



KFS: 800 Million Trees Planted In The 15B Trees Planting Initiative

The country has planted over 800 million trees since the tree planting initiative was launched by President William Ruto in December 2022, the Kenya Forest Service has reported. The Service says the number has been realised by the strategies it laid so as to achieve the target of planting 15 billion trees by 2032.

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NAIROBI INTERNATIONAL DIGITAL CONFERENCE, 10TH ANNIVERSARY ROADSHOW



WHERE: TWO RIVERS MALL - NAIROBI WHEN: 17-21ST SEPTEMBER 2025

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News >> Murkomen Leads 32nd Jukwaa La Usalama Forum In Nyeri, Pledges Intensified War On Illicit Alcohol And Drugs

P. 8. Interior Cabinet Secretary Kipchumba Murkomen yesterday presided over the 32nd Jukwaa la Usalama (Security Forum) in Nyeri County



News >> Kagio Residents To Benefit From KSh 100 Million Road Project

P. 12. Kagio residents in Ndia constituency, Kirinyaga County have a reason to smile after construction of their long-awaited feeder roads project officially kicked off.

Why Gachagua Skipped Kamukunji Rally



Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua has broken his silence following his dramatic return to the country on Thursday, choosing a brief social media message over a public rally to address Kenyans.

In his first statement since landing at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) after a 42-day tour of the United States, Gachagua expressed gratitude to his supporters.

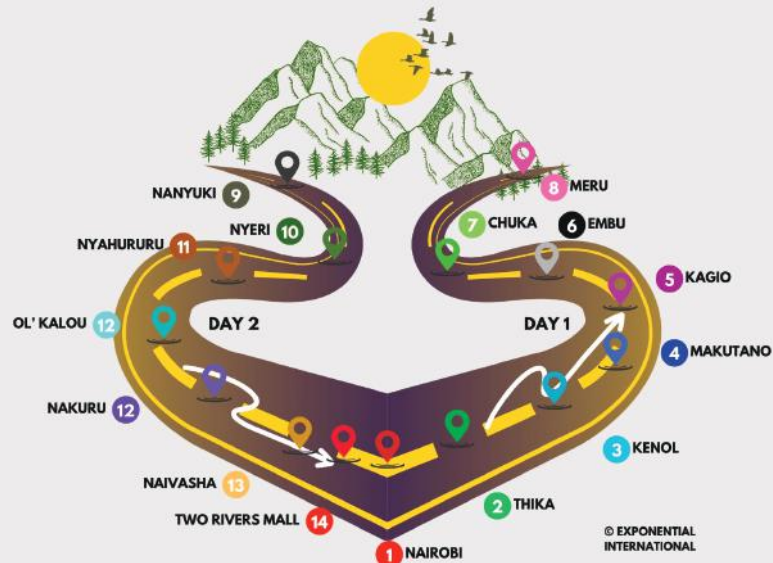
“Thank you, my great people of Kenya, for the love. I am happy to be back home,” he posted. Contrary to expectations that he would speak at Kamkunji grounds, Gachagua’s convoy did not make it to the venue.



Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua

STORY ON PAGE 9

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



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NAIROBI INTERNATIONAL DIGITAL CONFERENCE, 10TH ANNIVERSARY ROADSHOW

Gala Dinner

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Gachagua Is Back

By: MKT Reporter
@themtkenyatimes

Some Of The Moments As Captured In Pictures

Former Deputy President and Democracy for the Citizens Party (DCP) leader Rigathi Gachagua is back in the country. Gachagua jetted back yesterday to arousing welcome by thousands of his supporters who were led by several law-makers.



Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times



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

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NEWS IN BRIEF



Education Cabinet Secretary Julius Migos Ogamba (left seated) with the Chairman of the Commission for University Education, Prof. Onyango Awino, signs a letter of Interim Authority (LIA) for Consolata International University on Wednesday at Gigiri, Nairobi. The letter recognizes the university as the 82nd institution authorized to operate as a university in Kenya and achieve full mandate of university status. Looking on are Principal Secretary of the State Department for Higher Education Dr. Beatrice Inyangala (2nd left) and senior officers of the Commission for University Education.



Partnerships and local manufacturing remain central to driving sustainable healthcare and advancing Kenya's Universal Health Coverage (UHC) agenda. At the TICAD 9 Business Expo, Principal Secretary for Public Health, Mary Muthoni, and Director General for Health, Dr. Patrick Amoth, toured booths by Revital Healthcare Ltd, Symex Corporation, and Eiken Chemical Ltd, exploring collaborations to boost local production and innovation. Joined by Global Fund Executive Director Peter Sands, they underscored the importance of technology transfer and investment in positioning Kenya as a regional hub for health innovation while strengthening health systems and the fight against infectious diseases.



An outbreak of measles has been reported in Malindi Sub County, amid concerns over low childhood immunization coverage that local health officials warn could expose the community more epidemics. At least four children have been reported to have contracted measles in the Shella area of Malindi town, with health officials saying they are conducting a mop up exercise and administering repeat measles vaccine doses to those who may have missed out in the recent campaign. Sub-county Public Health Officer Alex Maitha said despite recent vaccination campaigns a significant number of children have not received the recommended two doses of the measles-rubella vaccine.



The Catholic faithful in Nandi are preparing for three days of prayer ahead of the impending installation of Bishop John Kiplimo Lelei. The cleric is first Bishop of the newly created Kapsabet Diocese and the historic occasion has been scheduled for August Friday to Sunday next week. The festivities will open on Friday with a grand procession and vigil prayers at the Kapsabet Catholic Church. Choirs, youth groups, and women's guilds will lead praise and worship sessions as thousands gather to spiritually prepare for the ordination. The second day will be the highlight, when Bishop Lelei is ordained and officially installed during a solemn Holy Mass at Eliud Kipchoge Sports complex in Kapsabet town. The mass will be presided over by the Apostolic Nuncio to Kenya Hurbertus Maria van Megen alongside the Archbishop of Eldoret Rev. Dominic Kimengich and bishops from across the country.



The Principal Secretary for the State Department of Tourism, Hon. John Ololua yesterday rewarded six winners of the MagicalKenya online trivia with official Harambee Stars jerseys. The initiative was part of the Ministry's campaign to rally nationwide support for the Harambee Stars while spotlighting Kenya as a leading sports tourism destination. Welcoming all visitors currently in the country for the ongoing sports events, the PS invited them to explore Kenya's unmatched tourism offerings—from vibrant cities to breathtaking landscapes. He also urged all Kenyans to turn up at the stadia, follow the matches online, and tune in via TV and radio to support our national team. Present at the award ceremony were the Acting CEO of Kenya Tourism Board, Mr. Allan Njoroge, alongside officials from the Ministry and KTB. Let's stand united behind the Harambee Stars—Tukutane Uwanjani, Mitandaoni, Redioni na Runingani!



The Media Council of Kenya yesterday condemned the violent assault and robbery of journalists from TV 47 Kenya Citizen TV Kenya and The Standard Group during the homecoming event for former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua. Several journalists were injured, with some requiring hospital treatment, and vital equipment was stolen. The council called on the Inspector General of the National Police Service Douglas Kanja to conduct a thorough investigation and ensure the perpetrators are brought to justice.

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

Kenya Benefits From A UN Project Aimed At Eliminating Toxic Firefighting Forms At Airports

By: Anita Omwenga
@themtkenyatimes



Worth Noting:

- FIRE, a USD \$82.5 million initiative with a USD \$10 million grant from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and USD \$72.5 million in co-financing from partners – will phase out firefighting foams containing PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances), hazardous ‘forever chemicals’ linked to serious environmental and health risks.
- Kenya’s Airport Authority CEO and Managing Director, Dr Mohamud Gedi, said that this project marks a significant step forward in Kenya’s commitment to protecting public health and the environment.

Kenya is among five countries set to benefit from the Fortifying Infrastructure for Responsible Extinguishment (FIRE) project, which aims to phase out the use of toxic fluorinated firefighting foams linked to serious environmental and health risks.

In a press statement, The FIRE project initiative launched jointly by The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) aims to phase out the use of toxic fluorinated firefighting foams and replace them with safer alternatives at major airports in Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa.

Together with participating airports, FIRE will support the transition from highly toxic firefighting foams to fluorine-free foams while maintaining safety and operational integrity.

These efforts are expected to promote safe removal of 4,500 tonnes of PFAS-contaminated material from fire trucks and safe disposal of 130 tonnes of PFAS-based foam concentrate.

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Kenya’s Airport Authority CEO and Managing Director, Dr Mohamud Gedi, said that this project marks a significant step forward in Kenya’s commitment to protecting public health and the environment.

“By phasing out harmful PFAS chemicals from firefighting foams, we are



safeguarding our communities and contributing to a cleaner, safer future for all,” said Gedi.

