



Meru County Reaps Big From Kenya National Music Festivals

Businessmen in Meru have made huge profits in the ten days the National Music Festivals has been held in the county. The Music Festivals that were held in Meru School, Kaaga and Meru teachers college started on August 4 and came to an end yesterday. The 97th Kenya Music Festival (KMF) came to a close, with winners showcasing their talents and creativity at a colorful gala Page 18

NAIROBI INTERNATIONAL DIGITAL CONFERENCE, 10TH ANNIVERSARY ROADSHOW
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News>> Raila: Support Devolution And Stop Weaponising Oversight

P. 8. Former Prime Minister Raila Odinga has called for an end to what he termed the “weaponisation of oversight” against county governments, saying devolution is the future of Kenya and must be fully supported rather than undermined.



News>> Mudavadi: Local Missteps Harm And Scare Foreign Investors At Counties, Are Costly To The Nation

P. 12. Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi has warned against harming foreign investors at county levels saying it damages bilateral relations and erodes investor confidence.

Special Report on the State of Devolution @ 12
National Gov't Must Handover All Devolved Functions

The National 9th Devolution Conference opened in Homa Bay County on Wednesday for three days under the theme: “For the People, For Prosperity: Devolution as a Catalyst for Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice.” There exists consensus on five key areas on the devolution implementation for the last 12 years. First, devolution has changed lives, services and power dynamics across the country.



President William Ruto with Council of Governors officials.

STORY ON PAGE 9,10,11

NAIROBI - MT KENYA CIRCUIT ROADSHOW ROADMAP (17-18 SEPT 2025)

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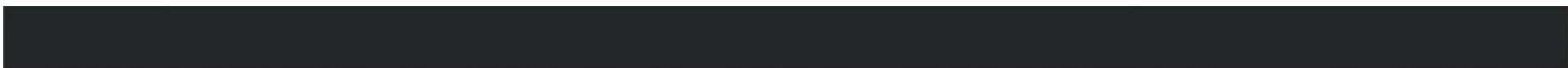
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Deputy President Kithure Kindiki Hosts Hundreds Of Baringo Leaders

By: MKT Reporter
 @themtkenyatimes

Some Of The Moments As Captured In Pictures

More than 3,000 leaders from Baringo county were yesterday hosted by Deputy President Kithure Kindiki in Nairobi. The meeting reviewed development matters in the Rift Valley region county. "Constant monitoring, evaluation and review of Government programmes and projects crucial for efficiency," the Deputy President noted, adding, "On a case by case basis, we are tracking the progress so far of national government programmes across the 47 Counties and receiving input for speedier service delivery." The Second-in-Command in Baringo County, resumption of construction of stalled roads is on course, affordable housing, fresh produce markets and last mile electricity connectivity projects are ongoing and so is the programme for universal health coverage for all residents. The 3,000 grassroots opinion leaders represented elders, women, the youth, people with disability, professionals and other interest groups from the County. During the meeting, the leaders agreed that all aspirants for the forthcoming Baringo Senator by-election will back one of them either through consensus or after competitive party primaries.



Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times

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Group Executive Chairman
M. Danson

Our Contacts
 P. O. Box 101 675 - 00101 Nairobi, Cell: 0700 161 866, 0705 215 262
Editorial Desk: editorial@mountkenyatimes.co.ke, **Adverts:** ads@mountkenyatimes.co.ke,
News Desk: news@mountkenyatimes.co.ke, **Web:** www.mountkenyatimes.co.ke

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NEWS IN BRIEF



Principal Secretary for Livestock Development Jonathan Mueke yesterday held a meeting to discuss the rollout of the vaccination program for Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR), which will be delivered as a subsidy through the eVoucher model. The national vaccination program, coupled with the traceability system, will enable Kenyan livestock keepers to access more and higher-value markets both locally and internationally.



The Mau Forest Complex Integrated Conservation and Livelihood Improvement Programme (MCF-ICLIP) has organised a marathon dubbed the Mau Conservation Marathon on Friday, 24th October, 2025. The marathon, which is categorised under 21 km, 10 km, 5 km and 2 km, will start from Kuresoi South and end at Kuresoi North with cash prizes to be won. An online portal will be created for participant registration at a fee of Ksh500. The Patron of MCF-ICLIP who is also the Principal Secretary for Environment and Climate Change Dr Eng Festus K Ng'eno yesterday held discussions with his Sports counterpart Mr. Elijah Mwangi on collaboration and partnership in the upcoming Marathon. The meeting was held at Talanta Plaza in Nairobi.



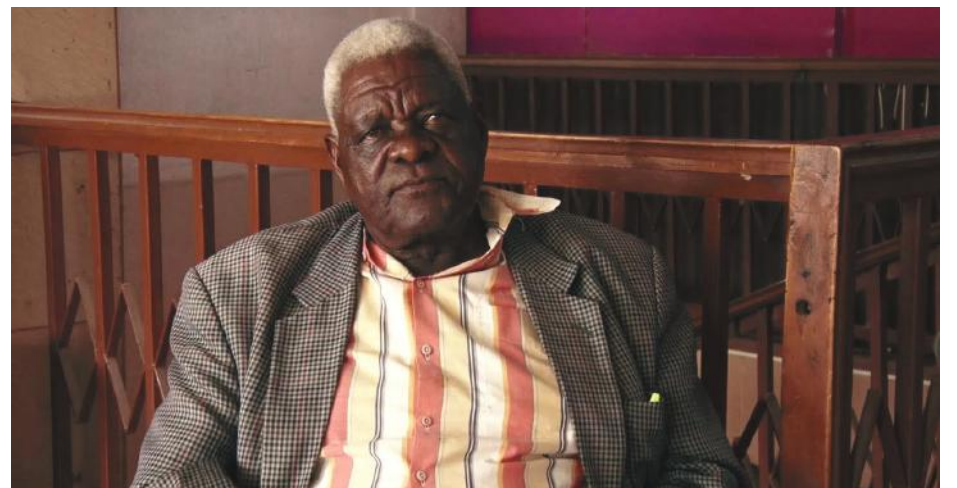
Kenya Pipeline Company (KPC) and Kenya Railways have set up a joint technical committee to investigate last week's devastating collision between a staff bus and a cargo train in Naivasha, which claimed 9 lives and left over a dozen injured. The accident happened on Thursday last week near Morendat, when a bus ferrying 32 KPC employees was struck by a train at a railway crossing. Poor visibility from heavy fog is believed to have been a factor. A memorial service was held on Wednesday for the victims, remembered as hardworking and dedicated. KPC has pledged to cover all medical and funeral expenses, and compensation will be addressed after investigations are complete. Authorities say the probe will focus on the events leading up to the crash, safety protocols at the crossing, and possible human or mechanical error.



Principal Secretary for Agriculture Paul Ronoh yesterday hosted two outstanding student delegates selected to represent Kenya at the prestigious World Food Prize Global Youth Institute, set to take place in the United States from October 21–23, 2025. The Global Youth Institute is a renowned international platform that brings together visionary students and educators from around the world to engage in transformative discussions and present innovative solutions to the global challenges of hunger and food insecurity. The PS commended the students for their remarkable achievement and emphasized that their selection reflects not only their academic brilliance and forward-thinking ideas, but also the Government's steadfast commitment to nurturing the next generation of agricultural leaders and changemakers. He assured the delegates of the government's support as they prepare to represent Kenya on the global stage, noting that their participation symbolizes the country's dedication to youth empowerment and sustainable agricultural development. Their journey, he remarked, is a beacon of hope and a testament to the promise of Kenya's future in food systems innovation.



The Principal Secretary for Public Health and Professional Standards, Mary Muithoni yesterday joined COMESA Ministers of Health for the official opening of the Second Regional Health Ministers' Meeting in Lusaka, Zambia. The gathering has brought together ministers, senior health officials, and development partners from across the COMESA region to advance a shared agenda on strengthening health systems, boosting local manufacturing, and enhancing pandemic preparedness. Building on commitments made during the inaugural session in May 2024, the two-day meeting will provide a platform for deeper collaboration and coordinated action to address the region's pressing health priorities.



Kakamega resident, Caleb Jumba, has urged MPs to amend the Kenya Medical Supplies Authority Act to allow KEMSA to run pharmacies in all public hospitals across the country. He said despite KEMSA supplying drugs worth millions of shillings, they are often unavailable whenever patients seek treatment. He lamented that every time Kenyans visit hospitals for treatment, they are forced to buy medicines from private pharmacies, thus paying out of pocket for medical care that should be covered by the Social Health Authority (SHA).

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THEME: "Promoting Climate Smart Agriculture and Trade Initiatives for sustainable Economic Growth"

Kagwe: Food Crisis Looms If Court Blocks Duty-Free Imports

By: Wangari Ndirangu
@themkenyentimes

Worth Noting:

According to an affidavit by the CS Kenya's annual demand for rice stands at about 1.3 million metric tonnes against a domestic production of just 20 percent, leaving a deficit of more than 80 percent, roughly 1 million metric tonnes, that is bridged mainly through imports.

The CS warned that the current retail price of Grade 1 milled white rice has already surged to between Sh190 and Sh220 per kilogramme, a steep rise from last year's duty-free period average of Sh150 per kilogramme.

Kenya is staring at a possible spike in food prices and an acute rice shortage if the courts uphold a petition seeking to block the importation of 500,000 metric tonnes of duty-free rice, Cabinet Secretary Mutahi Kagwe has said.

This follows a gazette notice on July 28 in which the Agriculture CS had recommended for Kenya to import 500,000 metric tons of Grade 1 milled rice duty-free before December 31, 2025.

Following the announcement, the farmers' party took the matter to court, successfully obtaining a temporary suspension of the import plan.

