I G I E E N O E E O E H  
R C S E U R E N R E D R U M R T N R O  
E T R A O R E K R A M N E D E A L O S  
A F H Y S R O D A S S A B M A T T O T  
L T H E P L A Y E R S C A S T L E I V  
O D L A N Y E R H E K B A R N A R D O  
S S E N D A M S U I L E N R O C I N G

Find and mark all the words hidden inside the box. The words may be placed horizontally, vertically, or diagonally.

- AMBASSADORS
- BARNARDO
- CASTLE
- CHALICE
- CLAUDIUS
- CORNELIUS
- DEATH
- DENMARK
- DUEL
- ELSINORE
- FORTINBRAS
- FRANCISCO
- GERTRUDE
- GHOST
- GRAVEDIGGERS
- GULDENSTERN
- HAMLET
- HAUTOBOYS
- HORATIO
- KING
- LAERTES
- MADNESS
- MARCELLUS
- MELANCHOLY
- MESSENGER
- MURDER
- OPHELIA
- OSRIC
- POISON
- POLONIUS
- PRIEST
- PRINCE
- QUEEN
- REGICIDE
- REVENGE
- REYNALDO
- ROSENCRANTZ
- SKULL
- SWORD
- THE PLAYERS
- TRAGEDY
- VOLTEMAND
- WINE
- YORICK

## ALL IN THE STARS



### VIRGO

August 23 - September 23

Increased psychic awareness could cause you to pick up on feelings of others more than usual, but don't reveal this understanding unless asked.

### LIBRA

September 24 - October 23

You have some outrageous ideas which might be more workable than they seem, but this isn't the day to make decisions.

### SCORPIO

October 24 - November 22

You used to love physical activity - the more intense the better. What has become of this urge?

### SAGITTARIUS

November 23 - December 21

Remember to always drink water after you exercise, to replenish your body's vital fluids.

### CAPRICORN

December 22 - January 20

Give yourself a double workout by releasing and strengthening within your mind and heart as well.

### AQUARIUS

January 21 - February 19

You may shower those you love with affection inwardly all the time, but people need physical and verbal appreciation.

### PISCES

February 20 - March 20

What you have to discuss with these friends could prove gratifying on more than one level.

### ARIES

March 21 - April 20

Upsets among family in the home could drive you to escape into your work, particularly creative projects.

### TAURUS

April 21 - May 21

Malfunctions with technology could plague you throughout the day. Fall back on good old pen and paper.

### GEMINI

May 22 - June 21

Upsetting news about money may come your way. Don't panic. It's likely the product of overblown journalism.

### CANCER

June 22 - July 22

Don't plunge ahead. Seek what you want in a few days. You should have better results by then!

### LEO

July 23 - August 22

Don't take offense at what someone you're very fond of may say in frustration and be your usual compassionate self.

## Grandfather accidentally takes home wrong kid from daycare

**BBC**/An investigation has been launched after a grandfather mistakenly took home the wrong child from a daycare centre in Sydney, Australia.

The man arrived to collect his grandchild from First Steps Learning Academy in the southern suburb of Bangor, on Monday afternoon.

But he accidentally took home a different child, who was asleep in a dark room.

The mistake only became clear when the mother of the child arrived at the centre to find that her one-year-old was not there, the Sydney Morning Herald reported.

"I can't explain the feeling," she told the newspaper. "They couldn't tell me [the man's] name, they couldn't tell me who he was, they couldn't tell me who he was meant to pick up. They couldn't tell me what he looked like, apart from that he was wearing shorts and he was an older gentleman," the mother, who asked not to be named, explained.

As part of safety protocols, childcare centres do not allow children to be collected by anyone else except recognised parents, guardians or carers.

But she also said the grandfather is not to blame. "We are not angry with him. We are not upset at him - we blame the daycare."

The grandfather's wife told the Sydney Morning Herald that her husband was "devastated" and had "owned the mistake".

"When he realised, he raced that child back so fast," she said.

First Steps told the BBC that the worker involved in the incident had been stood down.