Global Environment Facility (GEF), Senior Chemicals Specialist Anil Sookdeo said that the FIRE project shows how sector-focused action can drive the elimination of hazardous chemicals across value chains.

“The GEF is proud to support this effort, which we hope will inspire both participating countries and the wider aviation sector to transition to PFAS-free firefighting foams.” Said Sookdeo.

UNEP Director of Industry and Economy Division Sheila Aggarwal-Khan said that FIRE is an important initiative that empowers countries to eliminate one of the most harmful groups of pollutants found in firefighting foam supply chains

“The project supports a practical transition to safer, accessible, and af-

fordable alternatives, showing that environmental and health protection can go hand in hand with business and operational viability,” said Khan.

ICAO Secretary General, Juan Carlos Salazar, said that the International Civil Aviation Organisation is committed to supporting the adoption of safer and more sustainable firefighting practices at airports worldwide.

“The facilitation of access to safe alternatives to PFAS foams will be a very significant step for the recipient countries,” said Salazar.

On his part, Executive Secretary of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions on Persistent Organic Pollutants Rolph Payet said that PFAS is an invisible pollution time bomb that demands urgent, globally coordinated action before it is too late.

Payet said that initiatives like FIRE, which aim to eliminate PFAS from high-risk open applications such as

firefighting foams, demonstrate how the Convention fosters multilateral cooperation, drives innovation, and transforms practices, ultimately contributing to a cleaner environment and a healthier planet and people.

“The inclusion of several major PFAS under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants marks a critical step in international efforts to reduce exposure and environmental contamination” said Payet.

The FIRE Project is implemented by UNEP, executed by ICAO, and funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). This project is part of a broader set of UNEP-GEF activities dedicated to global monitoring and eliminating the use of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and reducing the impacts of POPs on human health and the environment.

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Murkomen Leads 32nd Jukwaa La Usalama Forum In Nyeri, Pledges Intensified War On Illicit Alcohol And Drugs

By: Rodgers Wagura
 @themtkenyatimes

Interior Cabinet Secretary Kipchumba Murkomen yesterday presided over the 32nd Jukwaa la Usalama (Security Forum) in Nyeri County, where he vowed to step up the government’s fight against illicit alcohol, counterfeit goods, and drug abuse, issues that continue to threaten public health and security across the region. by Inspector General of Police Douglas Kanja and his deputy in charge of Administration Police Gilbert Masengeli, said Nyeri has made remarkable progress in curbing illicit brews and drugs, ranking 41st nationally in alcohol abu

Murkomen, who was accompanied

se prevalence. However, he warned that some unscrupulous businesspeople are still peddling adulterated ethanol and cannabis, exposing the community to mental health challenges and social ills.

“Nyeri records at least eight suicide cases every month, most linked to prolonged drug and alcohol use. We cannot normalize this. We must intensify our joint efforts to save lives,” Murkomen said.

The CS revealed that authorities had recently intercepted adulterated ethanol in the county and arrested a businessman believed to be behind the trade. He further disclosed that some dealers have been hiding ethanol in Nanyuki, using the town as a “safe haven” whenever security agencies launch operations.

To address the challenge, Murkomen announced plans to form a national multi-agency team comprising NACADA, KRA, KEBS and county security teams to coordinate a tougher crackdown on illicit brews. Special operations will also be mounted in hotspots such as Nanyuki to dismantle entrenched cartels.

“Illicit alcohol is not just a local problem—it is a national crisis. We will coordinate enforcement from Nairobi and ensure rogue traders do not destabilize our communities,” he stated.

Nyeri’s strategic location has also made it vulnerable to cannabis trafficking, with consignments passing through from Ethiopia and Isiolo, while cultivation persists in the county’s forested mountain regions. Authorities say the drug has worsened mental health cases and contributed to family breakdowns, gender-based violence, and defilement.

The CS commended administrators, security officers, and residents for remaining vigilant in reporting such cases, noting that citizens in Central Kenya are increasingly conscious of the dangers of substance abuse. He stressed the need for the public to break the silence on gender-based violence and defilement, often perpetrated by close relatives under the influence of alcohol.

“Defilement and GBV must never be normalized. Families should not protect offenders. We call on wananchi to speak out so justice can be served,” Murkomen urged.

To strengthen the fight, the county government and NACADA are training chiefs, assistant chiefs, religious leaders, and student representatives to provide counselling and guidance, especially to the youth and students in local universities and colleges. Chiefs have also been tasked with curbing the revival of political gangs that have in the past been misused during protests.

Despite these challenges, Nyeri remains one of the most peaceful counties in the country, recording relatively few organized crime incidents compared to other regions.

Unlike Kiambu, which has been severely affected by illicit alcohol, Nyeri has seen reduced farm produce theft. Authorities said that better market prices for coffee and tea have boosted farmers’ earnings, though cases of coffee theft were recently reported, with some consignments recovered. produce in transit and storage.

He also urged the County Assembly to tighten liquor licensing laws, e

Murkomen assured farmers that law enforcement officers would continue escorting produce from factories to markets to curb theft, while security teams work with cooperatives to safeguard mphasizing that many unlicensed bars were the main outlets for adulterated alcohol. Joint operations between NACADA, county governments, and administrators will continue to close down such establishments.

“Every Kenyan deserves to go about their political, social, and economic activities without fear. Our National Police Service remains on high alert to guarantee safety for all,” Murkomen affirmed.

Earlier, he paid a courtesy call to area governor, Dr Mutahi Kahiga and Central Regional Commissioner.

He also visited government offices to assess service delivery to the public.

The Nyeri forum was attended by Deputy Governor Kinaniri Waroe, MPs Duncan Mathenge (Nyeri



CS Kipchumba Murkomen looking at a Birth certificate issued as he visited the Nyeri Huduma Centre. Photos/Joseph King’ori



CS Kipchumba Murkomen with Nyeri County governor Dr Mutahi Kahiga and other officers after paying a courtesy call yesterday.

Town), Njoroge Wainaina (Kieni), and Eric Wamumbi (Mathira), as well as MCAs and senior government officials. Also present were Commissioner General of Prisons Patrick Aranduh, Secretary for Internal Security Thomas Saka, NACADA CEO Dr. Anthony Omerikwa, and Central Kenya Regional Commissioner Joshua Nkanatha, among others.



CS Kipchumba Murkomen addressing the Jukwaa La Usalama in Nyeri yesterday

Gachagua Breaks Silence In Social Media Post After Skipping Anticipated Kamukunji Rally

By: Bruhan Makong
 @themtkenyatimes

Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua has broken his silence following his dramatic return to the country on Thursday, choosing a brief social media message over a public rally to address Kenyans.

In his first statement since landing at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) after a 42-day tour of the United States, Gachagua expressed gratitude to his supporters.

“Thank you, my great people of Kenya, for the love. I am happy to be back home,” he posted.

Contrary to expectations that he would speak at Kamukunji grounds, Gachagua’s convoy did not make it to the venue.

Instead, his allies, led by Nyandarua Senator John Methu, took the stage, with Methu issuing a fiery warning to President William Ruto.

Methu accused the government of orchestrating violence against Gachagua’s supporters after chaos erupted along Mombasa Road, where rowdy

youths pelted his convoy with stones. “We made you the President. We can equally make you an ordinary citizen,” Methu declared.

“If you are man enough, do not send goons to stone us and police to tear-gas us. Come face us directly.”

The senator vowed that the Mt Kenya political bloc would not be cowed into submission.

“Whether you like it or not, we will hold these public meetings. You will go home. You have tested our resolve and resilience, but we are unbogable and unbowed. We shall fight on until we deliver this country,” he said.

Earlier, Gachagua’s arrival drew jubilant crowds, with supporters waving placards and chanting slogans in solidarity with the Democracy for Citizens Party (DCP), which he leads. Hundreds attempted to breach security cordons to catch a glimpse of him.

The National Police Service had deployed water cannons, anti-riot squads, and helicopters to secure JKIA and major roads leading into Nairobi’s central business district.

Gachagua’s homecoming comes



Former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua

amid controversy over remarks he made during his American tour.

He accused President Ruto’s administration of secretly engaging with terror groups, financing Sudan’s Rapid Support Forces (RSF), and holding talks with Al-Shabaab intermediaries in Mandera.

Interior Cabinet Secretary Kipchumba Murkomen dismissed the claims as “reckless and damaging,” urging Gachagua to present evidence to the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI).

Gachagua, however, defended his trip, describing it as “successful and

fulfilling,” noting engagements with the Kenyan diaspora.

On August 11, Gachagua said he was cutting the visit short to focus on November’s by-elections.

Mt Kenya Made You President, We Hold The Key To Your Second Term: Methu To Ruto

By: Bruhan Makong
 @themtkenyatimes

Nyandarua Senator John Methu has issued a stinging warning to President William Ruto, declaring that the Mt Kenya region has the power to both elevate him and strip him of office.