The Kerugoya court is set to give directions today on whether to lift conservatory orders obtained challenging the Cabinet's decision.

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The CS warned that the current retail price of Grade 1 milled white rice has already surged to between Sh190 and Sh220 per kilogramme, a steep rise from last year's duty-free period average of Sh150 per kilogramme.

"If duty-free imports are blocked, the prices are likely to soar further, deepening the cost-of-living crisis," Kagwe said.

Kagwe noted that projections showed that Kenya's rice consumption per capita in 2025 is expected to reach 29 kilogrammes, with the population estimated at 54.79 million.

This, he added, translates to a national requirement of about 1.5 million metric tonnes of rice for the year, or roughly 125,000 metric tonnes per month. The country will need about



Cabinet Secretary Mutahi Kagwe.

625,000 metric tonnes between July and December 2025 alone.

The affidavit further reveals that the Kenya National Trading Corporation (KNTC) has signed contracts with the Mwea Rice Growers Cooperative to mop up local stocks for onward distribution to government institutions.

However, available stocks from farmers currently stand at only 20,000 (50 kg) bags, against a projected demand of more than 350,000 bags for key government institutions.

These are from the Ministry of Education—130,000 bags (Komboka). Special Programmes – 90,000 bags (Komboka). State Department for Correctional Services – 60,000 bags

(Sindano) and Kenya Defence Forces – 40,000 bags (SPR).

Other agencies, such as the Administration Police, General Service Unit, National Youth Service, and Kenya Police Service, also have substantial rice needs.

"The importation is necessary to stabilize prices and avert a potential food crisis," Kagwe emphasized, warning that without duty-free imports, both household consumers and critical public institutions could face severe shortages.

Three days ago, Justice Edward Muriithi issued a conservatory order suspending a directive by the Cabinet allowing the duty-free importation of

500,000 metric tonnes of rice. Kenyan rice farmers are protesting the government's decision to allow duty-free rice imports, fearing it would negatively impact their livelihoods.

The government maintains that imports are necessary to address a local shortage and ensure affordable prices for consumers.

According to the Kenya National Trading Corporation (KNTC), the local available stock currently is Komboka Rice-10,000 bags, Premium Basmati Rice-4,000 bags and MRG Rice-6,000 bags.

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Raila: Support Devolution And Stop Weaponising Oversight

By: Alex Njeru
@themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- “Devolution is a process, not an event. We have already made great strides, but there is still work to do. Counties are not identical, they differ in community composition, development levels, and needs. We must continue reviewing and improving devolution to ensure it delivers for our people,” Odinga said.
- The ODM leader maintained that county governors should be overseen by their respective county assemblies, not the Senate and that when the Senate Public Accounts Committee requires explanations on spending, it should summon County Executive Committee Members (CECMs) responsible for finance and relevant departments, not governors themselves.
- He accused some national leaders of using threats instead of support to deal with counties, adding that such actions weaken the spirit of the 2010 Constitution.

Former Prime Minister Raila Odinga has called for an end to what he termed the “weaponisation of oversight” against county governments, saying devolution is the future of Kenya and must be fully supported rather than undermined.

Speaking yesterday as the Chief Guest during the second day of the 2025 Devolution Conference at Homa Bay National School, Odinga urged national and county leaders to work in harmony to strengthen devolved units instead of engaging in political witch-hunts.

“Devolution is a process, not an event. We have already made great strides, but there is still work to do. Counties are not identical, they differ in community composition, development levels, and needs. We must continue reviewing and improving devolution to ensure it delivers for our people,” Odinga said.

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“Local communities must enjoy adequate resources, and county institutions must be strengthened. The national government should stop micromanaging counties,” he said.

Odinga further called for a rewards system to recognise counties performing well in service delivery, saying this would empower communities and inspire innovation.

He championed a “digital revolution” in counties to improve service delivery and curb corruption through transparent systems.

Addressing the long-running tussle over functions and resources, Odinga said there must be clear separation of roles between the two levels of government, with counties having full control of all devolved functions.

He proposed devolving education up to the secondary school level, arguing that it was unnecessary for the Cabinet Secretary for Education to be touring the country overseeing basic school matters.

He also challenged the government to surrender National Government Constituencies Development Fund (NGCDF) allocations to counties, noting that the role of MPs is to rep-

resent citizens and conduct oversight not manage development funds, which he said was the work of county governments.

On infrastructure, Odinga said the national government should only focus on highways and leave the construction of local roads to counties, terming it “illogical” for someone in Nairobi to manage a small road in Mandera or Kisumu.

The former Prime Minister also weighed in on the debate over governors’ benefits, saying they too should receive pensions if MPs serving two terms are entitled to them.

On corruption, Odinga dismissed the narrative that it is rampant only in counties, claiming that national government ministries, especially in procurement are also deeply affected. He warned against wasteful expenditure through endless summons to county and national officials, alleging that losing contractors often fund such sessions to sabotage ongoing projects.

Odinga did not spare the judiciary, accusing it of widespread corruption and alleging that some judges are bought to skew justice.

He also criticised sections of the media, claiming they are sometimes paid to shape public opinion and sabotage justice rather than genuinely expose wrongdoing.

“The time has come to be serious about fully implementing the Constitution of 2010. Let us empower counties, not weaken them. Devolution is the engine of Kenya’s future economy,” Odinga concluded.



Raila Odinga in Homa Bay yesterday



Some of the conference officials..

Special Report on the State of Devolution @ 12

National Executive Must Concede To Let Go All Devolved Functions And Attendant Resources

Remove costly duplications and overlaps escalating the economic and financial risks; rationalize and reduce unnecessary state corporations; build stronger devolution for fair economy

By: International Center for Policy and Conflict, (ICPC)

@themkenyatimes

The National 9th Devolution Conference opened in Homa Bay County on Wednesday for three days under the theme: “For the People, For Prosperity: Devolution as a Catalyst for Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice.”

There exists consensus on five key areas on the devolution implementation for the last 12 years. First, devolution has changed lives, services and power dynamics across the country.

Secondly, devolution has played critical role in political stabilizing of the country. Thirdly, devolution has played major role in achieving the underpinning social contract and cornerstone of the 2010 Constitution on social and economic rights, guaranteeing equal society, shared prosperity and public expenditure that promote equitable development across the country, and strengthening local participatory democracy. Counties are the new frontiers of wealth generation, job creation and inclusive economic growth. Fourthly, the dangerous cancerous tumor of impunity and corruption is existential threat to devolution. However, the situation at the national government is grave on account of the revenue share between the two levels of government. Fifth, most County Governments are yet to establish and institutionalize devolved county institutions, systems and processes at Sub- Counties and below for purpose of decentralizing services to the closest proximity of the people.

And finally, County Assemblies are still under strong stranglehold of the county Executive. The County Assemblies are yet to fully gain their full structural, operational and financial independence. Senate must expedite the law on financial and operational autonomy of the county Assemblies.

After successful multi-party and new Constitution struggles, Kenya’s next challenge is delivering effective devolution for inclusive human development, guaranteeing economic security and quality social and public services for all Kenyans. Coun-

ties are the new frontiers of wealth, job creation, and inclusive economic growth. County governments play pivotal role in creating a friendly and facilitative environment for the private sector and businesses to thrive and create jobs.

Devolution is the main engine for revolutionizing and transforming the governance, services and inclusive development of the Country. Devolution is the game changer and insurance for inclusion, stability, growth, services and participatory democracy. Making devolution work is not optional. It is vital for equity, sense of belonging of every region and community, and unlocking the enormous potential of the country and people across the board.

There are still and concurrence exclusive functions including devolved functions being performed by public sector state owned enterprises that are yet to be fully operationalized across all counties. It is unacceptable that the national government ministries, departments and agencies are still heavily performing some of exclusive functions or certain aspects of them, despite the functions having been transferred to the county governments. This challenge is most evident in the functions of health, housing, agriculture, roads, water, sanitation, education, energy among others.

The detailed report released by Inter-Governmental Relations technical committee (IGRTC) confirms make comprehensive radical changes to the old order system.

For instance, the IGRTC reveals that national government is holding devolved functions and assets valued at more than Sh400 billion are yet to be transferred to county governments with some ministries performing large elements of devolved functions. Example of elements still held by Ministries include: agriculture (41), health (45), Education (52), water (18) roads (51), trade (37). Others holding large elements of devolved functions are energy, tourism, environment and tourism

On August 16, 2023 President William Ruto promised his full commitment to transferring all devolved functions and costing of the functions which has been delayed for the last 10 years. He assured that the process would be concluded within



Council of Governors chairperson and Wajir Governor Ahmed Abdullahi addressing delegates in Homa Bay on Wednesday.

60 days. That promise is far from being fulfilled. Further, the President recognized that the delay in disbursement of constitutionally set equitable revenue share funds has had adverse impacts on service delivery leading to poor social and outcomes. This promise yet to be achieved.

National Executive and National Assembly have been the biggest obstruction and resistance forces to full devolution. The national government civil service bureaucracy keeps expanding rather than shrinking as the critical functions were devolved. The attempt to revive and expand the notorious provincial administration must be thwarted. This system must comprehensive be restructured and reformed to accord with and respect devolved system of the governance as per the Constitution. Changing names is the not the intended radical change of the system. The people of Kenya opted for democratically elected self-local governance.

One consequence of failure to restructure, reform and align National government Ministries, Departments, agencies and state corporations/parastatals to accord with and respect devolution is putting the country in high economic and financial risks. This is what the country is witnessing.

The current economic and financial challenges provide a pivotal moment to comprehensively downsize, restructure and align national government. This is a moment to fully implement the devolution, core promise of the 2010 Constitution.