## TELEVISION LINEUP - SATURDAY & SUNDAY



### SATURDAY

- 5:00AM MORNING DECREE
- 5:30AM MORNING DEVOTION
- 7:00AM AKILI KIDS (SWAHILI)
- 7:30AM BAHARI YA ELIMU
- 8:00AM DEBATE CIRCLE
- 8:30AM NUZO AND NAMIA (SWAHILI) RPT
- 9:00AM KIDS ON THE BLOCK
- 10:00AM BAHARI YA ELIMU
- 10:30AM BEAT KIDS
- 11:00AM BEAT PLUG EXTRA
- 1:00PM TV47 NEWS NOW
- 1:30PM AFRICA EXPRESS
- 4:00PM SPORTS EXTRAVAGANZA
- 7:00PM TV47 WIKENDI
- 7:30PM FOODS OF KENYA
- 8:30PM FALLING INTO YOUR SMILE
- 9:00PM WEEKEND EDITION WITH BETTY KYALLO
- 10:30PM IRIE VIBES
- 1:00AM AFRICA EXPRESS RPT
- 3:30AM WILD KINGDOM
- 4:30AM MORNING DEVOTION

### SUNDAY

- 5:00AM GOSPEL MUSIC
- 6:00AM SIFA SUNDAY
- 9:00AM LIVE CHURCH SERVICE
- 11:00AM SIFA SUNDAY PLUS
- 1:00PM TV47 NEWS NOW
- 1:30PM OLD SCHOOL SUNDAY
- 3:00PM COUNTRY RIDE MIX
- 4:30PM DR. OFWENEKE TONIGHT - RPT
- 6:00PM KILIMO 47
- 6:30PM THE 77 PERCENT
- 7:00PM UPEO WA TV47
- 7:30PM KILIMO DIARIES
- 8:00PM LOVE BEYOND 40
- 8:30PM FALLING INTO YOUR SMILE
- 9:00PM WEEKEND EDITION
- 11:00PM COUNTRY RIDE MIX
- 12:00 AM BEATPLUG MIX
- 2:00AM DW DOCUFILM - RPT
- 3:00AM ECO AFRICA - RPT
- 4:00AM GOSPEL MUSIC

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ATHLETICS

FOOTBALL

# KENYANS PLOT FOR GREAT NORTH RUN

*Kipchumba faces Munyao as Chepkirui takes on Cheruiyot*

BY TEDDY MULEI

TWO-time New York Half Marathon champion Abel Kipchumba has vowed to defend his Great North Run title when he lines up against a star-studded field on Sunday.

Kipchumba won the Great North Run Half-Marathon last year after cutting the tape in 59:52.

He led Britain's Marc Scott (1:01:11) and Norway's Sondre Nordstad Moen (1:01:25) to the podium.

The 31-year-old had thrown down the gauntlet, declaring his resolve to retain his crown.

"I am very happy to return to the Great North Run again this year. It was a great honour to win one of the biggest half Marathons in the world at my first attempt," Kipchumba told race organisers.

Kipchumba, however, acknowledged that this year's race is set to be highly competitive.

"I know I have tough competition this year, but I am ready for the challenge," he added.

Kipchumba heads into the race seeking his second half-marathon victory of the 2025 season. He opened his season with a dominant showing in New York on March 16, stopping the clock in 59:09 to claim the crown.

On that occasion, Americans Conner Mantz (59:15) and Hillary Bor (59:55) completed the podium.

Kipchumba holds a vast resume over the half-marathon, which includes victories from Valencia (58:07) and Adizero Road to records (58:48) in 2021, as well as Napoli in 2018 (1:00:12).

He, however, faces stiff competition from 2024 London Marathon champion Alexander Munyao, who hopes to use the race as a build-up for

his maiden appearance at the New York Marathon on November 2.

"I will be running the Great North Run in September, which I hope to use to gauge my form as well as sharpen up my speed and endurance. It will act as a crucial buildup for New York," he added.

"The Great North Run also comes at a perfect time because it will be only two months till November. My results there will help me tune up my training," Munyao had told the Star earlier.

Munyao's accolades over 21km include victories from Santa Pola 2020 (59:09), Marugame 2025 (59:16) and 2023 (59:17), as well as Gifu in 2022 (59:56).

Adding firepower to the field is Olympic Marathon bronze medallist

Bashir Abdi of Belgium. Abdi will be running his first race since the 2024 New York Marathon, where he placed ninth in 2:10:39. Marc Scott, the 2022 World Indoor 3,000m bronze medallist, headlines the charge for the hosts.