Speaking yesterday after chaos erupted when former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua’s convoy was stoned along Mombasa Road, Methu accused the government of orchestrating violence to intimidate dissenting voices.

“We made you the President. We can equally make you an ordinary citizen,” Senator Methu said.

“If you are man enough, do not send goons to stone us and police to tear-gas us. Come face us directly.”

Methu, a close ally of Gachagua, maintained that opposition voices in the Mt Kenya region will not be silenced.

“Whether you like it or not, we will hold these public meetings. You

will go home. You have tested our resolve and resilience, but we are unbogable and unbowed. We shall fight on until we deliver this country,” he declared.

His remarks came shortly after Gachagua returned to the country from a 42-day tour of the United States.

The former DP landed at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) shortly after 1 pm on Thursday, where he was received by jubilant supporters and political allies.

Hundreds of his followers camped at the airport overnight, waving placards and chanting slogans in solidarity with the Democracy for Citizens Party (DCP), which Gachagua leads.

Al-Shabaab claims

Security was tight at the airport, with the National Police Service deploying anti-riot squads, water cannons, and helicopters to monitor the situation as crowds attempted to gain access.

Gachagua’s return comes amid controversy over explosive allegations he made during his US trip.

The former DP accused President Ruto’s administration of secretly



Nyandarua Senator John Methu/FILE

engaging with terror groups, financing Sudan’s Rapid Support Forces (RSF), and holding clandestine talks with Al-Shabaab intermediaries in Mandera.

Interior Cabinet Secretary Kipchumba Murkomen dismissed the claims as “reckless and damaging,” warning that if Gachagua had credible evi-

dence, he must record it with the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI).

“There are so many people landing in Kenya every day, so I don’t know why we should be worried about one person landing,” Murkomen said earlier in Murang’a during the Jukwaa la Usalama forum. “But if anyone at-

tempts to cause unrest, they will meet the full force of the law.”

Gachagua, however, insisted that his trip was “successful and fulfilling,” citing engagements with Kenyans in the diaspora. He cut short the tour on August 11 to focus on upcoming by-elections in November.

BasiGo Named CATL's Official Partner In Africa

By: MKT Reporter
 @themtkenyatimes

A Chinese company Contemporary Amperex Technology Limited (CATL), has appointed BasiGo as its authorized service partner in sub-Saharan Africa.

Through this partnership, BasiGo's service teams in Kenya and Rwanda will receive specialized training and equipment to perform on-site maintenance and repairs on CATL batteries in electric vehicles.

CATL is the world's leading manufacturer of lithium-ion batteries for electric vehicles (EVs) and energy storage systems. With a global market share of about 38%, it holds a dominant position in the industry

"This partnership is a huge step forward for BasiGo and a strong sign of confidence in the work we've done in Kenya and Rwanda. CATL is the global leader in EV battery technology, and batteries are the most critical component of any electric vehicle.

Moreover, it means we are now equipped to keep CATL batteries running smoothly in African EVs—not

just for our own electric buses but for EV operators across the entire continent." Stated Jit Bhattacharya, CEO of BasiGo.

While this partnership covers all of sub-Saharan Africa BasiGo will initially focus its operations in Kenya and Rwanda giving the company a strong position in Kenya, which has ambitious plans to electrify its public transport system. Former Trade Minister Rebecca Miano, who attended the opening of the BasiGo factory last year stated that the government's goal was to have all public service vehicles (PSVs) go electric by 2027.

On his part, Saba Azizi, CATL's Head of Service Network and After-Sales for Europe, the Middle East, and Africa, said that BasiGo's experience and local presence made them an ideal partner to support the company's expansion in Africa.

"Their impressive history in electric mobility makes them a perfect partner to support the growing demand for dependable electric vehicle battery solutions in the region. This partnership is a crucial step in growing CATL's worldwide service network and promoting sustainable transportation in Africa." He stated.

CATL batteries are already in use in



Jit Bhattacharya, CEO of BasiGo and Tourism CS Rebecca Miano

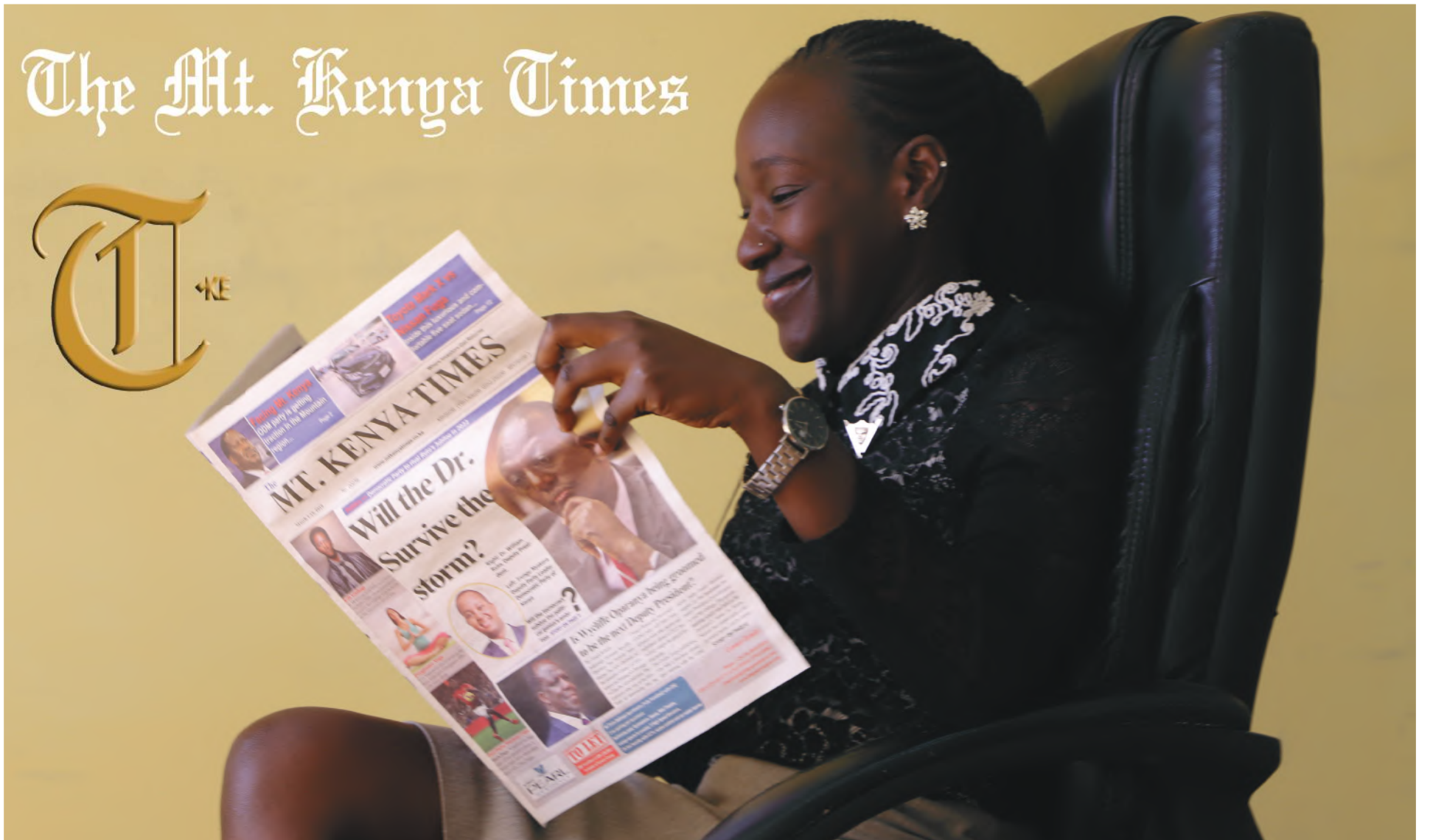
BasiGo's electric buses and other EVs in the region and the new agreement indicates that BasiGo's service centers will become collection points for used batteries, allowing them to be repurposed for a second life in Africa. Founded in 2021, BasiGo began manufacturing its E9 Kubwa electric buses in Kenya in 2024. The compa-

ny's goal is to produce 1,000 buses for the East African market within three years.

The nine-metre-long E9 Kubwa with space for up to 54 passengers is powered by a 210 kWh CATL LFP battery which can be charged in under two hours. With a midday charging, can travel up to 400 kilometers daily with

a total of 100 electric buses delivered to clients in Kenya and Rwanda.

The buses are assembled at the Kenya Vehicle Manufacturers (KVM) plant in Thika which houses the company's dedicated electric bus assembly line.



National Assembly Committees Score Card

By: PSCU and MKT Reporter

[@themtkenyatimes](#)

In the wake of heavy criticism by Kenyans, led by President William Ruto over integrity issues, Members of Parliament through their House committees have produced their score-card.

The house committees in the 13th Assembly have reviewed 648 Audit reports and held over 2,100 meetings.

Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, Gladys Boss who presented the report lauded the performance of National Assembly Committees, describing them as the “engine room of Parliament”.

Speaking during the National Assembly 3rd Leadership Retreat, Boss said Committees had demonstrated diligence in their role as representatives, holding 2,115 sittings, 820 meetings by Audit, Appropriations and General-Purpose Committees and 1,295 by Departmental Committees.

“In oversight alone, Committees reviewed 648 reports of the Auditor-General, cutting down legacy backlogs and strengthening follow-up on audit queries,” she noted, adding, “Committees are the heartbeat of Parliament.”

The Deputy Speaker added that Committees also conducted 47 inspection visits 17 by Audit and Appropriations Committees and 30 by Departmental Committees to inspect use of budgeted resources and policy implementation.

She also revealed that during the period the Committee on Appointments vetted 26 Cabinet Secretaries and one Attorney-General, while Departmental Committees vetted 65 nominees to constitutional and statutory offices, including the Inspector-General of Police, IEBC, IPOA, NGEIC, and NPSC.

In addition, the House considered 11 international treaties and agreements, adopting eight to align Kenya’s obligations with national interests.

“The Committee on Delegated Legislation scrutinized 83 Statutory Instruments and 21 draft instruments, providing a necessary legality and proportionality check on subsidiary legislation, pointed out the Deputy Speaker.

Speaking on the fiscal responsibility, the Deputy Speaker who also chairs the Liaison Committee reported that the House had successfully processed the 2025/26 Budget Policy Statement, the Medium-Term Debt Management Strategy and Supplementary Estimates II, with sector interrogations by departmental committees enriching the larger appropriations process.

“Leadership is not about motions and reports. It is about whether citizens can feel the impact of our work,” she stressed.

She commended Members contributions during the deliberation of the Constitution of Kenya (Amendment) Bill, 2025. “The passage of the Bill in the National Assembly is a significant achievement for the House. The proposed entrenchment of the National Government Constituencies Development Fund (NG-CDF), the Senate Oversight Fund, and the National Government Affirmative Action Fund reinforces our dedication to equitable resource sharing and devolution in practice. In addition, public consultations nationwide demonstrated overwhelming support,” she pointed out.



Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly Gladys Boss



National Assembly Majority leader Kimani Ichung'wa



National Assembly Minority leader Junet Mohamed

Worth Noting:

- The Deputy Speaker added that Committees also conducted 47 inspection visits 17 by Audit and Appropriations Committees and 30 by Departmental Committees to inspect use of budgeted resources and policy implementation.
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Kagio Residents To Benefit From KSh 100 Million Road Project

By: MKT Reporter
 @themtkenyatimes

Kagio residents in Ndia constituency, Kirinyaga County have a reason to smile after construction of their long-awaited feeder roads project officially kicked off.

The launch was conducted by the area Member of Parliament George Kariuki, following a commitment made by President William Ruto during his recent development tour of the Mt. Kenya region.

During his visit, the president pledged KSh100 million towards upgrading Kagio town's feeder roads.

The roads will be tarmacked to ease transport, improve sanitation, and give the bustling town a modern facelift.

This development is expected to address long-standing challenges faced by both residents and traders, considering that Kagio hosts the largest market in Kirinyaga County, attracting thousands of farmers, traders, and customers daily.

The project will also help reduce dust during the dry season and muddy conditions during the rainy season, thus promoting business opportunities.

Local business people have welcomed the move, noting that it will boost trade, attract more investments, and improve the overall economic status of Kagio town.

The Ndia MP, who also serves as the Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Transport and Infrastructure, assured residents that the works will be supervised by the Kenya Rural Roads Authority (KeRRA) to ensure high-quality standards are maintained.

Kariuki emphasized that the government is determined to complete all road projects within the stipulated time frames to avoid further delays.

In addition, the MP inspected the ongoing construction of the Kiangwaci-Ndia TVET-Thiguku road, a key section that had remained incomplete since it was launched by President Ruto in 2023.

He noted that most contractors who had suspended work due to pending payments are now back on site after signing a return-to-work agreement.

This follows the government's clearance of billions in pending bills through funds secured from the Fuel Levy, which has unlocked stalled infrastructure projects nationwide.

"As a committee, we will be moving around the country to inspect ongoing construction works and ensure that taxpayers' money is utilized effectively. We are committed to delivering value for money and ensuring Kenyans enjoy the fruits of their taxes," Kariuki said.



He further addressed concerns raised by county governors who are seeking a share of the Fuel Levy for road maintenance within their jurisdictions.

While acknowledging their frustrations, the legislator insisted that road infrastructure projects are best supervised when handled by specialized government agencies such as KeRRA and the Kenya National Highways Authority (KeNHA), which have the technical capacity to deliver.

The MP also urged fellow leaders to remain focused on service delivery rather than political wrangles, reminding them that Kenyans expect tangible development that can be seen and felt in their daily lives.

Kagio Residents led by Tabby kinyua Mungera, could not hide their excitement, noting that poor road network has been a nightmare for them over the years, particularly during the rainy seasons, when mud and stagnant waters cut off access to shops, schools and residential areas.

Traders said that customers often avoid the town during such times, resulting in heavy losses for businesses. Other members of the business fraternity added that the roads will not only improve trading, but also enhance security, as better infrastructure and lighting will reduce crime, especially for traders who operate late into the night.

The mega Kagio road project is

among the Kenya Kwanza government's broader agenda of investing in rural and urban infrastructure to spur economic growth, improve connectivity and uplift livelihoods country-wide.

For Kagio town, this marks the beginning of a new chapter, one that promises improved businesses, better living conditions and renewed hope for thousands of residents.



Worth Noting:

- This development is expected to address long-standing challenges faced by both residents and traders, considering that Kagio hosts the largest market in Kirinyaga County, attracting thousands of farmers, traders, and customers daily.
- The project will also help reduce dust during the dry season and muddy conditions during the rainy season, thus promoting business opportunities.
- Local business people have welcomed the move, noting that it will boost trade, attract more investments, and improve the overall economic status of Kagio town.
- The Ndia MP, who also serves as the Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Transport and Infrastructure, assured residents that the works will be supervised by the Kenya Rural Roads Authority (KeRRA) to ensure high-quality standards are maintained.

Groups Call For Tougher Laws Against Child Molestation

By: MKT Reporter
@themtkenyatimes

Civil society groups in Mombasa county have condemned the rising cases of child molestation at the Coastal region, urging the government and the Judiciary to impose tougher penalties and stricter bail terms for offenders.

The call comes after a local football coach, Mbarak Swaleh, popularly known as “Coaches”, was arraigned on 18th August, before Senior Resident Magistrate David Odhiambo, charged with molesting a 12-year-old football player. Swaleh faced committing an indecent act with a child. The offences are alleged to have taken place between January and August 14, 2025, at Fort Jesus Stadium in Mvita.

According to court proceedings, the accused allegedly lured the Grade Six pupil into a school store under the guise of collecting training equipment and then repeatedly abused him.

He is also said to have applied a substance referred to as “power shot oil”, claiming it would enhance the boy’s

athletic performance, before committing the acts.

The matter came to light after the child informed his mother on August 16, 2025, and the claims were later confirmed through medical examination.

The court granted the accused bail of Sh500,000 with a surety of a similar amount and ordered him to provide two contact persons. The case will be mentioned again on September 8, 2025.

Speaking at a press briefing at Fort Jesus, Anti-LGBTQ Movement Chairperson Salim Karama criticised the decision to release suspects of child abuse on low bail terms, saying it encourages repeat offences.

We condemn the increasing cases of child molestation in our society and urge the courts to review laws that give perpetrators confidence to commit these crimes. The laws are not harsh enough. Offenders know they can easily walk out of court,” Karama said.

Old Town Residents Association Chairman, Hemed Abdalla, also faulted the bail terms set in the latest case.

“The coach accused of molesting



a 12-year-old boy was released on Sh500,000 bond. This is too lenient. Such crimes should attract a minimum bond of Sh2 million. They destroy children’s lives and the laws must reflect the seriousness of these offences,” Abdalla said.

Activist Alamin Somo urged the Judiciary to fast-track child abuse cases to prevent delays that could lead to witness tampering or loss of evidence.

“Cases of this nature should be con-

cluded within six months, not drag on for years,” he said.

Children Protection Volunteer representative, Ahmed Ali, encouraged parents to remain vigilant in safeguarding their children.

“We must know where our children are, who they are meeting, and the character of the people around them,” he said.

Mama Zeinab Abdi, a mother and member of the Anti-LGBTQ Move-

ment, highlighted similar incidents reported recently in the region.

“Less than two months ago, we had another case in Lamu, where the accused was also granted a Sh500,000 bond.

The government should consider establishing a special department to handle child molestation cases,” she said.