Devolution has faced serious affront from the National Executive and National Assembly including direct attempts at recentralize and constant threats to the wellbeing of devolution.

Country urgently needs to draft and pass a national legislation on functions and powers to clarify the constitutional assignment of functions and powers to the two levels of government including major structural reform on fiscal policy of the country. Counties must have direct participation in national economic and fiscal policy decision making.

The legislation ‘The Devolved Governance Functions and Powers Act’, should have objectives of:

1. Operationalize Articles 186 and the Fourth Schedule, 183, and 187 of the Constitution making comprehensive provisions for the clarification of functional assignment and the functional lists (Money follows functions)
2. Establishment of clear framework for the national govern-

ment assignment of additional functions and powers to the county Governments (most advanced countries in world are highly devolved)

3. Establishment of a coherent framework for the intergovernmental transfer of functions and powers as well as cooperation, coordination and consultation between two levels of government

4. Provide clear legal mechanism for inclusion and participation of County Governments in the critical national fiscal and economic policy formulation.

5. Establishment of Alternative Dispute Resolution between two levels of government

6. Provide for legal mechanisms for technical support, capacity development and collaboration. Most county Governments are facing technical, capacity and institutionalization failures.

7. Establishment of proper functional, effective and efficient County’s institutions, systems, procedures and processes including the autonomy of the County Assemblies. County governance is not the

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Governor.

8. Create better enabling legal and policy framework for devolved economic revolution to build local economy and reduce poverty on large scale. It should stronger rule of law and better governance; human capital investment, market creating innovations and technology; competitive tax and business friendly legal environment; economic diversification, trade and export industrial production; and efficient mobility, connectivity and better infrastructure.

Analysis

It is unacceptable 12 years after ushering in devolved system of governance, significant devolved functions and their attendant resource both financial and human are still unconstitutionally held by National Government. This is gross violation of the Constitutional set timeline to implement full devolution. There has been significant reluctance by National Executive with tacit support by the National assembly in respect to the transfer of the remaining functions. Troublingly there has been concerted attempts at the reversals of already partially transferred functions.

Even with the limited devolution implementation so far, Kenya is a much transformed landscape with amazing opportunities for rural areas and urban centers especially on economic revival and transformation. There is now economic life in previously dead towns and market centers beaming with life after devolution. Devolution of resources to match transferred functions is hinged on the principle that resources should follow functions.

The constitutional functions assignment and transfer together with resources is one of the most critical aspects of Kenya's devolved governance structure. It is the core promise of the 2010 Constitution. Even though the same is constitutionally provided for, there are still challenges that are being experienced in the transfer of functions and the role that

is played by each level of government.

The Constitution envisages that there should be a fair degree of comity between the two levels of government and in that regard, the Intergovernmental Relations Act, 2012 establishes the legal and institutional framework for consultation, cooperation on and dispute resolution between the National and county governments and amongst the county governments inter alia, in the process of transfer and performance of functions. To the extent that an effective functions transfer process has a direct impact on the quality of service delivery, any outstanding issues in the transfer process must be concluded with utmost urgency. Effective contribution of the Senate is necessary to facilitate the transfer of the functions which are yet to be transferred.

The Supreme Court of Kenya's Legal Opinion of 2013 on the Division of Revenue and the High Court of Kenya's decision on Constituencies Development Funds of 2015 reasserted and affirmed the constitutional autonomy and competence of the county governments to execute and oversee all devolved functions and service delivery in their areas of jurisdiction.

At this critical one decade after devolution rollout, a more deliberate unbundling and transfer of remaining functions should be hastened. Comprehensive assessment, assignment and publish register of assets and liabilities carried over from the former local authorities should be concluded. Undertake comprehensive transfer of pensions, benefits and records of all personnel who have transited from the national to the county governments.

There has to be increased deliberate firm political decisions to align, restructure and reorder the national government ministries, departments and agencies with the principles and objects of devolution should be sustained. Concerted effort should be undertaken by the two levels of government to ensure public engagement through effective civic education. Retrogressive laws and policies aimed at claw backs or to conveniently overreach the authority of the national government through



9th Devolution Conference that is taking place in Homa Bay County..

parallel structures should be resisted and rejected. Undertaking nationwide, comprehensive and effective civic education on devolution is absolutely important

In November 2023, President William Ruto's promised that the national government will in the next 60 days (already expired) transfer all devolved functions currently being held and undertaken unconstitutionally by national government ministries and departments. This promise remain futile. Deeds speak better than words. The national government has successfully, through the National Assembly, pushed legislative and administrative processes that subvert constitutionally devolved functions.

The national government, while free to infiltrate its policies at the county levels, it must do so through the structures recognized under the Constitution and not run parallel or duplicate system. The law is clear that the national government may channel grants, whether conditional or unconditional, to the county governments as additional revenue within the meaning of Article 202 and not any other entity which performs the functions allocated to the county by the Constitution. The national government cannot purport to channel grants to an entity whose intended

projects effectively undermine the role of the government at the county level.

The Inter-Governmental Technical Relations Committee (IGTRC) has stated that devolved functions and assets valued at more than KSh400 Billion are yet to be transferred to county governments. A report by IGTRC shows that 12 years after devolution, there are significant devolved functions that are still being undertaken by national ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) including the public sector state owned enterprises.

According to IGTRC report, most of the national Ministries still unconstitutionally holding the largest elements of devolved functions include agriculture, health, water, energy, transport and roads, education, lands, trade, tourism and wildlife, environment, and housing and urban development. The IGTRC further notes that National Government administration structure is yet to fully be reformed and restructured to accord with and respect devolved of government. This fundamentally undermine devolution and create unnecessary costly parallel governance structures in the counties.

The 9th National Devolution Conference being held in Homa Bay

County should agree on how recommendations by the IGTRC on the exclusive and concurrent functions should be fully and expeditiously be implemented. There are few exclusive functions that are yet to be operationalized across all counties. The major difficulty concerning exclusive functions is that the national government is still performing some of these functions or certain aspects of them, despite the functions having been transferred to the county governments.

The precise mode of operationalizing concurrent functions has not been resolved in all sectors. The exact levels of responsibility and accountability of each level of government concerning most of the concurrent functions remain indeterminate. There has to be agreed framework for unbundling concurrent functions and the consequent assignment of responsibilities between the two levels of governments applying inter alia the subsidiarity principle.

There are significant functional overlaps and duplications have been noted. These overlaps are of great

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concerns as they annually cost more than Kshs.500Billion and keep causing a huge economic and financial risks to the country. The two levels of government have not always adhered to their respective roles and levels of responsibility regarding the functions that they have been assigned to counties. Their planning and budgeting still capture functions that are legally outside their jurisdictions.

The functions of the state corporations largely remain unbundled to date, a process which is a necessary precursor to transferring any component of their functions that should be performed by county governments. Annually state corporations have been receiving budgetary allocations averaging KShs. 500Billion. Yet they are performing duplicated functions. The state corporations must be rationalized, reduced and all devolved functions they are performing be transferred to County governments

The principle finance follows functions must be fully implemented and adhered to faithfully. Effective devolved governance units must of necessity have a broader mandates and implicit expectations to deliver functions at local level. By being closer to the people, they receive more demands than what the statutes allocate them. There is need for financial allocations to functions to take cognizance of this fact. The devolved units provide services where there was none and they perform beyond what the national government used to do. The end goal is to apply available resources to reach more people. It is crucial that accountability and participation in the devolved units is strengthened and robustly enforced.

The Devolution Conference must resolve the critical issues of delayed disbursements and skewed revenue share. Further the National Treasury must be fully reformed to serve two levels of governments independently. The National government budget and fiscal matters should be performed by independent office separate from the role of the National

Treasury. It is very important that County governments have a voice on the national table of economic, fiscal and taxation policy decision making as those decisions have direct implications to the devolved units.

In conclusion, the implementation of the system of devolved government is largely on course. Nonetheless, there is need to urgently expedite overhaul, and repeal as per constitutional requirements of the old order existing policies, legislation and institutional frameworks to ensure that they facilitate improved devolved governance and service delivery which can only be attained if the respective levels of government adequately carry out their responsibilities as spelt out in the Constitution and the law.

The Constitution needs further breakdown because the functions listed therein are still highly aggregated. A casual division along the lines of “policy versus implementation” or “national versus county” is still a broad spectrum for classification or delineation with a high degree of haziness on the specific boundaries of these functions. Therefore, reliance on the Fourth Schedule alone as the basis for delimiting the boundaries of responsibility between the National and county governments in matters of the division of functions might prove futile.

There is need to, through cooperative government and intergovernmental relations, enact national policy and legislation on functions and powers to clarify the constitutional assignment of functions and powers to the two levels of government. This legislation, which should be styled “The Functions and Powers Act”, should aim to operationalize Articles 186(1), (2) and the Fourth Schedule, 186(3),183(1)(b), and 187 of the constitution. This must be achieved through making provision for the clarification of functional assignment and the functional lists; establishment of a framework for the national government assignment of additional functions and powers to county governments; and establishment of a framework for the intergovernmental transfer of functions and powers. The core of devolution lies functional assignment and the costing that defines the process.



9th Devolution Conference that is taking place in Homa Bay County.

While some sector national ministries have tried to incorporate principles of devolution in their policy development process, others have continued to create structures, which completely ignore extent the devolution and fiscal imperative. Further, apart from inertia, there have been problems such as lack of policy clarity, lack of clarity on the institutional development required to implement decentralization, and lack of clarity on the part of each sectoral ministry as to what initiative they are expected to take.