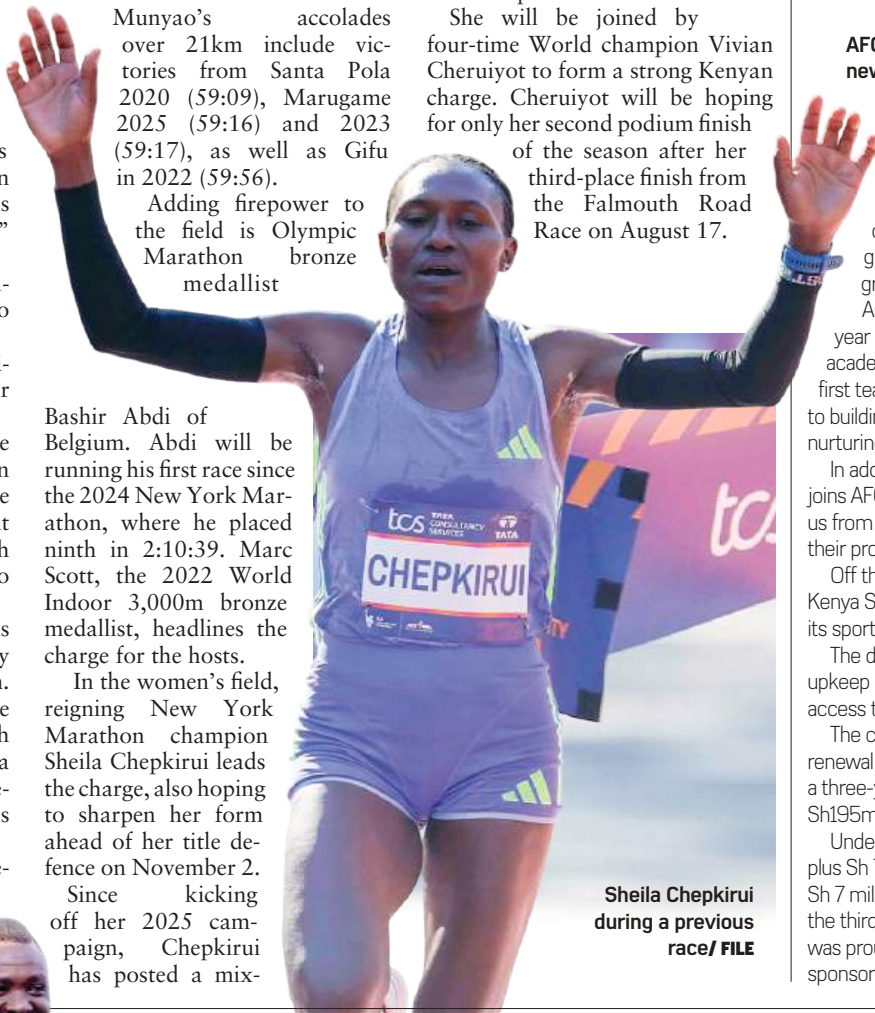
In the women's field, reigning New York Marathon champion Sheila Chepkirui leads the charge, also hoping to sharpen her form ahead of her title defence on November 2.

Since kicking off her 2025 campaign, Chepkirui has posted a mix-

ture of results.

On March 9, she stopped the clock in 2:20:40 to win the Nagoya women's Marathon ahead of Japan's Sayaka Sato (2:20:59) and Bahraini Eunice Chumba (2:21:35). In her most recent outing on June 22, however, Chepkirui fell short of a podium finish, clocking 32:17 to place seventh.

She will be joined by four-time World champion Vivian Cheruiyot to form a strong Kenyan charge. Cheruiyot will be hoping for only her second podium finish of the season after her third-place finish from the Falmouth Road Race on August 17.



Sheila Chepkirui during a previous race/ FILE

## Mugane joins AFC Leopards as Betika renews contract

BY CHARLENE MALWA



AFC Leopards have confirmed the signing of National Super League top scorer Elias Mugane from Fortune Sacco FC on a two-year deal as the 13-time champions continue to beef up their squad ahead of the 2025/26 KFF Premier League season.

Mugane, who netted 22 goals and provided nine assists in the just-concluded campaign, steps up to the top flight after previously finishing as Division Two's leading scorer with 18 goals in the 2018/19 season. The centre forward's arrival adds bite to Leopards' attack as the club prepares for their season opener against Sofapaka on September 20 at Nyayo Stadium.

**AFC Leopards' newly signed forward Elias Mugane/**

Ingwe have also promoted two players from their youth ranks, with attacking midfielder Deng Kang signing a three-year contract after being loaned to Division One side, Soy United, last season. Kang, described as a lanky playmaker with a strong eye for goal, has been with the junior team since 2023 and now graduates to the senior fold.

Another youth product, Jamal, has also earned a three-year deal after a successful spell at Soy United, joining fellow academy graduates Victor Otieno and Maxwell Otieno in the first team. The promotions underline Leopards' commitment to building from within, with the club reaffirming their belief in nurturing young talent through structured development.

In addition, through a club statement, Brian Ojok Nyongesa joins AFC Leopard on a three-year contract. The right back joins us from NSL newbies Soy United, having played a pivotal role in their promotion to the National Super League."

Off the pitch, AFC announced a landmark agreement with the Kenya School of Law that grants the club preferential access to its sports grounds and facilities at competitive rates.