EPRA Seeks Public Views On Petroleum Regulations Ahead Of Oil Production

By: MKT Reporter
@themtkenyatimes

The Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority (EPRA) has kicked off a series of public consultations on seven draft regulations and the Petroleum (Amendment) Bill, 2025, aimed at strengthening oversight of Kenya’s upstream and midstream petroleum sector.

Speaking during a consultative forum with industry players and members of the public at a Mombasa hotel, EPRA Director for Petroleum and Gas, Eng. Edward Pinyo, said the proposed regulations are critical in preparing the country for full-scale oil production.

“We are at the Coast to conduct public participation on the seven upstream regulations developed to govern the petroleum sector. The Petroleum Act 2019 mandates EPRA

to regulate upstream petroleum, including issuing non-exclusive exploration permits, drilling permits, and approving field development plans,” Eng. Pinyo explained.

He noted that since the 2012 oil discovery, the government has been putting in place a regulatory framework to support commercial production, with field development plans submitted in December 2021 and revised in March 2023.

According to the Director, the new legislation seeks to safeguard local content, protect the environment, health and safety, regulate access to land for petroleum development, and ensure only prudent costs are recovered by contractors.

Eng. Pinyo assured stakeholders and the public that their views will be incorporated before the regulations are finalized and submitted for gazette.

During the forum, Susan Muthoni a representative from the Kenya Association of Manufacturers,



EPRA Director for Petroleum and Gas, Eng. Edward Pinyo

urged EPRA to work closely with other agencies, including the Kenya National Highways Authority (KeNHA) and county governments,

to enhance road safety in petroleum transportation.

“EPRA should work with county governments, KeNHA and other

agencies to ensure there are designated areas for tankers to avoid catastrophe on our highways,” said Muthoni.

14 POEMS

When Strangers Bring Rain



In a world where things are rarely clear,
Surprises come from far and near.
Some strangers step into our day,
And gently guide us on our way.

Like sudden rain on thirsty land,
They come with help, not planned or
planned.

They calm the storms we try to hide,

And fill the emptiness inside.

But not all that shines is truly bright,
Some pretty things may not be right.
And stones that look so dark and plain
Might hold a worth we can't explain.

So choose with care who you let in,
For they can help—or cause a spin.
A wise heart builds a life with grace,
A rushed one falls from its own place

V Durgadevi

BT Assistant

GHS Nesal

Tiruvannamalai District

My Pillow



My pillow is too heavy
Soaked with bitter sweet tears
Drenching in pain
Mind caged in a nest
All this darkness amidst the light
Smiling loudly yet battling unforeseen

forces quietly

If only my pillow could talk

Am tired of all these

Don't be surprised

If tomorrow I appear

On the daily news paper

After all ain't I just

A human with feelings

I've chanted more mantras than my age

If only my pillow could talk

They say after the darkest hour comes

a brighter day

Lost faith in that

Cut my wrist several times
To appease my caged mind
Emotions after emotions
Irrational and impulsive decision

If only my pillow could talk
It's okay not to be okay aah
Problem shared is a half solved

What a genius perception

Ran to God, open up

I was feeding on his words
Particularly Nahum 1 Vs 7

How great I felt

The satisfaction can't be expressed in
words

If only my pillow could talk

Every time I kneel down

The forces that are holding me back

Are clipped by unknown protector

I won't lie it feels way better

God be praised

I no longer dwell

In the dark but brighter and burning

flame of the new faith

If only my pillow could talk

© Austeen

My 18 Years

you.

I dedicate to you the finest of lines,
My joy is with you, my life is with you.
I was no child, yet like a child I became,
With you I learned what it means to live.

Never before was my 18th spring like this,
I'll never regret the years that have
passed.

Till you, I never knew the taste of
fortune—

Oh, don't take it away, my 18 years.

Odinayeva Umida Ulug'bekovna

2006.05.12

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Dehkanabad district

Boston MFY Bahor street 72

School 85

Shakhrisabz State Pedagogical Institute

Uzbek language and literature major 3-24

groups

1st year student



With you I soared to heights above,
Through you I saw both good and bad of
man,

The true face of life revealed to me,
I lived it with you, I saw it with you.

At times I walked the path of hardship,
At times I was amazed by my own fortune.

I blossomed, I opened, I laughed in
brightness,

And told it all to you, described it all.

My fortune is with you, my happiness too,
It all entered smiling, I laughed with it.

Today no pen could capture its worth—
My greatness, my dearest, has come with

I Receive Real Pleasure From



They spoil good relationships
No drink or food can give true peace of
mind,
Only nature's solace, can soothe and any
mind

The sound of water, a gentle breeze,
Gives a boost to all, and brings us to our
enlightenment
Waves and bamboo, give soothing music
A music that immerses, in happiness

And yet, there's more, that brings us
cheer,

Serving creative writers, reading,
reviewing, and sharing their heart and art
brings soul-felt delight, at night

That happiness can't be compared to any
It is pure, true and shines throughout

Seeing the names in Mt. Kenya
International e newspaper gives immense
pleasure

Admiring nature, hundred pure delight,
Brings relaxation, and calms the our
tension

Speaking with nature, and animals too,
Fills my heart with happiness,
They are pure and true.

Nature's is, a treasure to see,
No impurities, no partiality,
A lesson to learn everyday,
To be in harmony and peace,
That is the right relaxation, my soul can
understand

human connections are not fair
With full of impurities and bad intentions

Brinda. D

Only You



When morning breaks and light pours
in, It's thoughts of you where dreams
begin. Your voice, a calm I always chase,
My world restored in your embrace.

No diamond shines the way you do, No
sunset holds a deeper hue. You are the
rhythm in my days, The silent song my
heart obeys.

So take my hand, and walk with me,
Through every storm, through every
sea. For love like ours is rare and true—
And all I need is only you.

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POLITICS

Wetang'ula Urges Members Of Parliament To Uphold Integrity

By: Chari Suche
@themtkenyatimes

Speaker of the National Assembly, Moses Wetang'ula, has called on Members of Parliament to reinvigorate their commitment to integrity and efficiency as the 13th Parliament enters its final 23 months before the next election.

Speaking during the 3rd National Assembly Leadership Retreat in Mombasa, Wetang'ula emphasized the need for MPs to uphold public trust, citing rising concerns over allegations of bribery in legislative processes.

The speaker told the legislators that in order to deliver on the mandate given by people, they must be ready to ask the hard questions and introspect on where they have failed and where they can do better.

Wetangula emphasized the need for the Members of Parliament (MPs) to recognize that they hold positions of public trust and the authority and responsibility vested on them should only be exercised in the interest of the people.

"I want to re-emphasize the sacred calling of leadership. As leaders and members of this honorable House, we are bound by the responsibilities and guiding principles of leadership and integrity enshrined in Article 73 of the Constitution," he said.

He reminded legislators of their constitutional duty to exercise leadership guided by integrity, accountability, and selfless service, noting that Parliament recently passed the Conflict-of-Interest Act, 2025, which imposes stricter rules on wealth declaration and curbs unethical practices.

The speaker said the Act establishes an enhanced wealth declaration model that requires Members of Parliament (MP) to submit wealth declarations on a biennial basis to the Parliamentary Power and Privileges Committee, under supervision of the EACC.

Wetangula also raised concern over quorum hitches, urging committee chairpersons and MPs to prioritize House business to avoid delays in lawmaking and oversight.

He noted that the house has in the recent past experienced quorum hitches even on priority business of the parliament whereas in some cases, the chairpersons of committees fail to move matters that fall under their mandate in parliament.

"A committee is as effective as its leader. It is paramount as chairpersons to ensure that whenever any oth-



Speaker of the National Assembly, Moses Wetang'ula

er business falling under your committee is slated for consideration, you attend the House proceedings and also whip your committee members to attend," added Wetangula.

He emphasized that for the house to deliver on its mandate, diligent attendance is key thus urging the MPs to strive and create a healthy balance between constituency duties and their roles and avoid causing unnecessary delays in transacting House business.

He commended Parliament's efforts in entrenching the NG-CDF in the Constitution, describing it as a potential hallmark legacy of the 13th Parliament.

On public participation, Wetang'ula lauded recent innovations such as the use of social media, QR codes, and constituency-level hearings but stressed the need for a comprehensive legal framework to standardize the process.

He also faulted the House for neglecting reports from Commissions and Independent Offices, saying they should inform budgetary and legislative decisions.

He further noted that MPs will explore new areas of innovation, including the adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI), and be briefed on matters of welfare such as pensions and post-service medical schemes.



Worth Noting:

Wetangula emphasized the need for the Members of Parliament (MPs) to recognize that they hold positions of public trust and the authority and responsibility vested on them should only be exercised in the interest of the people.

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KFS: 800 Million Trees Planted In The 15B Trees Planting Initiative

By: George Mugo
@themkenyatimes

The country has planted over 800 million trees since the tree planting initiative was launched by President William Ruto in December 2022, the Kenya Forest Service has reported.

The Service says the number has been realised by the strategies it laid so as to achieve the target of planting 15 billion trees by 2032.