As a country, devolution is the most significant political undertaking in post-independence. Devolution is today the anchor of social and political stability of the country. The 2010 Constitution heralded a new era of more open and inclusive governance best epitomized by devolution, a system that is significantly bridging development gaps between regions, bringing services delivery services closer to the people, and empowering and creating opportunities to local communities, and ensuring economy is growing from all corners of the country.

Kenya is at a great moment in its history with corresponding risk for failure. People of Kenya must not

allow a constitutional democratic recession. They must guard against entrenching old ways under the new systems. They must not breed apathy by substantiating apprehensions that the ambitions of the political leadership are not aligned to the needs of the people they serve. Kenyans must stay committed to the Constitution, learn lessons and make their common devolution journey worthwhile.

In order for devolution to paly pivotal role in transforming economy and reduce poverty on large scale, it should be backed by stronger rule of law and better governance; human capital investment, market creating innovations and technology; competitive tax and business friendly legal environment; economic diversification, trade and export industrial production; and efficient mobility, connectivity and better infrastructure.

Counties should conduct comprehensive, transparent audits of County assets, including land and properties and establish digitized open registries for proper planning and future utility. They should also conduct detailed county-based human resource assessment to harmonize personnel with needs, skills and reduce bloated unsustainable workforce and wag-

es. Each county government should establish an effective and efficient independent County Government Accountability Office to enforce stringent measures of performance, accountability and service delivery. We need a fully funded very structured intensive civic education on the Constitution and devolution.

Devolution is making the Country fire with all the engines. This is national dialogue on social and economic rights, quality public and social services, local economies and production, jobs and incomes, unleashing people’s potential and creativity, dignity and human freedoms.

This Report is prepared by the International Center for Policy and Conflict, ICPC, Nairobi Based regional think tank advancing the Human Security on freedom from Want, freedom from Fear and freedom to live in Dignity.

Mudavadi: Local Missteps Harm And Scare Foreign Investors At Counties, Are Costly To The Nation

By: OPCS PS
 @themtkenyatimes

Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi has warned against harming foreign investors at county levels saying it damages bilateral relations and erodes investor confidence.

Mudavadi, also the Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs said foreign investments just like local investments in our respective counties must be properly safeguarded.

He appealed to Governors, county leaders and locals to cultivate a culture of “welcome and protect”, underscoring how local missteps impose national costs.

“Sometimes, how we manage foreign Investments in our counties is absolutely critical,” noted the Foreign Affairs, CS.

“Competition for Foreign Direct Investment is absolutely essential for investment, employment and revenue growth. If we do not respect the rule of law and harm foreign investors, we cause a lot of damage and the consequences are very grave,” he added.

Mudavadi said investments in the respective counties must be properly safeguarded.

He said to accelerate development and close the socio-economic divide as a result of embracing devolution, the decisions made at county levels on foreign investment must be well thought out.

“In this regard, we must also confront how decisions at the county level can reverberate far beyond our borders, affecting national interests and our global standing,” noted Mudavadi, adding that “Consider the regrettable case in Meru County involving Leopard Rock Lodge, a luxury eco-tourism facility built by a French investor at a cost of over KSh500 million. In 2019, under the previous county administration, officials allegedly orchestrated the forcible eviction of the investor, leading to the destruction of the lodge’s infrastructure within Meru National Park.”

Mudavadi regretted that the investor, a French national, had legally leased the land and invested in sustainable tourism that promised jobs for local communities and revenue for the county.

He cautioned that internal political disputes and allegations of favouritism, at many times lead to destruction of property and scare away in-



Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi with ODM leader Raila Odinga.

vestors.

For the case of Meru, Mudavadi said, investigations showed that county enforcers demolished key structures of the prime investment, prompting a lawsuit that dragged on for years.

“The Courts ruled in favour of the investor, awarding compensation for breach of contract and unlawful eviction. The matter escalated internationally when the French Embassy raised concerns with our national government, highlighting the damage to bilateral relations and investor confidence,” he regretted.

“In May 2025, the national government intervened at a cost of hundreds of millions, shifting the burden to taxpayers and underscoring how local missteps impose national costs. This incident sends a chilling message: if we treat investors with such hostility, driven by petty politics rather than policy, we foster an environment of investment un-friendliness, deterring the very capital we need to create jobs for our youth.” Mudavadi warned.

The Prime CS was speaking in Homa Bay County during this year’s Devolution Conference, where

he urged counties to enact investor-friendly policies that will actualize streamlined permits underpin dispute resolution mechanisms, and incentives for sustainable projects.

“By doing so, we not only encourage investors to come but to stay,



Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi addressing delegates yesterday. Photos/Courtesy.

expand, and multiply opportunities.” affirmed the Prime CS.

The 2025 Devolution Conference is being held under the theme “For the People, For Prosperity: Devolution as a Catalyst for Equity, Inclusion and Social Justice”.

Mudavadi said the 2025 edition serves as a pivotal moment for Kenyans to reflect on the transformative journey of devolution and its immense potential in bridging the socio-economic divides.



Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi with conference officials.

Airtel Africa Foundation Launches ‘Tech for Her’ Programme To Upskill African Women With Digital Skills

By: Michael Omondi
@themtkenyatimes

Airtel Africa Foundation has launched its ‘Tech For Her’ Programme, targeting young women aged 18-40 years across Kenya, Zambia, and Uganda to equip them with high-demand digital skills, including Linux Administration, Cybersecurity, and Data Analytics, and prepare them to seek tech-related job opportunities across the world.

The five-week intensive online programme, to be delivered in partnership with Tertiary DNS, aligns with the Foundation’s mission to empower Africa through digital inclusion.

Participants will complete over 100 hours of intensive training through a flexible learning model that includes weekend classes for working professionals and weekday sessions for non-working participants.

To be eligible for the training, candidates are required to have basic digital literacy, a minimum education of a national diploma or its equivalent in science and technology, or higher qualifications.

In addition, graduates of the programme will receive 12 months of continuous skill development support, with top performers achieving scores of 90 percent or higher qualifying for internship opportunities at Airtel Africa and structured mentorship from technology industry leaders.

Airtel Africa Foundation Chair Dr. Segun Ogunsanya maintained that Africa’s digital revolution cannot reach its full potential without gender equity.

He explained that the Tech For Her programme helps to level the playing field by providing women with industry-relevant skills, mentorship, and pathways to high-growth tech roles around the world.

“By investing in Africa’s women, we are investing in sustainable economic transformation,” emphasized Dr. Ogunsanya in a press statement.

He added that the Foundation would reserve 30 percent of training participant slots for women in rural and underserved communities, while 40 percent of training seats would prioritize applicants from low-income households.

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural

Organization (UNESCO), only 30 percent of tech professionals in sub-Saharan Africa are women, and notably, the women hold just 2-8 percent of software development roles.

Considering the above, Annika Poutainen, one of the foundation’s committee members, stated, “At Airtel Africa, we are actively working to advance women in technology roles, and we are committed to a future where young women can be at the forefront of innovation.”

She revealed that in running this programme, Airtel Africa Foundation is creating a pipeline of female tech leaders who would help unlock the vast digital opportunities both at home, in Africa, and further afield.

Meanwhile, applications close on 21st August 2025, and participants are welcome to apply via country-specific portals on their respective Airtel websites or by following the links below.

Kenya: <https://premium.dspyder.uk/kenya/kenya.php>

Uganda: <https://premium.dspyder.uk/uganda/uganda.php>

Zambia: <https://premium.dspyder.uk/zambia/zambia.php>



Airtel Africa Foundation Chair Dr. Segun Ogunsanya.

PS Harsama Flags Off Camel Distribution To Boost Livelihoods In Marsabit

By: Charles Matacho
@themtkenyatimes

The government has reinforced its commitment to building resilience and sustainable livelihoods in Arid and Semi-Arid Land (ASALS) counties with the official flag-off of a major camel restocking programme in Marsabit County.

In a colourful ceremony held in Butiye ward, Moyale Sub-County, Principal Secretary for the State Department for the ASALs and Regional Development, Kello Harsama, launched the distribution of 100 camels to pastoral households. The event marked the start of a countywide exercise that will see 400 camels distributed, 100 each to the Moyale, Saku, Laisamis, and North Horr constituencies.

Coordinated by the National Drought Management Authority (NDMA), the programme targets households hard-

est hit by the devastating 2021–2023 drought, which wiped out large herds and left many families without a source of income and food. Beneficiaries were identified through a rigorous vetting process involving National Government Administration Officers (NGAO), NDMA officials, and village elders, ensuring that the most vulnerable families are reached.

Speaking during the flag-off, PS Harsama emphasised that the camel restocking programme is a practical and sustainable approach to rebuilding livelihoods in ASAL areas.

“In total, 400 families across Marsabit will each receive a camel. This is not just an aid initiative; it is an investment in resilience. Camels are drought-tolerant, provide milk, generate income, and serve as reliable transport in harsh terrain,” he said.

The initiative aligns with President William Ruto’s vision of a food-secure, self-reliant, and climate-resilient Kenya. Under his administration, tar-

geted interventions have been prioritised to help communities adapt to the realities of climate change, especially in drought-prone regions. The President has consistently underscored that empowering communities with the means to sustainably produce food and generate income is central to achieving long-term economic stability.

Similar livestock restocking efforts have been rolled out in Turkana, Samburu, Isiolo, Garissa, and Wajir, where NDMA has complemented camel and goat distribution with training in herd management, animal health, and feed support to improve survival rates.

Local leaders, including Moyale MP Prof. Guyo Waqo Jaldesa and Butiye Ward MCA, welcomed the Marsabit initiative as a timely intervention that will not only provide immediate relief but also serve as a foundation for long-term economic recovery. Beneficiaries in Butiye expressed optimism that the camels would help them re-



PS for ASALs and Regional Development Kello Harsama (left) with one of the farmers during the ceremony..

build their livelihoods, restore their herds, and secure a better future for their families.