The deal includes provisions for the club to contribute to the upkeep and enhancement of the grounds, ensuring priority access to training and welfare needs throughout the season.

The club's preparations have been further boosted by the renewal of their sponsorship deal with Betika, who confirmed a three-year partnership worth Sh231 million, up from the Sh195m package signed in 2022.

Under the new agreement, Leopards will receive Sh65 million plus Sh 7 million in bonuses in the first year, Sh 70 million plus Sh 7 million in the second and Sh 75 million plus Sh 7 million in the third. Betika Group CEO Mutua Mutava said the company was proud to walk the journey with Leopards, describing the sponsorship as a long-term investment in Kenyan football.

## Abdulmalik, Katuga to spearhead Kenyan teams for the Africa Zone 3 Championship at Kasarani

BY WILLIAM NJUGUNA

RENOWNED swimming coach Abdulmalik Abdulkmalik will spearhead one of the Kenyan teams to the Africa Zone 3 swimming Championship at the Kasarani Aquatics Sports Complex in October.

The Mombasa coach is one of the most experienced coaches in the country, having graced international events like the World Championships and Olympics. He will be at the helm of Team A.

Team B will be guided by fast-rising coach Noni Katuga, who is also the coach of Little Fish Swimming Club in Nairobi. Katuga is no stranger to the big stage, having been in charge of Team Kenya during the World Aquatics Short Course Championships in Budapest.

She has quickly earned a reputation as one of the most promising female coaches in the region. Several of her swimmers have already clocked over 500 FINA points, a feat that signals just how high her influence runs.

To strengthen the technical bench, a team of assistant coaches has been drawn from across the country, including Lucas Juma (NextGen Nairobi), Jacqueline Macharia (Kiambu), Abdalla Mansoor (Bandari Mombasa) and Kelvin Beru (Uasin Gishu). Others are—Fiona Kinyua (Embu), Steve Biko (Kisumu), Noel Amwayi (Machakos) and Boniface Anyanzwa (Laikipia).

Away from the pool deck, the team will be in the safe hands of two respected chaperones—Dr. Susan Nanchama, affectionately known as "Mama Swift in Kisumu, and Kiambu's very own

Trizah Waithera. Waithera, whose tireless voluntary work has done much to market Kenya Aquatics programmes, has previously accompanied the Masters team to Uganda and Tanzania.

While unveiling the names, Kenya Aquatics Secretary General Collins Marigiri explained that the process was guided by merit, discipline, gender balance and regional exclusivity.

He noted that Kenya has a growing pool of talented swimmers, which created the need to increase the number of assistant coaches so that more athletes can be nurtured and exposed to the rigours of international competition.

"We want to give our swimmers as much exposure as possible to global swimming meets," he said, adding that the structures being put in place will also help to develop future stars.



Steve Biko, One of the Team Kenya swimming coaches / HANDOUT



## FOOTBALL

### Equity Bank run riot in Inter-bank tourney opener

BY TEDDY MULEI

EQUITY Bank women's coach Dan Odhiambo hailed his side's slick passing game and relentless high press after they dismantled Central Bank of Kenya 5-0 on Thursday.

The two teams met during the opener of the Interbank competition on Thursday afternoon at the Kenya School of Monetary Studies.

From the first whistle, Equity seized control, dictating tempo with crisp touches and fluid movement that left their rivals chasing shadows.

Central Bank threatened a brief fightback, but their resistance was swept aside by the wave of attacking intent that surged through Odhiambo's charges.

Odhiambo was pleased with his charges' flying start. "This was a fantastic start to the competition," he stated.

He highlighted that their game plan was to maintain possession and press high, which worked out.

"The ladies executed our game plan perfectly. We focused on maintaining possession, pressing high, and capitalising on every opportunity. Their commitment to each other and to the system was truly impressive."

Odhiambo noted that the resounding victory was a testament to the hard work they have been putting in training. "This 5-0 victory isn't just about the scoreline; it's a testament to the hard work they've put in during training and their belief in themselves as a unit. We came here to make a statement, and I believe we did just that."

One of the standout performers was tireless midfielder Elizabeth Namalwa. Speaking after the match, Namalwa was pleased with the team's performance.

"It feels amazing to get such a comprehensive win," Namalwa said. She revealed that the team had expected a tough contest heading into the match.

"We knew Central Bank would be a tough opponent, but we were so focused. From the

moment we stepped onto the pitch, there was a real sense of purpose."

"We communicated well, we supported each other, and every player contributed their all. The goals came from great team play, a lot of passing and moving, and just taking our chances when they came. We've been working on our finishing in training, and it really paid off today."

Looking ahead, Namalwa insisted the victory was only the start.