KFS Chief Conservator Alex Lemarkoko applauded environment stakeholders, partners and local communities for their continued support towards tree planting, nurturing and forest protection.

However, he said even after having planted 846,863,143 trees which are witnessed from all 47 counties, the country has a lot of work ahead of planting more trees so as to achieve it target.

He attributed the realisation of the achievement from the tireless effort of the service as well as the stakeholders of planting trees throughout all seasons.

He also noted that the country heard the call of the government towards the environmental conservation, owing its destruction some years ago where trees were cut down carelessly without being replanted.

“Kenya set a bold target of growing 15 billion trees by 2032 so as to restore 10.6 million hectares of degraded landscape. By so doing, it will secure water towers, enhancing biodiversity, improving livelihoods, and ensuring that our children will inherit a greener, healthier and more climate resilient nation” Lemarkoko noted.

The Chief Conservator added that the move saw the KFS stewarding the move and embraced a theme, “15 Billion trees, kazi yetu, urithi wetu”.

He spoke at KFS headquarters on Wednesday when he launched another phase of tree planting countrywide. The exercise will be overseen by senior KFS officers in different forests.

At the same time, Lemarkoko noted that the KFS was able to sustain tree planting without stopping following the setup of tree nursery beds in all forest stations, adding that Community Forest Association members also set up theirs so as to boost the production of seedlings.

“In the 2023/2024 financial year, the KFS supported seedlings productions in over 300 government tree nurseries and worked with CFA’s and private nurseries to make quality seedlings available” he noted.

“Partnerships with counties, non governmental organisations, and corporate sponsors, have further boosted the seedlings production, enabling the national wide supply of 561,697,667”



Kenya Forest Service officers and the Community Forest Association members jointly plant a tree together at Longoman forest station in Nakuru county Simon Waweru on Wednesday.

he added.

In a statement, Lemarkoko urged the stakeholders and the local community to take advantage of the short rains in the months of August, September, October, November and December, to plant trees as the way of supporting the 15 billion trees 2032 target.

The KFS adds that it has stocked all its nurseries within its forest stations with millions of seedlings at subsidised prices, so as to enable as many people as possible to buy and plant the trees.

The trees are sold so as to offer incentives to the caretakers of the nurseries and who are drawn from the CFA’s.

A member of Longoman forest station in Nakuru county Simon Waweru said even though the KFS has conducted environmental education to the community, it needs to keep doing it so as to refresh it members with it.

“When people are enlightened each and every time, members who join different CFA’s will learn about forest conservation. People need to be

taught. Our country was at risk some years ago if nothing was done. So far, we feel that the government through the KFS was doing a great job to conserve the environment” Waweru noted.

Not only in the forests, the KFS urges stakeholders to plant trees at their homes, public places and within institutions since they were tracking the trees planted using the jaza miti app so as to track the progress.



Kenya Forest Service Chief Conservator Alex Lemarkoko signs to launch the tree planting exercise at KFS headquarters in Karura, Nairobi.

Worth Noting:

- KFS Chief Conservator Alex Lemarkoko applauded environment stakeholders, partners and local communities for their continued support towards tree planting, nurturing and forest protection.
- However, he said even after having planted 846,863,143 trees which are witnessed from all 47 counties, the country has a lot of work ahead of planting more trees so as to achieve it target.
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- He also noted that the country heard the call of the government towards the environmental conservation, owing its destruction some years ago where trees were cut down carelessly without being replanted.

Nine Arrested As Communication Authority Raids Unlicensed Courier Service Providers In Nairobi

By: Anita Omwenga
@themkenyatimes

Nine suspects have been arrested as the Communication Authority of Kenya (CA) raided unlicensed courier service providers in the Eastleigh area, Nairobi County.

In a press release yesterday, CA conducted the crackdown in collaboration with the National Police Service and netted samples of parcels, receipts and consignment books which were collected and preserved as court exhibits.

During the enforcement activity, a number of local parcel and courier firms were found to have been offering unlicensed parcel and courier services contrary to Section 67 of the Kenya Information and Communications Act, 1998.

According to the statement, the suspects were held at the California Police Station and will be arraigned at the Makadara Law Courts.

The Authority in undertaking its

mandate on compliance and enforcement urges firms wishing to engage in parcel and courier services to apply for the requisite licenses from our offices in Nairobi, Kisumu, Eldoret, Nyeri and Mombasa.

The Authority also cautions members of the public to seek parcel and courier services from CA licensed providers only.

Dealing with licensed parcel and courier operators safeguards consumers welfare, ensures secure and reliable delivery, and supports lawful and sustainable growth of the sector.



IFC Launches Global Initiatives To Tackle Gender-Based Violence And Harassment In Workplaces

By: James Ndolo
@themkenyatimes

The International Finance Corporation (IFC) has launched two major initiatives – the Gender-Based Violence Center of Expertise and the Respect@Work Program – aimed at addressing gender-based violence and harassment (GBVH) in workplaces worldwide.

The initiatives seek to foster safer, more inclusive work environments, with IFC underscoring that tackling GBVH is not only critical for advancing gender equality but also for improving business performance and unlocking economic opportunities for women and marginalized groups.

The Gender-Based Violence Center of Expertise will serve as a global knowledge hub, providing toolkits, training, and advisory services to IFC clients and private sector actors. Its goal is to help companies develop policies and practices that

prevent and respond to GBVH while promoting cultures of respect, accountability, and resilience across workplaces and communities.

Complementing this effort, the Respect@Work Program builds on IFC's Kenya2Equal Initiative, launched in partnership with the Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE). The program will offer a peer-learning platform for businesses to share experiences, adopt practical strategies, and draw on real-world case studies aligned with international best practices, including the International Labour Organization's Convention 190 on violence and harassment in the world of work.

Research demonstrates that companies that actively address GBVH enjoy measurable business benefits, including higher employee retention, improved productivity, stronger reputations, and greater capacity to attract top talent.

"Gender-based violence and harassment is not just a personal issue, it is a workplace issue, and one that demands urgent and collective action,"



From left: Ms. Marieme Niang (IFC Global GBV Lead), Ms. Sazini M., Hon. Harriette Chiggai (Women's Rights Advisor to the President of Kenya), Ms. Karine Bachongy (GEID Global Operations Manager), and Ms. Grace Kaome (Federation of Kenya Employers) during the launch of IFC's Gender-Based Violence Hub at Radisson Blu, Nairobi. The Hub aims to foster collaboration, research, and partnerships to create safer, more inclusive workplaces and communities across Africa.

said Gillian Rogers, IFC's Principal Country Officer in Kenya. "The evidence is clear: workplaces free from violence and harassment are more productive, innovative, and inclusive. IFC is committed to partnering

with the private sector, offering evidence-based solutions and sharing practical experiences to create work environments where every worker feels safe, valued, and empowered."

The initiatives form part of IFC's

broader Respectful Workplaces Program, which supports companies globally in building equitable, safe, and empowering work environments.

Why Israel's E1 Settlement Plan Is Sparking Outrage

By: Xinhua
@themtkenyentimes

Worth Noting:

- Israel launched a new offensive on Gaza City on Wednesday, a move that has drawn international criticism over its impact on civilians in the devastated enclave. Earlier in the day, Israel began calling up around 60,000 reservists for the offensive to take over Gaza City.
- Against this backdrop, analysts say the approval of the E1 settlement plan serves multiple purposes: on the domestic front, the far-right dominated government seeks to consolidate its political base by taking a hard line on settlement expansion; at the same time, with public attention largely on the Gaza war and regional tensions, the government is using this moment as a window of opportunity to push forward a project that had been stalled for decades under domestic and international pressure.

Israel on Wednesday approved the construction of 3,401 housing units in E1, a highly contentious area of the occupied West Bank.

The decision by the Higher Planning Council has triggered strong condemnation from the international community. Why is Israel advancing this plan now, and why has it drawn such anger?

The Higher Planning Council on Wednesday authorized 3,753 housing units, including 3,401 for final approval in the E1 neighborhood of Maale Adumim. E1 is located east of Jerusalem, linking the large-scale settlement of Maale Adumim with East Jerusalem. Settlement construction there is believed to effectively divide the West Bank into northern and southern parts, cutting off Palestinian territorial continuity between East Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Ramallah, while creating a continuous Jewish population corridor between Jerusalem and Maale Adumim. Plans to expand settlements in E1 date back to the 1990s and have been reportedly endorsed by almost every Israeli prime minister since. However, strong international pressure repeatedly forced Israel to shelve or delay the project. Earlier this month, Israel's far-right Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich declared that the E1 plan would be approved, saying it would "bury the idea of a Palestinian state" and form part of the government's broader "sovereignty plan." The Ramallah-based Palestinian Authority swiftly condemned the move. "This undermines the chances of implementing the two-state solution, establishing a Palestinian state on the ground, and fragments its geographic and demographic unity," the Palestinian Authority's foreign ministry said in a statement.