The Kenya Kwanza Government’s broader strategy for ASALs anchored in resilience, adaptation, and sustainability is steadily transforming drought-hit regions into zones of opportunity. Through initiatives like

this, the administration is not only responding to emergencies but also equipping communities to thrive despite the challenges of a changing climate.

My Best Friend Gokulesh



Gokulesh is my best friend,
He is true and gentle
We sit together, sharing all moments
We sit in the same bench,
We laugh together,
We make great memories together
Sharing lunch and secrets,
our bond won't break at all

In school and playground, we meet happily
Sharing food and stories,
He explains tough topics, with patience to me
He is a loyal friend to me
always he is there to make me happy

He stands next to my parents,
He is a trusted friend so close
Like family, he is close to me,
He is always near in my life's journey,
he's a shining light, my best friend,

Arivazhagan
7A
Govt High School
MELPATTAMPACKKAM
Cuddalore district
Tamil Nadu, India

You Are The Light



When you are the light, darkness will be
there in the near by
for contrast will be there
No need to feel sad, because this is your
role,
To lead others on the right path, with
your light

You have a greater part to play, a special
role,
Compared to others, your light makes
you whole,
It's time to understand, your purpose

To light up others' lives, with your inner
light

Guide others forward, with your shining
light,
Don't let their darkness, dim your light
Let it glow and spark, many lives
Others will follow, the path that you lead

Hold your head high, be smart, and move
ahead,
Be the guiding star, like the pole star
Make a difference, in others' lives with
your light,
And illuminate the world, with your bright
light

Brinda. D
CREATIVE WRITERS
GRADUATE TEACHER,
GOVT HIGH SCHOOL,
MELPATTAMPACKKAM
CUDDALORE,
Tamilnadu India

My Best Friend



My best friend's name is Ajith,
He is a lovely friend
He is full of charm, and a heart full of love
He's very free with a sharp mind
He scores high marks,
He helps others weak students succeed

Reading and writing are his hobbies
One day he'll shine, as a great businessman
He's a supportive friend, always lend a helping
hand,
He is a true companion, in every way

I'm lucky to have him, as my friend
Together we'll continue the journey,
through laughter and tears,
Wishing him all the best,
for his future so bright,
Ajith, my best friend, shining with delight.

Varshith.
7 B
GOVT High school Melpattampakkam
Cuddalore district
Tamil Nadu, India

The Beauty Of Unplanned



Don't plan each step or pave the way,
Let life unfold in its own play.

Not all must go as you believe,
Some things are meant just to relieve.

Don't twist what's far beyond your hand,
Let moments bloom, not all be planned.

A flower blooms where no eyes see,
Its beauty thrives in mystery.

The river breaks through stone and sand,
Without a map, it shapes the land.

A seed may fall on unknown ground,
Yet rise as trees, strong and profound.

A painter starts with no clear line,
Yet ends with something near divine.

The stars don't follow human charts,
Still guide the lost and heal their hearts.

A missed train leads to fateful eyes,
Strangers become life's greatest prize.

Uncharted roads bring thrill and grace,
With lessons time cannot erase.

So let the winds decide the flight,
For life moves best in its own light

V Durgadevi
BT Assistant
GHS Nesar
Tiruvannamalai District

My Mother



My mother, the best mom,
a treasure for me
My favorite person, with full of love
I can't compare her with anyone
She loves all children,
her heart is so kind,

She Prepares delicious dishes
Her speech is melodious, like a sweet song,
She's cool and gentle,
She never gets angry or tensed
She loves pet animals, and takes care well
She is a hard worker,
Very sincere, dedicated
She's a wonderful mom,
She a guiding light,
A role model, in every way,
I'm lucky to have her,
in my life's journey
A mother like her, is a precious star.

Aswitha.
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BUSINESS

Equity Scholars Win Scholarships To Join Top Global Universities

By: Felix Njenga
@themtkenyentimes

Worth Noting:

- Since the program's inception, 1,098 students have benefited from full scholarships to leading global institutions.
- This year's cohort includes 16 students headed to Ivy League universities such as Harvard (4), Princeton (8), Columbia (1) and the University of Pennsylvania (3).
- Dr. Mwangi lauded the program as an investment in Africa's future innovators.
- "As you embark on your global education, remember that your perspectives and skills are vital to unlocking Africa's potential," he said.
- "Return with a spirit of innovation, a commitment to building a more equitable Africa, and the knowledge to drive economic growth and social progress."
- Several scholars shared their personal journeys.

A total of 128 students from the Equity Leaders Program (ELP) have secured admission and scholarships to join 63 prestigious universities across 20 countries.

The scholars, drawn from; Kenya (87), Rwanda (33), Uganda (4) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (4), were officially commissioned for their academic journeys abroad by Equity Group Foundation (EGF) Executive Chairman Dr. James Mwangi.

Their scholarships, valued at KSh2.79 billion, will cover four years of undergraduate study.

Each will also receive up to KSh200,000 in airlift support to ease their transition overseas.

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"As you embark on your global education, remember that your perspectives and skills are vital to unlocking Africa's potential," he said.

"Return with a spirit of innovation, a commitment to building a more equitable Africa, and the knowledge to drive economic growth and social progress."

Several scholars shared their personal journeys.

Ugandan student Claire Nsaba, who will study Environmental Engineering at New York University Abu Dha-



Alicia Gibore, an Equity Leaders Program (ELP) Scholar from Kenya, who is set to join Emory University – USA, to study Nursing, receives a congratulatory letter from Equity Group Foundation Executive Chairman, Dr. James Mwangi, during the commissioning of scholars who will be joining top global universities.

bi, said she hopes to develop sustainable clean water solutions for remote communities.

"The Equity Leaders Program gave me mentorship and support to turn my dreams into a clear path," she said.

Kenya's Presley Chomba, headed to Harvard University to study Renewable Energy Engineering, described his journey as one of resilience, having sat for the SAT four times while working to fund his preparation.

"This opportunity is not just for me,

it's for the collective good of our communities," he said.

Sharon Nyambura Wanjiku, who will pursue Nursing at Matej Bel University in Slovakia, credited the program for giving her hope after earlier rejections.

"Rejection doesn't mean you're not good enough; it can redirect you to something better," she reflected.

Dr. Mwangi urged the scholars to see their studies abroad as a platform for both personal and continental transformation.

"You are not just students; you are Equity Global Scholars carrying the hopes of your families, communities and country," he said.

Launched in 1998, the Equity Leaders Program identifies and nurtures top-performing students from the bank's subsidiaries. Through leadership training, academic mentorship and global exposure, it aims to equip Africa's next generation with the skills, networks and vision to tackle the continent's toughest challenges.



The Equity Group leadership led by Equity Group Foundation Executive Chairman, Dr. James Mwangi (Centre) together with a section of the Equity Leaders Program (ELP) scholars who will be joining 63 global universities in 20 Countries.



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Meru County Reaps Big From Kenya National Music Festivals

By: Dennis Dibondo
@themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- The event saw an impressive participation of about 140,000 individuals from across the country.
- The Director General of the State Department of Education, Dr. Elyas Abdi Jillaow praised the participants for their remarkable improvement in arts and music.
- He further emphasized the importance of promoting arts and creativity in education, citing its potential to transform the nation.
- During the closing of the event, KMF Chair Johnson Ngala commended the winners and participants, noting that the festival fosters nationalism, promotes interactions among learners, and encourages individual development goals.
- The chairman also called on the institutions to encourage male participation, saying they have been overtaken by female participants.

Businessmen in Meru have made huge profits in the ten days the National Music Festivals has been held in the county.

The Music Festivals that were held in Meru School, Kaaga and Meru teachers college started on August 4 and came to an end yesterday.

The 97th Kenya Music Festival (KMF) came to a close, with winners showcasing their talents and creativity at a colorful gala held at Meru School.

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The Director General of the State Department of Education, Dr. Elyas Abdi Jillaow praised the participants for their remarkable improvement in arts and music.

He further emphasized the importance of promoting arts and creativity in education, citing its potential to transform the nation.

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The chairman also called on the institutions to encourage male participation, saying they have been overtaken by female participants.

“The festival had about 140,000 participants, where we had 95,000 female students and 45,000 male students. Let’s encourage our male learners and involve them” said the Chairman .

The winners will proceed to a state concert at Sagana State Lodge, Nyeri on Saturday, before representing Kenya in an East African competition.

Equity bank manager Meru branch Nancy Gitonga said the county traders had reaped very much from the event.

“Hotels have been fully booked and even the traders selling foodstuffs have made a lot of profits from the event this will also help us the banking sector as the money circulating will end up in the bank accounts,” Gitonga said.

Equity was one of the sponsors of the event, with Gitonga saying they partnered with the ministry and sponsored the Music Festivals with KSh100 million for four years and every year they will be donating KSh25 million.

Gitonga said they used the chance to showcase other products they offer apart from banking.

“Apart from banking, we also have insurance covers that are affordable and we were able to showcase that af-



Kianda School Perform a Chinese Dance at the Kenya National Music Festivals in Meru school the Music Festivals came to an end yesterday. Photo/Dennis Dibondo



Kamatungu day and boarding primary school perform a traditional song at the Meru School during the Kenya National Music Festival. Photo/Dennis Dibondo.

ter we sponsored some schools to tell people about our products,” Gitonga said.

Meru Chief of staff Julius Mbijiwe thanked the organisers of the event for choosing Meru to host the event. The county lastly hosted the event in 2012, said Mbijiwe who represented Meru governor Isaac Mutuma in the closing ceremony.