Elizabeth Namalwa dribbles past a CBK player / HANDOUT

## ATHLETICS

# MWAI STAYS FOCUSED

*Sprint prodigy hopes to help 4x100m squad to win global medal*

BY TEDDY MULEI

RISING sprint prodigy Dennis Mwai is hoping to leave his mark in his maiden World Championship appearance for Kenya under the 4x100m relay squad.

The 20-year-old was named in a seven-man squad unveiled by Athletics Kenya, with the nation chasing its first-ever World Championships medal in the relay event.

Spearheading the squad is Africa's fastest man, Ferdinand Omanyala, joined by Steve Odhiambo, national champion Meshack Babu, former world record holder Mark Otieno, alongside youngsters Mwai, Clinton Aluvi and Isaac Omurwa.

Kenya booked its ticket to the global showpiece after making history at the World Relays in Guangzhou, China, on May 11.

The quartet of Boniface Mweresa, Omanyala, Babu and Odhiambo clocked 38.51 seconds during the second day of World

Championship qualifiers to book a maiden ticket to the bonanza. Before that, the quartet had set a national record of 38.35 on May 10 during the first day of qualifiers. For Mwai, Tokyo presents not just a debut but a chance to etch his name in the country's sprinting story.

"I feel good being part of this squad. It's a dream come true," Mwai said.

He hopes that the selected squad is strong enough to jostle for medals against the world's top guns. "Sprints have not been performing well globally, but we are on the right track and we expect good results to come," he added.

In Tokyo, the Kenyan squad will square off against defending champions the USA, who hold the most titles in the relay event with nine.

Also qualified for Tokyo are continental heavyweights South Africa, Great Britain and Canada.

The 4x100m heats will be on September 20, with the finals set to be the closing event of the Championships on September 21. The young speedster believes the blend of youth and experience will give Kenya the edge.

"We are learning every day in training, and Clinton is part of the younger athletes; he just finished school last year."

He noted that they are slowly adapting to the senior competitive ranks through the experience they are gaining in training. "We are seeing new things we haven't really been used to, and we are getting to know more about sprints and what the bigger athletes do to be where they are," he said.

Mwai, one of the earlier recruits of the Omanyala foundation, also highlighted the importance of being under the wings of the speedster. "I am in the Omanyala foundation, and it has been really supporting me in my sprint career."

He further noted that the foundation has been a backbone to him, providing him with training kits and shoes.

"They have been providing me with spikes and running kits, and I am really grateful for that."



Dennis Mwai all set for World Champs in Tokyo / HANDOUT

## RUGBY

### Race for the National Seven Series enters penultimate stage

BY WILLIAM NJUGUNA

THE race for the national seven series enters the penultimate stage today with the Kabeberi sevens at the RFUEA ground

Only two points separate the protagonists, KCB (82) and Strathmore Leos (80), with one round left after this weekend's event. The Dala Sevens is on September 13-14 in Kisumu.



The two sides have been the form teams in the circuit, with each winning two tournaments.

The bankers won Driftwood and Christie Sevens, while the varsity emerged top at the Prinsloo and Embu Sevens.

KCB coach Dennis Mwanja believes it will boil down to depth and execution on who will carry the overall crown after pulsating five weeks of high-octane rugby.

"It's been a tough and competitive series. Now we are in the home straight, so in my view, it's going to be depth and execution on attack, defence and the kickoff reception. I believe it will come down to the last tournament," he said.

Mwanja charges will open their campaign against Mean Machine, then face Mombasa Sports Club, before a tricky contest against Nakuru RFC in Pool A.

Fresh from winning the Embu Sevens fortnight ago, Strathmore Leos face a tough pool in the shape of Quins, Impala and Mwamba. Coach Willis Ojal said they cannot underestimate any of the three teams in the pool.

"We are more than ready for the three teams we are facing. We will take it one match at a time and, most importantly, qualify for the quarters," noted Ojal.

Embu Sevens surprise package, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST), have a date with Daystar Falcons, Catholic University Monks and Homeboyz RFC in Pool C.

Pool D sees a battle between Menengai Oilers and Kabras, alongside Embu RFC and Kisumu. The two giants are looking for improvement after an underwhelming campaign so far, where they have played second fiddle to both KCB and Strathmore.

The top two sides in each pool qualify for the quarterfinals, while the teams placed third and fourth head to the classification matches.

KCB's George Ooro with the ball, alongside Festus Shiasi during a past Sevens tournament / HANDOUT



FOOTBALL

‘Financial restrictions ‘killed’ Villa in summer transfers’



Aston Villa defender Ezra Konsa/ HANDOUT

BBC

ASTON Villa defender Ezri Konsa says financial restrictions “killed” the club in the summer transfer window.