Consistent Expansion Strategy

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Against this backdrop, analysts say the approval of the E1 settlement plan serves multiple purposes: on the domestic front, the far-right dominated government seeks to consolidate its political base by taking a hard line on settlement expansion; at the same time, with public attention largely on the Gaza war and region-

al tensions, the government is using this moment as a window of opportunity to push forward a project that had been stalled for decades under domestic and international pressure. Analysts believe the E1 move could also prolong the Gaza conflict. Israel's E1 plans are widely seen as further evidence that it rejects peace and seeks to annex occupied land, a perception that could fuel resistance. At the same time, the decision may weaken Israel's already limited international tolerance for its military campaign in Gaza, leaving the Netanyahu government more isolated. Settlement expansion is seen as a significant obstacle to peace talks. Israel occupied East Jerusalem and the West Bank in the Six-Day War of 1967 and has since built settlements widely deemed illegal under international law. Currently, more than 720,000 Israeli settlers live in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Israel has accelerated settlement activities in recent years. In 2024, the government approved the expropriation of 12.7 square kilometers of land in the Jordan Valley, the largest since the 1993 Oslo Accords. In May this year, it approved 22 new settlements in the West Bank. Critics say E1 is part of this broader strategy, particularly among the Israeli far right, to entrench Israeli control and block Palestinian statehood.

Broad Opposition

According to Peace Now, an Israeli NGO that has long opposed settlement construction, the plan would increase the housing stock in Maale Adumim by about 33 percent. For a settlement whose population has stagnated at around 38,000 over the past decade and even experienced net out-migration, the plan represents a "massive expansion." The group warned that the project undermines prospects for a political solution to the seemingly intractable conflict with the Palestinians, poses a severe threat to the establishment of a Palestinian state, and could waste vast amounts of Israeli public funds. International opposition has also grown sharper. On Aug. 14, one day after Smotrich approved the plan, EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas urged Israel to drop the plan, warning that the move would violate international law and irreparably damage prospects for a two-state solution. "If implemented, settlement construction in this area will permanently cut the geographical and territorial contiguity between



occupied East Jerusalem and the West Bank and sever the connection between the northern and southern West Bank," Kallas said in a statement.

A few hours after the Higher Planning Council approved the plan, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres condemned the decision, saying that Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, "are a violation of international law and run directly counter to UN resolutions." "The advancement of this project is an existential threat to the two-State solution. It would sever the northern and southern West Bank and have severe consequences for the territorial contiguity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory," said Stephane Dujarric, spokesman for the UN chief, in a statement. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said

on Wednesday that the plan would essentially cut off the northern and central West Bank from the south, resulting in severe humanitarian consequences. The wider occupied Palestinian territory would be impacted, with 18 Palestinian Bedouin communities put at a higher risk of displacement. "This plan also involves the construction of a bypass road diverting Palestinian traffic away from the main Jerusalem-Jericho road," the office said. "In this context, OCHA notes that such roads undermine territorial contiguity, increase travel times, and negatively affect people's livelihoods and access to services."

Jerusalem, August 21, 2025

CAF Clears 36,000 Fans For Kenya–Madagascar CHAN Quarterfinal At Kasarani

By: Cynthia Masibo
@themkenyentimes

Kenyan football fans will pack Kasarani Stadium in large numbers after the Confederation of African Football (CAF) approved an 80 per cent capacity for tomorrow’s CHAN 2024 quarterfinal clash between Kenya and Madagascar.

Cabinet Secretary for Youth Affairs, Creative Economy and Sports, Salim Mvurya, confirmed on Thursday that CAF had granted Football Kenya Federation’s (FKF) appeal, allowing 36,000 fans into the stadium.

“Tomorrow we are happy to announce to all Kenyans that now in Kasarani we will have 80 per cent attendance capacity, which translates to 36,000 fans,” said Mvurya, flanked by Sports Principal Secretary, FKF President Hussein Mohamed, and Local Organizing Committee Chair Nicolas Musonye.

CAF based its approval on the excellent discipline and organization displayed during Kenya’s previous match, where fans complied fully with safety regulations.

“The report officially presented to us by CAF reflects very good progress. They observed that the game last Sunday was in full compliance,” Mvurya noted.

In response, authorities have tightened protocols, increased crowd-control measures, and expanded fan zones to 13 locations across Nairobi and surrounding areas.

Mvurya has urged fans to conduct themselves responsibly to pave the way for even higher future attendance.

While the capacity increase is a boost to fans and stakeholders alike, ticketing remains a concern.

He also urged Kenyans to maintain the same spirit, stressing that continued discipline could open the door to a full-capacity stadium in future matches. “This is good news to Kenyans. We want to reiterate that we



Cabinet Secretary for Youth Affairs, Creative Economy and Sports, Salim Mvurya alongside FKF officials issuing his address to the media

continue to comply in the game tomorrow. It’s a big game, and therefore we urge all Kenyans to continue to comply, so that the next time we

play 100 percent without any problem,” he added.

The Harambee Stars face Madagascar on Friday in a high-stakes quar-

terfinal that could edge Kenya closer to continental glory.

Operation Wototo Warudi Salama Campaign Launched To Ensure Learners’ Safe Return To School

By: Elizabeth Angira
@themkenyentimes

As schools prepare to reopen, stakeholders in road safety have launched a campaign dubbed Operation Wototo Warudi Salama aimed at minimizing accidents and ensuring children’s safe travel back to school.

Speaking to the press ahead of the event, Adan Adow, the Regional Manager for the National Transport and Safety Authority (NTSA) in South Nyanza, said the initiative is a proactive measure to reduce fatalities linked to school transport.

The campaign comes against the backdrop of worrying statistics, with 2,933 Kenyans reported dead in road crashes between January and August 2025, a figure Adow described as “unacceptable.”

To address this, the NTSA, in collaboration with the County Transport and Safety Committee, the Ministry of Education, and the National Police Service, will hold a free motor vehicle inspection clinic on Friday, August 22, 2025, at Cardinal Otunga

High School, Mosoch.

Adow urged all school transport operators’ owners of vans, buses, and private vehicles to attend the event in large numbers.

“We have observed laxity in the past, with cases of unroadworthy and unlicensed vehicles ferrying children, overloading, and loitering of learners in urban centers. This must stop. Road safety is a shared responsibility,” he said.

The inspection clinic will bring together officers from motor vehicle inspection, licensing, and road safety departments, who will interact with drivers and bus owners on road safety preparedness and compliance with the Traffic Act and NTSA regulations.

Dan Marwa, Quality Assurance and Standards Officer in the Office of the County Director of Education, also emphasized the importance of the campaign.

He called on principals, drivers, and school bus owners to take advantage of the one-day clinic to ensure their vehicles are roadworthy and certified for use.

“Safety on the roads is a responsibility



Adan Adow, the Regional Manager for the NTSA South Nyanza (Middle), Adan Marwa, Quality Assurance and Standards Officer in the office of the County Director of Education (Right), Kisii Central Traffic Base Commander (Left) during media briefing on the road safety as children prepare to ope. Pphoto/Elizabeth Angira

for all of us. If anything happens, let it not be because we failed to do what we were supposed to do. This is a rare opportunity, and I urge all schools to bring their vehicles, ask questions, and learn what is required

to meet safety standards,” Marwa said.

The campaign underlines the government’s one-government approach mechanism, where all agencies work together to enforce laws and promote

safety.

Stakeholders believe that through such collective efforts, fatalities on the roads can be prevented, and children can travel back to school safely.

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Sports >> *Kisii High School were crowned the Federation of East Africa Secondary Schools Sports Association Rugby 15s champions after breezing past defending champions All Saints Embu 11-06 at Bull Ring Grounds in Kakamega

EA Games: Kisii School, St. Joseph's Kitale Lift Rugby And Hockey Titles



Kisii High School were crowned the Federation of East Africa Secondary Schools Sports Association (FEASSA) Rugby 15s champions after breezing past defending champions All Saints Embu 11-06 at Bull Ring Grounds in Kakamega yesterday. Matrick Matangi opened the scoring for Kisii in the third minute to give them a 3-0 lead, after converting a penalty following a defensive mistake from All Saints.

All Saints' penalty kicker Josphat Karanja replied in a similar fashion two minutes later to level the scores.

Both teams defended well, conceding few chances until the 18th minute when All Saints made an error, leading to another penalty for Kisii which Matangi converted to help Nyanza regional giants regain their lead.

Seven minutes later, Karanja converted yet another penalty for All Saints to level at 06-06 with both teams trading for penalties at halftime.

Second half produced a different show as Isaac Mageto scored an important try which proved to be the match winner.

The victory marked Kisii's first-ever East Africa's rugby 15s title, capping off a remarkable rise under newly World Rugby Level 1 accredited coach, Lee Arstone.