Beatrice Ntoiti a boiled eggs vendo who sells in Meru town said that since the music festival started she pitched tent at Meru School and was selling three to five crates, which is double of what she sells on normal days.



Some of the trophies awarded to the winners.

Mudavadi Calls On County Officials To Ensure An UDA Candidate Gets Malava Seat

By: OPCS Press Service

@themkenyatimes



Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi addressing the administrators.

Worth Noting:

- Speaking when he met the Sub-County and Ward administrators, Mudavadi said it will send a wrong message if they elect a legislator from the opposition who is without the trust of the current sitting government.

- “I kindly ask you to elect an MP from the UDA ruling party. We want an MP who will easily earn the trust of the President. Malulu and I worked together when we merged with the ruling party, we request that you give us back an MP from the party,” said Mudavadi.

- He gave an analogy of the constituency electing a leader so that the President could leave his glass of water on the table and pick up his calls out and still drink the same water when he comes back to the room.

The Prime Cabinet Secretary, Dr. Musalia Mudavadi has asked county leaders from Malava to ensure that the constituency elects a United Democratic Alliance (UDA) candidate in the November 27th by-election.

Mudavadi also Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs said it was important for the residents of Malava to continue being in government, as the late MP Malulu Injendi had ensured that they were inside the Kenya Kwanza coalition government.

Speaking when he met the Sub-County and Ward administrators, Mudavadi said it will send a wrong message if they elect a legislator from the opposition who is without the trust of the current sitting government.

“I kindly ask you to elect an MP from the UDA ruling party. We want an MP who will easily earn the trust of the President. Malulu and I worked together when we merged with the ruling party, we request that you give us back an MP from the party,” said Mudavadi.

He gave an analogy of the constituency electing a leader so that the President could leave his glass of water on the table and pick up his calls out and still drink the same water when he comes back to the room.

“Don’t let the President down, don’t also let me down and above all don’t let the people of Malava and Western region down,” said Mudavadi.

Mudavadi said that government was keen to ensure the development projects in the constituency were implemented including roads water project, tertiary and secondary and primary schools.

“A week ago I was in Malava and

gave out President William Ruto’s donation of Sh.20million for schools in the constituency. We will continue to do more including the completion of projects the late Injendi left unfinished,” said Mudavadi.

The PCS said that given that ODM leader Raila Odinga had declared that the partnership with the government would go beyond 2027, he urged the people of Malava, Kakamega and the Western region to join the growing ship under President Ruto.

Even if you have a deficit of interpreting issues and I don’t think you have any, then you know what he was saying,” said Mudavadi.

“The ship is now getting bigger, we need to all be inside the government for faster development. The people of Malava and the Western region cannot be left behind. We must find a comfortable seat in government,” said Mudavadi.

The PCS urged the Sub-County and Ward administrators to ensure that whoever was elected in the by-election was someone who understands and supports devolution.

We need to ensure that the leaders we elect in the region are those that support devolution. Please ensure that the constituency elects someone who supports devolution for faster

national and county development in the constituency,” said Mudavadi.

Mudavadi said that he worked on the first Sessional Paper and six founding pieces of legislation that gave birth to devolution that has become a game changer in the country.

He added, “Give us a leader you can trust and one who will have the qualities of good leadership,” said Mudavadi.

PCS said that when Malava succeeds the Western region will have succeeded and Kenya will have made strides as well.



Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi with the administrators after the meeting.

A Red River of Rage: The Source is Suspect — ‘Androicide’ in Margaret Ogola’s, ‘The River and the Source’

By: Maina Wahome
 @themkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

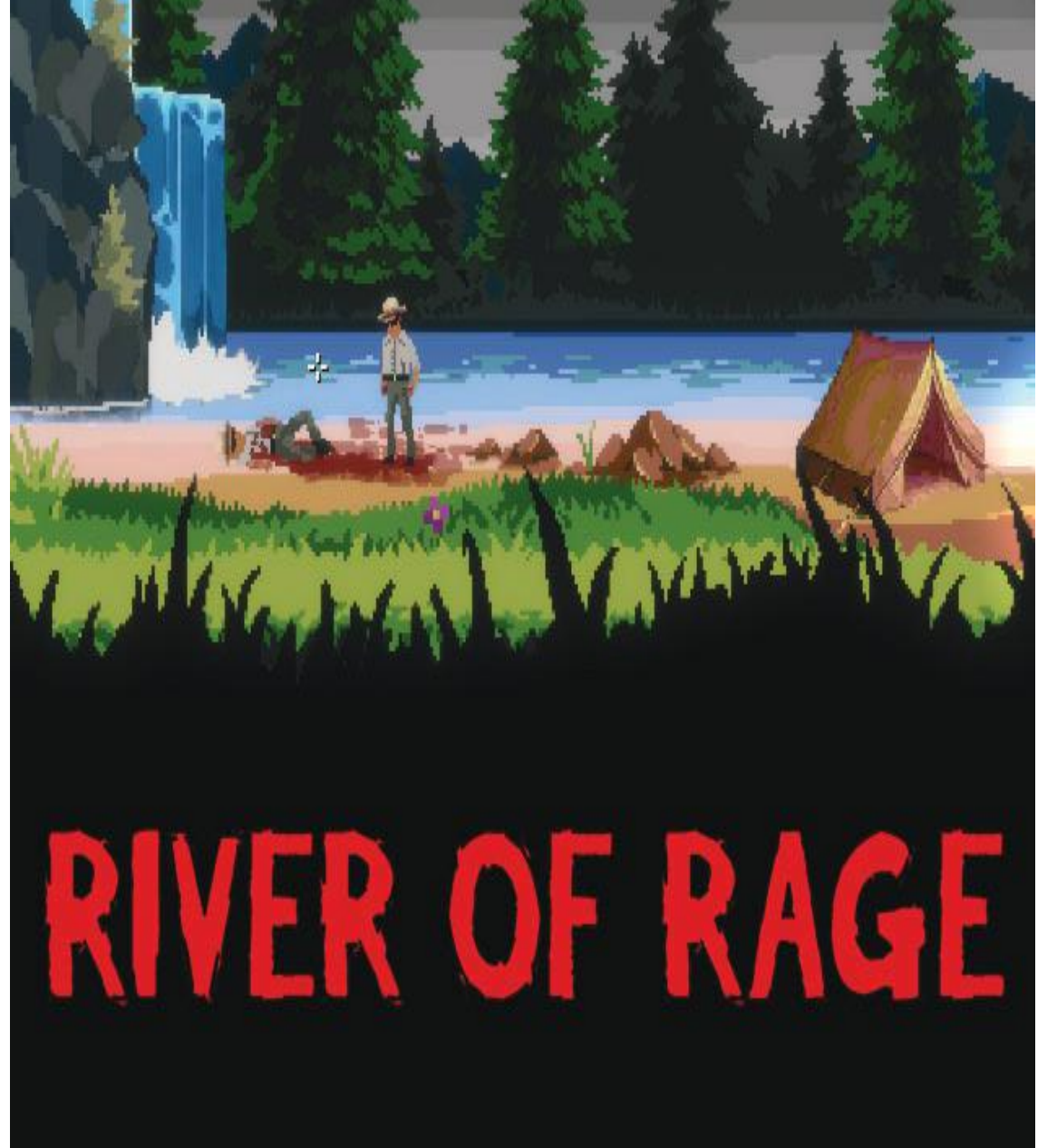
- While I respect feminist literature and its crucial role in challenging oppressive systems, Ogola’s novel goes far beyond the bounds of redress. It reads like an elaborate campaign of Literary Androicide, a systematic silencing, weakening, and, in many cases, outright extermination of every significant male figure.
- What begins as a celebration of female resilience gradually morphs into a narrative where strong men are not just sidelined but symbolically obliterated. When compared to works like Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s, ‘The River Between’, and Witi Ihimaera’s, ‘The Whale Rider’, Ogola’s intentions become even more striking: in the quest to empower women, she appears to suggest that men must be obliterated.

Men Don’t Just Suffer In ‘The River And The Source’; They Are Mocked As They Die. Margaret Ogola was not just a feminist; she was a surgeon of masculinity, slicing through male characters with literary precision. She gave voice to generations of women, yes, but she also left behind a literary battlefield strewn with male corpses; a testament to the dangers of feminism unmoored from balance. The men’s pain in her novel is not treated with dignity, and their deaths are not heroic or even meaningful. Instead, many of them are written off in ways that feel cruel, unnecessary, and sometimes even ridiculous. Margaret Ogola doesn’t simply leave men out of her feminist vision; she clears them out of the way. From the very first pages, it’s clear that men are not meant to survive or shine.

When I was asked to teach this novel in schools, I decided not only to teach it but also to unmask its hidden agenda. Not because I am against feminism, far from it, but because I opine that feminism should not come at the cost of fairness, honesty, or empathy. Teaching Literature Is Not Just About Following The Syllabus. It’s About Shaping How Young People See The World. I taught ‘The River and the Source’ in various schools, but I always made it clear to my students that I did not endorse its obliteration of male characters and its overall treatment of gender dynamics. I often told students, “I have taught and presented Margaret Ogola’s book with absolute sincerity, but I have never said she is right. It is up to you to reflect on what I’ve explained and what is written, and to make your judgment as rational, independent thinkers.” My concern was straightforward: I found the text ideologically lopsided, emotionally manipulative, and profoundly unjust, not only in its portrayal of male characters but also in its overt advocacy of a one-sided feminist agenda. In my view, such a narrative sets a troubling precedent for a society that should be grounded in unity, equity, and mutual respect between genders.