Villa’s only major permanent transfer came early in August when they signed striker Evann Guessand from Nice for £26m and £4.3m in add-ons.

They then sold academy product Jacob Ramsey to Newcastle United for £40m before only adding to manager Unai Emery’s squad on transfer deadline day.

They brought in Liverpool’s Harvey Elliott and Manchester United’s Jadon Sancho on loan, plus free agent Victor Lindelof, as they navigated limits on spending.

Villa were fined by UEFA in July for breaching the European governing body’s financial rules and could have been prevented from registering new players for the Europa League this season if they did not have a positive transfer balance by the end of the summer transfer window.

On top of that, the Birmingham club, like their top-flight counterparts, also have to adhere to profit and sustainability rules (PSR) which state that clubs cannot post losses of more than £105m over a three-year reporting cycle.

“It is crazy. I don’t understand it myself, but from the outside looking in, it doesn’t look too good. I know that. I know it’s really killed us this transfer window,” said Konsa, who is on international duty with England. Villa were sixth in the Premier League last season as they missed out on fifth spot and Champions League qualification by finishing below Newcastle United on goal difference. Villa had the lowest outlay in the top flight this summer as they spent around £33m on initial fees and recouped £42.5m to end with a £9.5m surplus.

“We’re going to have to deal with what we’ve got now,” said Konsa.

“I definitely didn’t watch that (transfer deadline day). It’s been tough, especially for us. I knew that signing players was going to be difficult for us, so I did not look at transfer deadline day.

“Around eight o’clock, I went on Villa’s social media to see what happened. I saw that we signed three players, who are really good and have Premier League experience.

FORCE BEHIND SPURS

Levy can’t escape failures on the field but history will be kind record off it

BBC

TOTTENHAM Hotspur’s executive chairman, Daniel Levy—who has “stepped down” after almost 25 years — will always be regarded as one of the most contentious figures in their history.

He was the driving force behind the world-class infrastructure the club now boasts, from the magnificent new £1bn stadium that stands comparison with any in the sport, to the spectacular training headquarters at Hotspur Way in Enfield.

And yet, instead of being lauded for these towering achievements, Levy’s time at the top will always be overshadowed for many fans by the lack of success associated with his reign.

While he still retains a minority ownership but will not be involved in the day-to-day running of the club, the news of Levy’s exit will be greeted with undisguised delight by a large percentage of the Spurs fanbase.

When the story of the 63-year-old’s time in the boardroom is told and his legacy takes shape, it will be one of financial and structural success, but underachievement in it.

Levy will also be forever associated with instability, including a revolving door of 12 sacked managers as Spurs reached 16 semi-finals and seven finals, not including the recent UEFA Super Cup. And it is the lack of silverware that will always cast a dark cloud over his chairmanship.

History will be kind when his achievements off the field are reflected upon - but there can be no escaping the failures on it.

Spurs competed in Europe regularly and had an almost permanent presence in the top half of the Premier League, but meaningful success es -

caped them and Levy.

In his time at the helm, Spurs won only the League Cup under Juande Ramos in 2008, then the Europa League last season, with Levy then courting criticism after their first glory in 17 years by sacking manager Ange Postecoglou 16 days after the win against Manchester United in Bilbao.

Spurs came closest to the biggest prize of all in 2019, reaching the Champions League final, only to lose 2-0 to Liverpool in Madrid. But, even then, what promised to be the start of a new golden era ended in acrimony. The aftermath of that defeat turned sour as hugely popular manager Mauricio Pochettino failed to get the backing he believed he deserved—the fracture with his chairman leading to his sacking six months later.

It provided fuel for Levy’s critics, who felt his determination to run

Spurs on a firm financial footing was too often translated into a lack of ambition when set against those clubs enjoying success regularly.

His business acumen was never in doubt, with football finance expert Kieran Maguire describing the Londoners as the “most profitable club in Premier League history” because of the money their new stadium generates, a historically lower wage structure and a “degree of caution” on transfer spending.

This was never transformed into tangible success measured by silverware, with Levy increasingly a target for supporters’ anger throughout his tenure.

It manifested itself with regular protests outside games, with one prominent banner delivering a nod to legendary former captain Danny Blanchflower’s famous phrase.

It read: “Our game is about glory, Levy’s game is about greed”, while another was “24 years, 16 managers, 1 trophy - time for change.”

Among the anti-Levy chants that echoed regularly around the vast Tottenham Hotspur Stadium, a popular one was, “I don’t care about Levy, he doesn’t care about me, all I care about is Kulusevski”.