It was a sweet revenge for Kisii after being beaten 13-10 by All Saints in the preliminary matches.

Assistant coach Nobert Bonyi was awed by his boys' resilience and determination which won them the game.

"The game has been tough but I'm glad we won. We came to this match expecting a tough encounter and it actually was. We won the game through set-pieces and our defence was solid," said Bonyi.

His counterpart Benson Mwenda praised his boys despite the loss.

"My boys gave their best, our tactics just didn't work today

but overall they have improved. We are going back to the drawing board and we will come back better."

In hockey girls', St. Joseph's Kitale thrashed former champions Kakungulu of Uganda 6-0 to bag three important points, helping them retain their hockey title.

The defending champions were tipped title favourites on Wednesday after making light work of national champions Tigoi, beating them 3-2, to open a three-point gap at the top and needed just a point to finish off the job.

They amassed 19 points after seven matches in the competition played in round-robin format.

St. Joseph, popularly known as JOGA, continued to show their mettle regionally despite failing to dominate nationally in the last two years they've lifted the East African crown.

Head coach Linah Barasa couldn't hold back her joy after the match.

"I'm happy that we won this title, we showed a lot of determination and in the end it paid off. We now hope we can win the national title that has been slipping through our hands next year."

Reigning national champions Tigoi Girls had to settle for a second place with 16 points after crushing

The boys crown went to Uganda with Kakungulu reclaiming it after losing it to Musingu last year. Kakungulu stunned St. Charles Lwanga 3-0 in the early kick off of the day.

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Sports >>> *Liverpool defender Jeremie Frimpong faces several weeks out of action with a hamstring injury, Reds manager Arne Slot said yesterday.

Liverpool's Frimpong Out For Several Weeks With Hamstring Injury



Liverpool's Jeremie Frimpong plays during the FA Community Shield match between Crystal Palace and Liverpool at Wembley Stadium in London, England, on August 10, 2025. (Photo by Action Foto Sport/NurPhoto) (Photo by Action Foto Sport / NurPhoto / NurPhoto via AFP)

Liverpool defender Jeremie Frimpong faces several weeks out of action with a hamstring injury, Reds manager Arne Slot said yesterday.

Frimpong suffered the setback during the Premier League champions' 4-2 opening win over Bournemouth at Anfield last Friday.

The former Bayer Leverkusen full-back, a reported £29.5 million (\$39.6 million) replacement for Trent Alexander-Arnold, went off after an hour of his home league debut for Liverpool.

"The medical team were completely right about Jeremie to tell me to take him off because he is out until the end of the international break (September 10) and that happened during the game," Slot told a pre-match press conference ahead of Liverpool's game against Newcastle on Monday.

"I think I got criticised for taking him off, didn't I?," the Dutch boss added. "It had nothing to do with how he played but we felt he had an issue with his hamstring and by we, I mean the medical staff.

It was a good call to take him off, otherwise he would have been out for longer. We expect to have him back after the international break."

Conor Bradley, Liverpool's other option at right-back, only returned from injury to training on Thursday.

The build-up to Monday's match at St. James' Park has been dominated by Liverpool's pursuit of unsettled Newcastle striker Alexander Isak, with the Magpies reported to be demanding a British record transfer fee of £150 million

(\$202 million) for the 25-year-old Sweden international.

AFP

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SPORTS AS THEY HAPPEN



Unfortunately, Macedonian Literature Is Not Translated Very Often



By: Jakhongir NOMOZOV
@themtkenyatimes

Our guest today is the renowned Macedonian writer, theatre critic, Doctor of Philosophy in Communication, Editor-in-Chief of the literary journal *Literary Elements*, President of the “Perun Artis” Association for Art and Multiculturalism, and laureate of the Kosovo IWA Bogdani, the Montenegro Translators Association, and the Croatia Literary Association’s “Literary Feather” awards, Sasho Ogenovskii.

— As a theatre critic, what criteria do you use to evaluate a performance?

— Theatre is a symbiotic art and establishing a criteria for the particular theatre show means to develop a sort of relationship with it. It is not only taste, it is not only liking the show, or being your type of the theatre show, it is a kind of analyzing all segments of it (acting, directing, dramaturgy, visual and auditional). I never write a review for the show I think is not well developed. I write for the shows that excites me with its compactness and an impacting and artistic well expressed. Theatre is also a message and mostly engagement, so it means we, as theatre critics have to recognize its meaningfulness.

— What kind of fairy tales do you think modern children need the most?

— Unfortunately, the modern children are mostly influenced by the visual types of storytelling. Fairy tales like the classic ones are not well recognizable. The modern heroes and villains are a kind of hybrid creatures constructed and built by the visions influenced by the other medias. For my opinion, children

have to get back to reading because it is the only way for developing the criteria and the recognizable understanding of the social values in general. Good and bad guys in the fairy tales are products of the philosophical approach to the human life shaped into the stories we are recognize as fairy tales. The mechanism of separation of books from the visual media is crucial for proper understanding of the role of the literature in the children’s spiritual life.

— In children’s literature, what elements are more important than fantasy, in your opinion?

— Fantasy is always the most important thing ever. It is bonded with the talent and is very needful in the children’s understanding of the literature. The reading and the understanding of the characters and the story are the elements that are the biggest ingredients of the child’s relationship to the literature.

— Which national literatures have had the greatest influence on your creative work?

— The classic models are incredibly important in the understanding of the role of literature and mostly of the reasons for writing. I find impressions and inspiration in the modern literature as well. My favorite writer is William Faulkner and I adore his writing style, as well as his point of view, of course his attitude towards the world. Of course, I’ll never try to write like him, I’d rather write like I feel, but the depth of his stories and his characters are fantastic to me.

— How do you portray global issues in your writings — directly, symbolically, or spiritually?

— I’d say directly, even I write realistic story developing especially into the novel. I find symbols in the moments of the story, it is in the style, I think. Symbols are everywhere around us and all we need is to recognize them and to articulate them in the piece of art. Converting the moments in the story into symbols is a process very close to

the intimate life of the author, so the mentioned types of portraying very often are mixing each other in the period of creating the literature piece.

— Are there days when you completely stop writing? What emotions do those moments evoke?

— I believe in the writers who spend more time in the process of researching particular theme than to the writers who writes one piece of literature step by step leaving it to get matured. I always spend a lot of time in searching and researching and when I am sure it is the right path, I write it in a very short time. The most exhausted are the corrections and cutting the text you think is not needful. Here are the biggest dilemmas. And of course, the biggest writers always think the missed something in the already published piece of work, always think they did not write well some parts of the work.

— When and from what does a poet’s soul break? What kind of pain does he hide from others?

— Poet’s pain is very secret and very personal. The reader recognizes his own pain, reading the poets verses. The poems are always intimate act, even the philosophical ones. They have their own path to reach the reader’s souls.

— In your view, what makes a writer different from other people? Is this difference a gift or a burden?

— Writers always see the world from the different point of view that the regular people. His emotions are dedicated to the fantasy and inspiration. Of course, here is the gift very important because the talent is the one that gives to the writer the power to watch the world’s processes completely different. That’s why the writers are read. Because they are completely different that the other people. It is the same with the other types of the artist: painters, composers, actors etc.

— It is often said that artists suffer



more than others. Do you believe this to be true?

— No, the suffering could be from the reasons not bonded to the inspiration. We all suffer from different reasons and not all people takes the essence of it to create the piece of work. It is important for the artist to suffer to make the better piece of work, but it is usually called the human experience.

— What is your opinion about the statement: “Writing is turning pain into words”?

— Writers are turning everything into words. The different approaches are generated by the diverse of the genres. You not needed to suffer always to write a good novel, or poem or drama etc. Sometimes you have to revoke the moment of your past, or maybe from your life experience to make a good piece of art. Comedies are the best example. The comedy is a mindfulness issue, but the tragedy is a emotional issue. The both are corresponding with the pain, and they are not, as well. All is your approach to the world.

— Are there topics you have never written about — subjects you didn’t dare to approach?

— I am not daring, there are sub-

jects I’d never write about. It depends of your interests and your personal engagement. My opinion is that the author has to be engaged. He/she must be related to the human movements because the author is the human’s voice. Translated and read, the author (as the other kind of artists) must shape the human bean’s opinion to the traumas and unfortunates of his being.

— How is literature, and the role of poets and writers, regarded in Macedonia? What is the culture of reading like there?

— Macedonian literature is inspired by the very moment of the transitional country like Macedonia is. Unfortunately, Macedonian literature is not translated a lot. I think there are a lot of writers in my country that deserved to be translated. There are literature festivals dedicated to poetry and to other genres that give the chances to our writers to compare themselves with the other writers worldwide, but it has to be developed more, of course, with the support of the state institutions.

Jakhongir NOMOZOV, is a young poet and journalist from Uzbekistan.

He is also a Member of the Union of Journalists of Azerbaijan and the World Young Turkic Writers Union.