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Unlike Ngũgĩ and Ihimaera, who portray gender empowerment through dialogue, tension, and eventual reconciliation, Ogola’s narrative leans toward exclusion, where male presence is not negotiated but erased. For a classroom of young, impressionable students, that’s a dangerous precedent. From the start, male characters are lined up for destruction, either by death, humiliation, or irrelevance. Take Owang’ Sino, for example. He’s a young chief, respected and full of promise. He could have carried on the family legacy. However, Ogola ‘kills him’ off with a fish bone. Yes, a fish bone.

pointing that it feels like a bad joke. His wife, Alando Nyar Uyoma, is introduced with so much drama and tension that you can almost guess her husband won’t survive the story. Sure enough, Owang’ Sino is quickly written out, not just with death, but with mockery. There’s no honor in how he dies. It’s as if the story laughs at him as it sweeps him away.

The author does not relent in this literary androicide, dispatching male characters with clinical precision and a theatrical flair that borders on contempt. Their demise rarely feels narratively essential; rather, it suggests a purposeful erasure, one so exaggerated that a promising young man meets his end by choking on a fish bone, a death as quiet as it is absurd. Peter Owuor Kembo, Akoko’s only son, is sent to the seminary, a path that guarantees he will never marry or have children. Though he rises to prominence within the Church, his legacy is severed from

bologically sterile within the broader narrative. He becomes, in effect, a ‘willing eunuch’, a man of faith stripped of generational continuity, sacrificed at the altar of spiritual duty. It’s akin to cutting off a branch that could bear fruit. In many cultures, sons are seen as carriers of the family name and memory, vessels of continuity.

However, in this narrative, Peter’s renunciation of fatherhood is portrayed as a noble and unquestionable path, as though lineage and legacy no longer hold value. His spiritual success comes at the cost of familial erasure. The men who remain, Mark and Tony, fare no better. They are either emotionally sidelined or rendered ineffectual, further reinforcing the novel’s troubling pattern

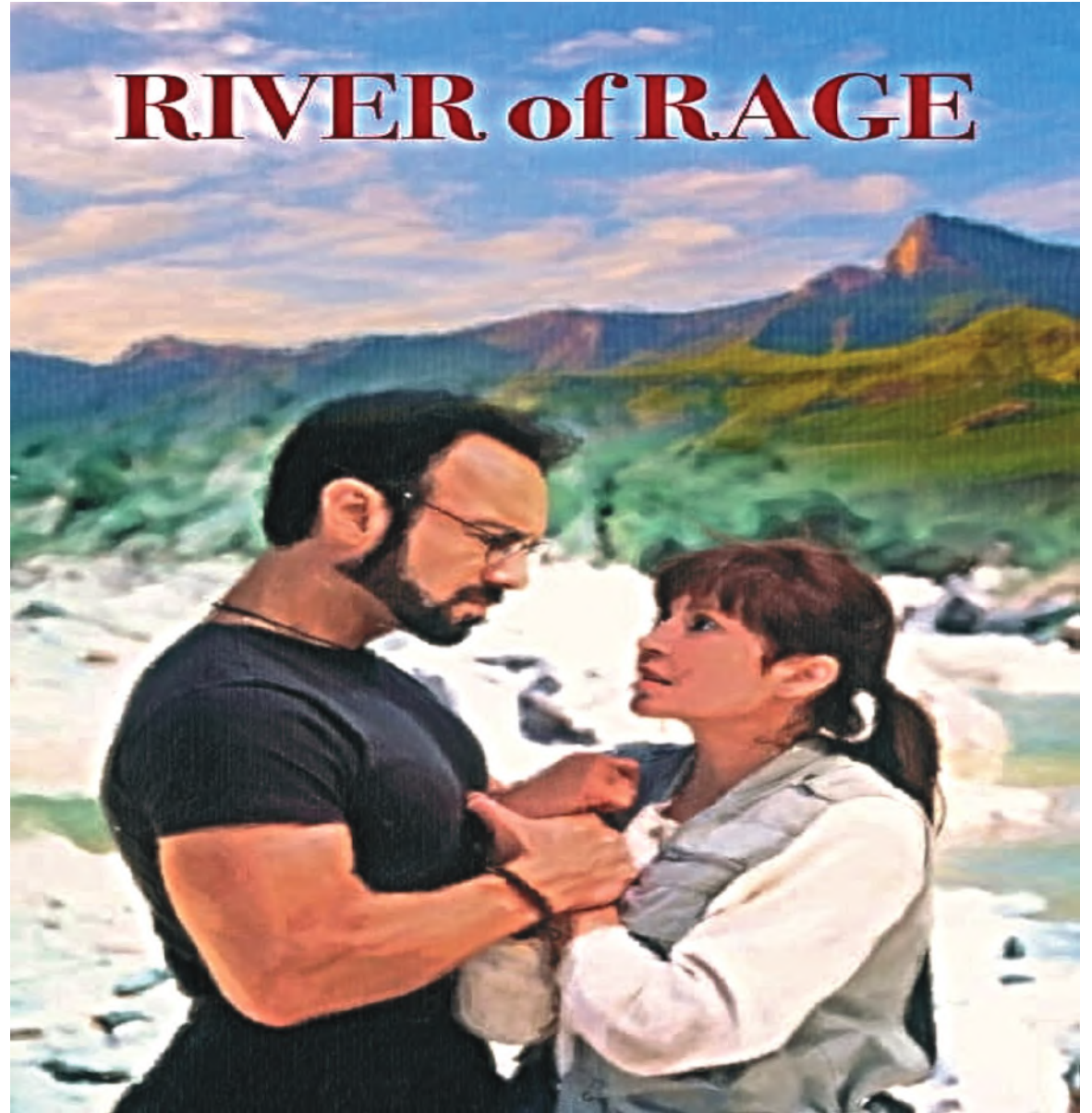
A Red River of Rage: The Source is Suspect — ‘Androicide’ in Margaret Ogola’s, ‘The River and the Source’

Contd from page 20

of diminishing male significance. They are background figures, barely influencing the plot in any meaningful way. They do not challenge the women, do not undergo growth, and certainly do not lead. Their presence serves little purpose beyond providing support, or more often, simply staying out of the way. Even in moments of professional success, they remain emotionally hollow, more like silhouettes than fully realized characters. The narrative denies them complexity, reducing them to passive observers in a story that grants agency almost exclusively to women. It's not just that they aren't central. It's that they are erased. The author's approach was both surgical and farcical: surgical in the sense that she meticulously and deliberately deconstructed patriarchal power structures, and farcical in that she did so through exaggerated, almost absurd narrative choices that rendered male characters comically powerless or tragically irrelevant.

This is not the kind of feminism we need. True feminism should uplift everyone, not achieve empowerment by pushing others down. It should confront injustice without replacing one form of silencing with another. It should invite both boys and girls into the shared work of transformation. However, in ‘The River and the Source’, women rise only because the men around them are diminished, sidelined, or made to disappear. That's not genuine growth; it's strategic removal. The few men who are allowed to remain in the story don't shape anything; they merely exist, quietly following along. And that's not a fair or accurate image of men. It's not how society functions. When boys read this book, what are they supposed to do? To believe that their voices don't matter? That strong, thoughtful men have no place in powerful narratives about African women? That they are either obstacles or already written out? Such representation risks alienating the very individuals who should be part of the conversation on equality, equity, and transformation.

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o offers a very different vision in ‘The River Between.’ His river is a place of tension, transition, and transformation, a symbolic space where cultures clash and characters evolve. Waiyaki, the protagonist, is caught in profound struggles between tradition and modernity, love and duty. He is allowed to stumble, to learn, and to grow. His journey feels authentically human. In Ngũgĩ's narrative, men are not per-



fect, but they are present. They are given emotional depth, moral complexity, and room to breathe. Margaret Ogola's river, by contrast, does not flow between opposing forces; it erases what it does not favor. Men don't swim in it; they vanish beneath its current. Her novel isn't really about the river; it's about the source. In Ogola's vision, that source appears to have space only for women. It is a matriarchal spring that nurtures some while washing away others, not through justice, but through selective storytelling.

Feminism was born out of necessity, to secure voting rights, reproductive autonomy, equal education, and opportunities for women. However, what happens when it becomes an instrument of literary revenge? Today, some strands of radical feminism bear more resemblance to trauma venting than social justice. ‘The River and the Source’, while groundbreaking, is also a cautionary tale of feminism weaponized. Even the novel's infamous line, “a home without daughters is like a river without a source”, possesses an initial poetic

allure. However, beneath its surface lies a more troubling implication: that without women, nothing truly holds value. That sons are somehow inadequate. That a man's presence, no matter how noble, enduring, or committed, derives its worth only through the existence of a woman. It's a beautiful line with a bias at its core, subtly devaluing half of humanity in the name of celebrating the other. It's a powerful statement, but also a reductive one, one that risks diminishing the worth of boys and men in the architecture of home, legacy, and meaning.

While it may sound empowering on the surface, it subtly excludes half the population from the emotional and cultural foundation of the family. In elevating daughters as the sole source of value, it inadvertently silences sons. That kind of messaging may uplift some, but it leaves many behind. It suggests that only one gender holds the key to the future, and that simply isn't true. In real life, we need one another: to love, to lead, to grow, and to survive. Our stories should reflect that shared humanity.

When we tell stories, we must strive to tell the whole truth, not just the parts that serve an agenda. We must write with passion, yes, but true empowerment doesn't erase; it includes.

This is why, although I taught ‘The River and the Source,’ I always did so with caution, not because it isn't well-written, and not because it lacks popularity, but because it erases something too important. It portrays power in a way that silences others. Literature should speak to everyone, even when it tells hard, uncomfortable truths. However, it should never ask us to applaud someone's disappearance. Feminism is not about making men vanish; it is about positioning us all fairly and representing both men and women with honesty and care, so that we may all show up better, stronger, and more whole.