Thomas Frank became the 14th permanent manager to work under Levy when he succeeded Postecoglou. In his quest for success, Levy has attracted proven, high-class Premier League winners such as Jose Mourinho - bizarrely sacked days before the 2021 Carabao Cup final against Manchester City —and Antonio Conte.



Tottenham Hotspur’s executive chairman, Daniel Levy /HANDOUT

FOOTBALL

Don’t judge Tuchel on ‘nonsense’ Cup qualifiers—Rooney

BBC

ENGLAND boss Thomas Tuchel should not be judged on “nonsense” World Cup qualifiers, says Wayne Rooney.

The Three Lions host Andorra and visit Serbia in Group K during the

next five days. England have beaten Albania 2-0, Latvia 3-0 and Andorra 1-0 in Tuchel’s first three competitive matches in charge. “I think he’s a top manager,” Rooney said on his BBC podcast, The Wayne Rooney Show.

“He’s maybe got a little bit of stick about the way that England played, and those games are just nonsense really.

“You turn up and you just know England are going to win the game. It’s 10 men sitting behind the ball, and you’ve got to break them down, which is not easy against any team.”

Rooney scored 53 goals in 120 caps for England between 2003 and 2018. “I used to love playing for England. Watching England now and some of the games, you know they’re going to win, but it can be a bit boring. Obviously, getting into the tournament, that’s when you enjoy it,” he said. “The last few games, it was

against Andorra or something like that. It was painful.

“([I feel] sorry for Thomas Tuchel because he probably wants a decent game where he can go and show what he can do. It’s a no-win [situation] really.” Tuchel’s England contract runs until the end of the 2026 World Cup in the United States, Canada and Mexico. Two wins in the next week would take them close to sealing their place there with three qualifiers to spare. Rooney added, “I think for Thomas Tuchel, you want to see England having to sit back and defend and having to tactically break down teams.

“Against the better teams, that chance will come. So, I think he’ll do really well for England. Whether they’ll win the World Cup... you don’t know, I think that he’s got one shot, hasn’t he?”



England manager Thomas Tuchel

/HANDOUT

## ATHLETICS

Star studded  
Kenyan field  
tipped to rule  
Great North Run

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SATURDAY-SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6-7, 2025

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## FOOTBALL

# STARS DIMMMED

Harambee Stars exit the 2026 World Cup after succumbing to Gambia 3-1

BY TONY MBALLA

UNDER the floodlights of Moi Stadium, Kasarani, Harambee Stars' World Cup dreams flickered and died.

Friday night delivered a 3-1 win to Gambia, with Sheriff Sinyan, Yankuba Minteh, and Adima Sidibeh etching the Scorpions' dominance.

Kenya's consolation came from Ryan Ogam late in the match, but the gap was insurmountable, leaving the Stars' campaign over before the final whistle of the qualifiers.

Kenya had a promising moment in the seventh minute when Moses Lenkupai, positioned perfectly, shot wide—an early warning that luck would not favour them. Minutes later, Timothy Ouma thought he had scored, but the referee's whistle silenced the attempt.

By the 12th minute, Sheriff Sinyan headed Gambia into the lead, exploiting defensive gaps. Brighton & Hove Albion's Yankuba Minteh doubled the lead in the 38th minute, and Adima Sidibeh struck again in the 51st. Kasarani watched in stunned silence as Gambia's precision exposed every Kenyan lapse.

Coach Benni McCarthy spoke with a mix of frustration and reflection. "Not what we expected, not what we wanted," he said. "At this level, mistakes get punished. Their squad plays in Europe, and you feel every error sharply. Down 3-0, it becomes uphill, but we never stopped fighting."

McCarthy highlighted defensive miscalculations. "Instead of clearing, we dribbled. We left Minteh one-on-one. The outcome was



Gambia's Mohammed Sanneh battles with Harambee Stars forward Emmanuel Osoro /HANDOUT

inevitable. But the boys showed heart in the second half."

At halftime, McCarthy brought in Manzur Suleiman and Alpha Onyango. Their energy transformed Kenya's play—suddenly, the Stars pressed, attacked, and carved out chances.

Ryan Ogam announced his arrival in the 81st minute with a brilliant strike. Kasarani roared as Kenya dominated possession, though Gambia's defence remained resolute.

"The second half showed what national pride looks like," McCarthy said. "Fans want fight and passion, and the boys delivered."

For Gambia coach Jonathan McKinstry, Kasarani held nostalgia. "I feel at home here," McKinstry said.

"Kenya welcomed me warmly. Winning tonight adds to a story that began long ago. We managed the altitude, relied on our European-based squad, and stayed disciplined. It was a complete team performance."