Short Bio About the author
Maina Wahome is a Kenyan-born linguistics researcher at Universitas Diponegoro, Semarang, Indonesia. He has published novels, a play, short stories, anthologies of poems, and academic articles.

Worth Noting:

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Sports >> *Paris Saint-Germain will be hoping a severely curtailed summer break does not come back to bite them as the Ligue 1 season begins this weekend

PSG Begin French Title Defence As Pogba Returns Home And Paris FC Step Up

Paris Saint-Germain will be hoping a severely curtailed summer break does not come back to bite them as the Ligue 1 season begins this weekend, headlined by the newly-crowned European champions and featuring the return to France of Paul Pogba.

It is just the second time that the French top flight has boasted the Champions League winners among its ranks, with PSG's success against Inter Milan in May following Marseille's triumph in 1993.

Luis Enrique's team added the UEFA Super Cup on Wednesday as they came from two goals down against Tottenham before winning on penalties.

The nature of that success was made all the more remarkable given they had just a week's pre-season training under their belts, and no friendly matches.

That is after they went all the way to the Club World Cup final in the United States, their 3-0 defeat against Chelsea on July 13 bringing the curtain down on a marathon 65-game season.

That did not take the shine off their achievement in winning the Champions League, but those exertions risk having an impact on Luis Enrique's players further down the line.

"What we did last season had been the objective for all PSG supporters, for the whole club, and for everyone who played for the club," PSG's coach said this week.

"Now we want to keep on making history, and that means winning consecutive Champions Leagues, so that is our objective. That is the dream."

Put another way, continued European success is the priority over winning a 12th domestic title in 14 years.

PSG are nevertheless overwhelming favourites to do that as they attack the season having added goalkeeper Lucas Cheva-



Paris Saint-Germain's Portuguese midfielder Vitorinha (L) and Paris Saint-Germain's French forward Ousmane Dembele (C) embrace the trophy on the podium next to Paris Saint-Germain's Spanish headcoach Luis Enrique (R) as they celebrate winning the UEFA Champions League final football match between Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) and Inter Milan in Munich, southern Germany, on May 31, 2025. (Photo by FRANCK FIFE / AFP)

lier from Lille to replace Gianluigi Donnarumma, and Ukrainian centre-back Illia Zabarnyi from Bournemouth.

- Lyon back from brink -

French football has been mired in crisis due to difficulties finding a domestic broadcast partner willing to offer the kind of money needed to help teams beyond PSG compete with their European counterparts.

At the end of last season, the French league pulled the plug on a cut-price deal with streaming platform DAZN.

Instead it has launched its own platform, a bold step which may succeed in the long run but for now means clubs have no guaranteed television income.

Seven-time champions Lyon's woes almost led to them being relegated -- they were initially demoted to Ligue 2 by French football's financial watchdog before successfully appealing that punishment.

However, they were told they would have to cut their wage bill and transfer budget for this cam-

paign and the future still looks uncertain -- key players such as Rayan Cherki, Alexandre Lacazette and goalkeeper Lucas Perri have all departed.

Marseille and Monaco completed the podium in Ligue 1 last season and surely have the best chance of challenging PSG this time.

Monaco have signed Pogba on a two-year deal, giving the 2018 World Cup winner a chance to revive a career that has been stalled by injury and an 18-month doping ban.

- Capital derby returns -

Pogba is now 32 and has hardly played in three years, but Monaco are hopeful he can help them make a real push at the top of the table.

"The next step for us is to have a team that is mentally stronger, that really believes it can go far in the Champions League and challenge Paris," said Monaco CEO Thiago Scuro.

Pogba has never previously played in France having left Le Havre for Manchester United as

a teenager. Fellow 2018 World Cup winner Olivier Giroud, meanwhile, has returned to Ligue 1 aged 38 to join Lille.

It remains to be seen what impact he might have, and whether Paris FC can feature prominently following promotion.

They have big ambitions after a takeover last year by the Arnaults, one of the world's wealthiest families.

It is the first time since 1990 that two Parisian teams have featured in the top flight, and the rivalry between them will be stoked by the fact Paris FC will play home games at the Stade Jean-Bouin -- a stone's throw from PSG's Parc des Princes.

Paris FC have already invested significant sums in the transfer market but will probably have to wait before seriously challenging their neighbours.

"Everyone is eagerly looking forward to the derbies, but we know very well that the gulf between us is huge. They are on another planet," said Paris FC president Pierre Ferracci.

AFP

GET THE BEST OF WORLD

Sports >>> *The Kenya Volleyball Federation (KVF) has named the travelling Malkia Strikers squad ahead of the World championship slated for August 22 to September 7 in Thailand.

Tata, Letting In Malkia Strikers Squad For 2025 World Championship



FILE: Malkia Strikers opposite attacker Pamela Adhiambo in action against Puerto Rico during Challenger Cup quarter finals on Thursday July 4, 2024 at Ninoy Aquino Stadium in the Philippines. Kenya lost 3-0 sets

The Kenya Volleyball Federation (KVF) has named the travelling Malkia Strikers squad ahead of the World championship slated for August 22 to September 7 in Thailand.

Recently crowned African Nations U-20 Championship's MVP Marline Terry Tata Idachi (KCB) and last season's KVF women's league MVP Daisy Letting (Kenya Pipeline) highlight the 16-member squad while setter Marclean Okoko has been dropped.

Kenya Pipeline middleblocker Gladys Ekaru is the only veteran player in the squad that also consists of regulars Veronica Adhiambo, Pamela Adhiambo, Lorine Chebet, Juliana Namutira, Belinda Barasa and Meldina Sande.

Only Veronicah, Ekaru, Chebet, Sande, Belinda and Nekesa

retained their status in the squad from the 2022 World Championship squad.

Head coach Geoffrey Omondi is confident the team will write history noting that this is part of the preparations for the next Olympic Games.

"The team is ready; we have a mixture of experienced and young players and I believe the team we have assembled will be able to push us to the next level. We are not just preparing for the world championships but for the 2028 Olympic Games," said Omondi.

Omondi asked for patience as he works towards building a team that will dominate in the near future.

"This is the team that will grow and it will be the Kenyan team that will take us places. We want

to first make history in World Championships by at least qualifying for the second round."

Captain Meldina Sande echoed Omondi's words saying they were looking forward for the competition, promising to give their best.

"We are ready for the the competition. Our coaches have helped us work on our weaknesses and we are optimistic we will do well."

Malkia will jet out of the country tonight in two groups for eight days in Vietnam where they will have intense training and friendlies against the hosts and Spain before leaving for Thailand on August 19.

The team will be trimmed down to 14 players prior to the world showpiece.

The 10-time African champions are pooled in Group G alongside

former European champions Poland, Germany and Vietnam.

Malkia Strikers Squad
Setters- Emmaculate Nekesa, Fridah Boke.

Liberos: Cestelle Nyongesa, Sharleen Maywa.

Left attackers: Juliana Namutira, Meldina Sande (captain) and Veronica Adhiambo, Daisy Leting.

Opposite hitters: Pamela Adhiambo, Mercy Iminza, Marlyne Tata.

Middle blockers: Gladys Ekaru (assistant captain) Belinda Barasa, Lorine Chebet.

Training partners - Sarah Namisi and Marriane Sokoiyo.

Citizen Sport

SPORTS NEWS



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SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



Empowering Lives through Self-Defense, Wellness



By: Anila Bukhari
@themtkenyatimes

Biography

Ayeesha Muzammil is a trailblazing CEO, Self-Defense Strategist, Wellness Coach, Business Consultant, and Corporate Trainer who has dedicated her career to empowering individuals and organizations. With a multifaceted background and expertise, Ayeesha has made a significant impact in various fields, inspiring countless people to take control of their lives and reach their full potential.

A Visionary Leader

As the CEO of her own venture, Ayeesha oversees operations and strategic growth, implementing innovative wellness programs and leading initiatives to transform business strategies. Her leadership style promotes personal and professional development, fostering a culture of growth and excellence.

Entrepreneurial Ventures

Ayeesha is the Co-Founder of Burger Chalet, where she manages business operations and growth strategies, enhancing customer experience and product offerings. She is also the Co-Founder of Co Work In Shared Space, creating and managing collaborative workspaces that foster community and innovation among entrepreneurs.

Expertise and Passion

Ayeesha's expertise lies in designing self-defense programs for various demographics, including differently-abled persons. As a Self-Defense Trainer for Differently-Abled Persons, she creates specialized training programs to enhance safety and confidence. Her work as a Wellness Coach focuses on offering personalized wellness plans and coaching, helping individuals achieve holistic well-being.

Business Acumen

As a Business Consultant, Ayeesha provides strategic advice to busi-



Ayeesha Muzammil

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nesses for growth and efficiency. Her corporate training programs equip professionals with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in their respective fields. Ayeesha's business acumen and expertise have helped numerous organizations thrive in competitive markets.

Empowering Others

Ayeesha's work is guided by a passion for empowering others. She

believes in creating safe, supportive environments that foster growth and development. Her clients appreciate her ability to understand their unique needs and provide tailored solutions that meet their goals.

Conclusion

Ayeesha Muzammil's story is a testament to the power of leadership, entrepreneurship, and expertise. As a CEO, Self-Defense Strategist, Well-

ness Coach, Business Consultant, and Corporate Trainer, she continues to inspire and empower individuals and organizations. Her dedication to promoting personal and professional development has made a lasting impact, and her legacy will undoubtedly continue to grow.