Kenya had one goal ruled out. McCarthy accepted the decisions, emphasising resilience over complaint.

"Part of coaching Kenya is accepting what comes. You fight on even if goals are disallowed. Our pride is in effort, not just the scoreline."

The Stars slumped to fifth in Group F with six points from seven matches. Gabon leads with 18

points, Ivory Coast 14, Burundi 10, Gambia 7, and Seychelles zero. Kenya's final match against Seychelles on Tuesday will be for pride, not qualification. McCarthy sees potential despite defeat.

"The CHAN stars—Ryan Ogam, Manzur Suleiman, Alpha Onyango—showed skill, courage, and readiness for international football. This experience builds confidence.

The future remains bright if we nurture these players."

McCarthy reckons Kenya's domestic talent rises, new strategies take shape, and while the World Cup dream ends, the foundation for tomorrow strengthens.

## ★ BASKETBALL

Sparks seek to make history as they take KPA

BY CHARLENE MALWA

ZETECH Sparks head coach Maurice Obilo says his side is primed to make history when they lock horns with KPA in the Kenya Basketball Federation (KBF) women's league best-of-five playoff finals this weekend.

The Sparks arrive on the back of a commanding 3-0 sweep over Strathmore Swords in the semifinals.

"We have shown great character in these playoffs, and this is a big moment for the girls," Obilo said.

"We respect KPA because of their pedigree, but we are not here by chance."

The Dockers, coached by Antony Ojukwu, rallied from a Game One stumble against defending champions Equity Hawks to close out the semis 3-1.

KPA's experience and depth will again be their greatest weapons as they try to halt Sparks' fairytale run.

The students, however, are chasing a slice of history, bidding to become only the second university side to lift the crown after USIU Flames in 2014.

Both teams have already punched their tickets to October's Women's Basketball League Africa (WBLA) Zone Five qualifiers in Zanzibar, with Sparks set for their continental debut.

For Sparks, captain Michele Sokoudjou has led from the front, combining with forward Christine Akinyi to drop 20 points apiece in their decisive semifinal clash.

Angie Akinyi came close to a double-double with 14 rebounds, while Beryl Otieno released 15 points and 21 rebounds in Game Two, underlining the squad's depth. Sokoudjou was equally ruthless that day, torching Swords with 28 points in a 76-46 rout.

"Our strength is teamwork," Obilo insisted.

## Nsanzuwera delivers at home in Sunshine Tour

BY TEDDY MULEI

RWANDA'S Celestin Nsanzuwera believes holding his nerves was the secret to his commanding victory at the fifth leg of the Sunshine Development Tour – East Africa swing, the SportsBiz Africa Golf Championship in Kigali.

Carrying the weight of home expectations, the 27-year-old closed his final round with a

Celestin Nsanzuwera /HANDOUT

steady 2-under par 70 to finish on an impressive 15-under par 201, sealing the crown by a comfortable five-stroke margin. His closing round featured birdies on the 1st, 2nd, 8th, 16th and 18th, tempered by bogeys on the 2nd, 11th and 13th.

Despite being under pressure, Nsanzuwera said that focus saw him carry the day. "This win means a lot to me, especially here at home in Kigali. There was pressure, but I stayed focused on my game plan and trusted the preparation I've put in," the Rwandan said. Nsanzuwera said that he is growing with each game he competes in.

"The birdie on 18 was a special moment, in front of the fans, and it gave me a lot of pride to

deliver this win for Rwanda. Having competed in every leg of this Tour so far, I feel my game is growing stronger with each event, and this victory gives me confidence heading into the next legs," he added.

The triumph earned him Sh646,492 from the Sh3.2m purse. South Africa's Adam Breen produced the round of the day, firing a flawless 6-under par 66 to snatch second place at 10-under par 206. His charge included birdies on the first, sixth, eighth, 13th, 17th and 18th holes. He pocketed Sh345,873.

"Today was one of those rounds where everything clicked. I gave myself a lot of chances and managed to convert on the back nine to put

some pressure on the leader," Breen said. Compatriot Haydn Porteous, a two-time DP World Tour winner and 2015 Kenya Open champion, settled for third on 8-under par 208 after a tidy 2-under par 70. His round mixed birdies on the 4th, 7th, 12th and 13th with dropped shots on the 8th, 14th and 15th. He collected Sh234,030 (USD 1,810). Uganda's Gaita Rodell and South Africa's Travis Procter shared fourth at 7-under par 209 after consistent three-day performances. Kenya's Eric Ooko flew the Kenyan flag highest, finishing sixth on 6-under par 210, while compatriots Greg Snow and John Wangai also cracked the top 10 with a tie for eighth on 4-under par 212.

